

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

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

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**CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH**

## **Ecclesial News**

**HOUSTON, Texas—Christadelphian Hall, 8008 Junius St.—Sunday :S.S.& Bible Class 10 am; Memorial 11 am; Eureka 7 pm (3rd Sun. eve, Lecture); Wed. Visible Hand of God 7pm (Hymn practice Wed. following lecture). Bro. Don Newcomer, 4011 Bolivia, Houston, Tx 77092; home phone (713) 686-6088; work (713) 869-8963.**

LOVING Greetings to all of like precious Faith near and far.

Since our last correspondence we have enjoyed the visits of brethren & sisters Wm. Phillips, Paul Neely, Nick Mammone, Fred Higham Sr., Ross Wolfe and Gary Smith; bre. Gilbert Growcott, August Fabris, Ronnie Wolfe, Terry Webb, Jack Carroll, Jim Phillips & Jim Truelove; sisters Vera McConnell, Margaret Sommerville, Ethel Hoage, Blanche Roberts and Icle Osborne.

Bre. Growcott, Wolfe, Higham, Mammone, Smith, and Wm. and Jim Phillips laboured among us in the Word of Truth.

We have lost some members who have moved to other locations: sis. Eva Banta to Lampasas; bro. Terry Webb to San Angelo; and sis. Kay Wolfe to California after her marriage to bro. Jim Phillips on Mar. 5 of this year. We gained a member when sis. Carolyn Thompson moved to Deer Park from Evansville, Ind.

Due to reasons of health, bro. John Packer resigned as recording brother. He will, God willing, continue to serve the Household with the Tape Library.

We are thankful for the opportunity of proclaiming the Truth to a large audience over the radio. On Jan. 1 we began a 30-minute question-&-answer program that is broadcast every Sunday morning. In the first 5 months, we have had over 90 calls on the air, and 20 requests for literature.

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**KARDINYA, W. Australia—Memorial 10:45 am, home of bro. G. A. Gibson, 33 Bellairs Rd., Kardinya, phone 09 337 4780. Study class Wed. 7:30 pm, also home of bro. Gibson.**

LOVING Greetings to the Household of Faith.

Bro. & sis. David Hopper have taken up temporary residence in Scotland, where they plan to live till the property they are purchasing in Wales is ready for occupancy. We are deeply saddened by their departure from Perth, but are in constant correspondence with them, and have a standing invitation to visit them in their new home when it is complete.

On Sun., May 21, we had the association & fellowship of bro. & sis. Jeff Hodges of Esperance at our memorial meeting, which made it a joyful occasion for us.

As announced in the Esperance news for May, we had the joy of welcoming bro. Max McLaren into fellowship. It is a great pleasure to work with him, for he has a sound knowledge of the Truth.

—bro. George A. Gibson

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**WORCESTER, Mass.—Vasa Hall, 1 Ekman St., phone (617) 753-4492—S.S. 9:30am; Memorial 10:30 am (10am July & Aug.); Lecture monthly; Classes in homes—Bro. Edward Prentice, 56 Lake St., Whitinsville, MA 01588, phone (617) 234-3304.**

LOVING Greetings in the Name of our Lord.

Normal ecclesial activities continue in this corner of the Vineyard, & we have continued to be blessed with visitors from various ecclesias: bre. G. Jones and J. Truelove (Richard); bro. & sis. R. Philip (Burlington); sisters Wm. Phillips and E. Mudge, bre. B. Edwards Jr., Wm. R. & John Phillips (Canton); bro. & sis. D. Sommerville, sisters Margaret, Lois, Mary, Becky, & Sharon Sommerville (Wanaque).

Bre. Jones, Truelove & Philip encouraged us by their exhortations; bro. Sommerville assisted by lecturing. The help and encouragement of our visitors and speaking brethren were greatly appreciated.

Sis. Sargent Sr. was with us for a few weeks, but has returned to Sarasota.

Sis. Brenda Sargent, and bro. & sis. Ed Sargent & family, are relocating to Saskatchewan, and will, God willing, be members of the Richard ecclesia. They will be greatly missed by this ecclesia.

All correspondence for the Worcester ecclesia should now be addressed to bro. Edward Prentice (address above).

With much love in the Truth to all of like precious Faith. May the return of our Messiah be soon!

—bro. E. Sargent

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If the Lord will

### **FRATERNAL GATHERINGS**

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

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

## Created for Thy Pleasure

*"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are, and were created"*—Rev. 4:11

TO those who have unhesitating confidence in the Bible as a divinely inspired record, the quotation above will arrest their vigilant attention, and excite their intense admiration and heartfelt gratitude for this sublime revelation. We are made for God's pleasure: it is our destiny.

*But how few are mindful of this profound and fundamental truth!* How few realize that man was not created for the purpose of self-gratification. One of the impressive lessons of the construction of the Tabernacle in the wilderness, and the institution of a divine system of religion for Israel, is to show that religion was made for man to train him into a pattern of eternally manifesting God's glory. In fact, the whole teaching of the Bible is that man—through belief and obedience of God's law, and conformity to God's image—would at last glorify Him, to God's holy pleasure, and man's thankful joy. Jesus said—

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and *glorify your Father* which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

To follow divine instructions, in the matter of religion, is of paramount importance. This principle was deeply impressed on the mind of Moses by the frequent repetition of the warning that he must make the Tabernacle and all its appurtenances (Exod. 25:9,40, 26:30, 27.8, etc)—

"After the pattern which was shown thee in the mount."

Writing to the Hebrews, Paul quotes this warning—8 : 5, & says further—

"Moses verily was faithful in all His House, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after" (Heb. 3:5).

The lesson is plainly apparent. God is supreme, and must be very carefully obeyed, if our actions are to meet with His approval. The required form of our service is revealed in the Scriptures, and it is our wisdom and joy to *search diligently* for it as for hid treasure (which it is), and follow that which is well-pleasing to God.

That Moses was also faithful in the construction of the Tabernacle and its furniture is conclusively evident, for when the work was done:

"Then a cloud covered the Tent of the congregation, and the *glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle*. And Moses was not able to enter into the Tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and *the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle*" (Exod. 40:34-35).

—indicating God's pleasure and approval, which would not have occurred if it had been done other than He had instructed. So in the antitype: those alone will comprise the Temple & be filled with the glory who have been made according to the pattern shown in the mounts of Moriah and of Transfiguration.

For almost 500 years, the Tabernacle continued as the religious centre of the people of Israel, and in which the appointed offerings were made to the glory of God. But after David had subdued all his enemies, and peace had come to Israel, it was his ardent desire to discontinue the portable Tabernacle that had served so long, & build a permanent house or Temple in which the Ark of the Covenant would rest.

However, because he had been a man of war, he was not permitted to do so; but Solomon his son was appointed to construct the building—

"Then David gave to Solomon his son the *pattern* of the porch, and of the houses thereof.. and of the place of the Mercy-seat, and of the courts of the House of the Lord. All this, said David, the Lord made me to understand *in writing by His hand upon me*, even all the work of this pattern" (1 Chron. 28:11, 12, 19).

This reveals that, though David was the architect, and prepared the plans of the Temple, *no part of the design was of his own imagining*, for it had been communicated to him in detail by divine inspiration.

During a period of 7 years, Solomon supervised the construction of the Temple—a building that has not been superseded for its magnificence. When the work was completed *exactly as God had instructed*, Solomon kneeled before all the congregation, and expressed the supplicating prayer constituting the entire 6th chapter of 2 Chronicles—

"When Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering & the sacrifices, & THE GLORY OF THE LORD FILLED THE HOUSE" (2 Chron.7:1).

*The continuation of this manifested glory, and of God's favour, was contingent upon the obedience of Solomon and the people of Israel:*

"If thou wilt walk before Me, as David thy father walked, and do according to ALL that I have commanded thee . . . then will I establish the throne of thy kingdom, according as I have covenanted with David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man to be ruler in Israel.

"But if ye turn away, and forsake My statutes and My commandments . . . and go and serve other gods, and worship them;

"Then I will pluck them up by the roots out of My land which I have given them. And this House, which I have sanctified for My Name, will I cast out of My sight" (2 Chron. 7:17-20).

The history of Israel's unfaithfulness is a sad commentary on a once-great nation under David and Solomon. Within 400 years the people were carried captive by other nations, and the Temple was completely destroyed. About 100 years later, under the supervision of Zerubbabel, the Temple was rebuilt. It remained till about 20 BC, when it was replaced by Herod's Temple, with which Jesus was familiar. This was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70.

During the 'Christian' dispensation, it has been a general practice among many religious bodies to build magnificent church edifices, & lay a cornerstone upon which has been engraved 'To the glory of God.' But these are entirely of man's device. Glory to God must come through our own personal lives, in careful conformity to God's commands.

These great buildings give God no glory or pleasure, because their congregations are astray from the system of doctrine and conduct established by the labours of the apostles in the first century, & because they are mixed with the world and its pleasures 6 days in the week.

The Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple were constructed by *rigidly following detailed plans provided by divine instruction*. This is the great lesson they are designed to teach. They gave God no glory in themselves, as inanimate masonry and wood and metal. Beautiful though they were, God destroyed them because through man's wickedness they were not giving Him glory, but very much the reverse.

At present, during the dark Gentile night, God has no literal House of Prayer upon the earth. The Law of Moses was fulfilled in Christ, & taken away, & with it the Temple, and similar conditions do not prevail in our time. Both Stephen and Paul give force of expression to this concept when they say—

*"The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands, as saith the prophet: Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool. What house will ye build Me, saith the Lord, or where is the place of My rest? Hath not My hand made all these things?"* (Acts 7:48-50).

*"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing He is Lord of heaven & earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands"* (Acts 17:24).

The lesson intended for us is obvious. The Tabernacle and the Temple were representatives of a national system, for the training of dull, animal man (as will again be needed in the Millennial Age)—but they were also *types and shadows of the True Living Temple, the Household of Christ—*

*"YE are the Temple of the living God"* (2 Cor. 6:16).

*"YE are the Temple of God . . . if any man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the Temple of God is holy"* (1 Cor. 3:16-17).

This being so, our minds should *always* be a Holy Place, in which the things of the Kingdom and the Name of Jesus must be stored, so we will be able to 'bring forth out of our treasure things new and old. Set up in our hearts would be the Altar on which the Christ-sacrifice burns day by day, and from which rises the Incense of our prayers.

Our daily reading of and meditation upon God's Word would ever kindle the Altar-fire, and keep it brightly burning. Tho living in the midst of a 'crooked and perverse generation,' we would not be a part of it, for *all* our time would be devoted to the service of the One Who has done far more for us than we are able to comprehend. The Temple of God cannot be used part time for worldly things: if we are the Temple, we must be at every moment the Temple.

*Therefore we should constantly 'praise the Lord for His goodness, and His wonderful works to the children of men'—Psalm 107, and 'rejoice in hope of the glory of God'—Romans 5: 2.* —G.A.G.

## ISRAEL AT THE RED SEA

Behind them lies the desert waste; before, the rolling, pathless deep:  
And on their track with vengeful haste the chariot hosts of Egypt sweep—  
Till in the sunset's last red glow flashes the armour of the foe!

Then rose to heav'n a mighty cry: a people's voice was on the air—  
In every heart, in every eye, rebellion burned, and dark despair:  
"Why didst thou thus our steps beguile? Were there no graves beside the Nile?"

"Where are the pleasant things and fair that grow by Egypt's verdant streams?  
Is this lone waste, this lion's lair, the storied Canaan of our dreams?  
This dismal sea, this barren strand, the pathway to the Promised Land?"

The word is spoken! O'er the wave is stretched the leader's holy rod;  
And safely through the yawning grave, where human foot had never trod,  
They reached at dawn the distant shore: their buried foes are seen no more!

O Lord! When like Thy sons of old, we wander through a barren waste,  
Where Hope is faint, and Love is cold, and bitter to our earthly taste  
The stream that in the desert flows, the daily bread Thy hand bestows—

When haunting dreams of pleasant things make the lone wilderness more drear,  
When every hour in passing brings some present pain, some threatening fear,  
And stretched before our shrinking eyes like a dark sea the future lies—

Then, Lord, be Thou at hand to guide, Thy Word be there our path to mark:  
Though high may swell the stormy tide—in heaven is light, though earth be dark:  
Like those who crossed that eastern sea, we shall be safe who trust in Thee!

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### WHAT MUST BE BELIEVED BEFORE IMMERSION

to constitute it the

### The Obedience of Faith

*"He that receiveth not my words hath that which judgeth him. The word that I have spoken ('the Gospel of the Kingdom') the same shall judge him in the last day"—John 12:48*

BY BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

**Bro. Thomas created the following dialogue from extracts from  
a Campbellite publication, with his answers and comments.**

WITHOUT that faith defined by Paul in Heb. 11:1, no one can please God, for:

"He that comes to God must believe that He is, and becomes a Rewarder of them who diligently seek Him" (v. 6).  
—and without His good pleasure, or approbation, no man can be justified. That is, doubtless, the correct definition of the Faith that Paul preached, and by the profession of which the ancient worthies acquired so much renown.

There are but One Faith and One Hope of the calling—Eph.4:4-5, both of which the apostle includes in his definition. They are the 'Glad Tidings,' or the 'Gospel,' called 'the Faith' because they are the subject matter of faith, or belief; and called 'the Hope' because the believer embraces them as the things promised of God that he hopes to obtain.

Some allege that we teach that a man must be perfect in knowledge before baptism; so that afterwards he can add nothing thereto. I have never thought, dreamed, believed, or said such a thing. If a man's knowledge were required to be pre-baptismally perfect, what could Peter mean when he exhorts the baptized to "*add* to their faith, knowledge"?

"Exactly so," says our friend, " I rejoice to hear you say this. The apostles at the time of their baptism were imperfect in their faith. We do not conceive that a person must be perfect in his faith in the Gospel to make his immersion valid.

"The Gospel is made up of many particulars. They are the things concerning the Kingdom and the Name of Jesus Christ. It is not necessary to know all these things to fit a man for immersion. Now some of these things were delivered 'first of all,' such as that Jesus was the Son of God, that he died for our sins and rose again for our justification (1 Cor. 15:1-4). These were part of the Gospel of the Kingdom, and in believing them, that Gospel was believed, though not perfectly . . ."

Excuse me interrupting you here, but by what rule do you define how *many* of these 'things of the Gospel' may be absent from a man's faith without so far impairing it as to destroy its justifying power, which is equivalent to leaving his immersion invalid?

**"The rule is," says our friend, "the effect produced. If the subject have a sufficient degree of the right kind of faith to cause him to die to sin and to live to God."**

Here is an issue between us. I understand your propositions to be—

1. *That a man is justified by the smallest amount of truth believed; provided the little he believes causes him to 'die to sin and to live to God'; and—*
2. *That that minimum of truth must comprehend the items that Jesus is the anointed Son of God, died, was buried, and rose again for the forgiveness of his sins who believes this minimum.*

But to these propositions I object that the minimum they define has never yet 'caused a man to die to sin & to live to God.' *Sin* is the transgression of divine commands, and one of these commands is '*Hear ye him!*'—Matt. 17:5. This is Yahweh's commandment concerning Jesus. Now Jesus preached the 'Gospel of the Kingdom' *before* he 'died and rose again,' and he said before he suffered—

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath that which judgeth him. The word that I have spoken (*the Gospel of the Kingdom*"), the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48).

What doth it avail if a man confess that Jesus is the Son of God, but 'receiveth not *his words*'? From whatever cause, he doth not DO what is required to be done, and therefore does not 'live to God,' but continues dead in sin, which breaks out from time to time in Campbellism, Millerism, Mormonism, Spiritualism, and anything but earnest and enlightened *obedience to the Gospel*.

**"But you have admitted that it is not necessary to know everything as a qualification for immersion. How much IS required?"**

Jesus and his apostles require that the Gospel, *as a whole*, be understood and believed. It is nowhere written—

*"He that believes a PART of the Gospel & is baptized, shall be saved."*

But Jesus' command is:

"Repent, and believe THE Gospel" (Mark 1:15).

To believe (especially as ignorant Gentiles profess to do) that Jesus is the Son of God, that he died for sins, was buried & rose, is *not*—

"The assurance of things hoped for, & the conviction of things unseen" (Heb. 11:1).

—and therefore it is not the faith which justifies. The Gospel is, as a whole, made up of divers elementary parts, so that faith merely in an element thereof is no more belief of *the* Gospel than the knowledge of a part is the knowledge of its whole.

**"How, then, would you define 'the Gospel as a whole' in the fewest words?"**

In the words of Paul:

"God will justify the nations by faith" (Gal. 3:8).

—or in their equivalent by Moses:

"In thee, Abraham, shall all nations be blessed" (*same verse*).

How much do pan-christendom sentimentalists, who say that Jesus is the Son of God, etc., believe in *such* a Gospel?

**"It must be confessed, not much. But then we hold that 'the prerequisite to immersion demanded by the Scriptures is not perfection of faith, but faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the promised Messiah (Acts7:37). The plain literal word should be our guide in this case'."**

So it should, and therefore I am the more astonished that after such an admission, you do not walk under its guidance. The right kind of faith is the understanding of the 'Word of the Kingdom'—Matt. 13:19-23; Luke 8:15 in the sense of God's teaching, heartily believed in honesty & goodness.

You talk much about 'imperfection of faith,' as if the Scriptures *demand*ed an imperfect faith for justification. Imperfection of faith is scepticism. A man whose faith is imperfect is in doubt, and cannot obey the apostolic exhortation to:

"Draw near with a true heart, in *full assurance of faith*" (Heb. 10:22).

Abraham was justified by the faith by which all his children by adoption can alone be justified. Their faith must be the same in 'kind' but greater in amount, or 'degree,' for they have not only to believe what their adopted father believed, but to believe *also* the 'things concerning the Name of Jesus.'

Now, my dear friend, first reflect upon the 'plain literal words' descriptive of the nature of the faith the father of the faithful had when his faith 'pleased God.' Hear Paul, who says of the—

"Promise that Abraham & his Seed should be heirs of the world."

—that the heirship is 'of faith,' to the end—

"That the Promise might be sure to them who are of the faith of Abraham."

These are Paul's words, condensed from Rom. 4:13-16. Now, from them you cannot fail to perceive that the heirship of the world without limitation is promised to those 'who are of the faith of Abraham'—who *believe the Promise he believed*, and something more. Will you affirm that 'Christendom'—sprinkled or dipped—are of the faith of Abraham: that they came to the waters because they believed with Abraham that they should be, with him, the heirs of the world of nations?

**"But the 'kind' of faith! Our faith was like Abraham's 'in kind.' He believed a part of what is now the 'Truth' as a whole. We also believed a part of this whole. And the part we believed, we believed it as sincerely and honestly as he."**

I was coming to that. Bear with me in saying that I regard the imperfect faith you talk about as being equally as un-Abrahamic in 'kind' as 'degree.' Defining the kind of faith he had *when justified*, Paul says—

"Abraham against hope believed in hope, *that he might become the father of many nations...* and being not weak in faith, he staggered not at the Promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, *giving glory to God*, and being fully persuaded that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And *therefore* it was imputed to him for righteousness" (Rom.4:18).

Now, compare this faith with yours and Christendom's. Look again at the 'kind' of faith Paul preached for justification: strongly *believing in hope*, with the full persuasion that the THINGS PROMISED, however improbable, God is able to perform. *This* was the 'kind' of faith Abraham had, and it is styled by Paul 'believing God' and 'believing upon God'—Rom. 4:3, 5, 24.

**"If these things be so, who then can be saved?"**

What have we to do with that? It is our business, my friend, to discover *the Truth*; and when found, to let our fellow-men know what the Scriptures teach, that they may believe & do. There is the Truth: and they have got to embrace it, or encounter it as foes.

**"But what is to become of those 1000s of pious people in the sects who have sincerely believed in God, Christ, the Spirit, the church, the kingdom, and have joyfully submitted to His requirements, as they understood them?"**

'God, Christ, Spirit, Church, Kingdom, Gospel' as they understand them, are not the God, Christ, Spirit, Church, Kingdom, and Gospel of the Bible. Many truly have been burned for their understanding of the Bible, but martyrdom does not transmute error into 'the Truth as it is in Jesus.'

"Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (1 Cor. 13:3).

Now, that 'charity' does not substitute sincerely-believed error for truth, for justification. It requires that professors—

"Rejoice *in the Truth*; believe ALL things, and hope ALL things" (v. 7).

Hence Paul's teaching is that if a man give his body to be burned, but do not rejoice in the Truth, and believe & hope all things, it profiteth him nothing:

"He that believeth not the Gospel of the Kingdom shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16).

These are the words of Jesus:

"Hear ye him!"—Matt 17: 5

**"But the apostles were so fundamentally imperfect in their faith that the vision of the sheet was given to teach them the truth relative to one important doctrine of the Gospel. Nevertheless, we have no account that this defect in their faith rendered their immersion invalid."**

The admission of Gentiles to a joint-heirship with Jesus and the saints of all nations, blessed in Abraham and his Seed, was not preached to the apostles as an element of the faith that justifies. They were not, therefore, fundamentally imperfect in *that* Faith. Jesus himself cleansed them by the Word, and perfected his work in regard to them by washing their feet: which could not be dispensed with in their case, under pain of everlasting exclusion from the inheritance—

"Ye are clean thru the Word that I have spoken to you" (John 15:3).

—that is, the 'Gospel of the Kingdom.' And—

"If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me" (John 13:8).

The apostles believed all that Abraham believed, and more too. So they were of the Faith of Abraham, which pan-christendom is not. Obedience is not rendered nugatory by not believing what God *purposely conceals* until the time arrives for its manifestation. There is yet a 'law to go forth from Zion'—Isaiah 2:3, but our not believing this unrevealed law will not invalidate immersion predicated on belief of what is *revealed* for faith. The admission of Gentiles upon the same principles with Jews to joint-heirship of the Kingdom of Israel, was not the Gospel, but:

"The Fellowship of the Mystery which from ages had been HID in God" (Eph. 3:6-9).

**"But we are not expected to believe the Promises of God for justification; but only that 'Jesus is the Son of God; as is clear from the case of the Ethiopian. The Promises can be learned afterwards.'"**

In that, I differ from you altogether. Paul says that what was written about Abraham's faith and his justification thereby, was—

"Written for our sakes, to whom faith shall be imputed, if we believe on God Who raised up Jesus from the dead; who was delivered for the offences of believers on God, and raised for their justification"

(Rom.4:23-25).

Now you say that you believed that Jesus was Son of God. Well, 'the demons believed that & trembled'—James 2:19. But by your own showing, you did not also 'believe on God Who raised him' *in the sense explained by Paul* in Rom. 4.

**"I believed in His existence."**

So did Mohammed. For a man to believe there is a God simply saves him from being a fool, for:

"The fool hath said in his heart there is no God."

But to 'believe on God and on His Son Jesus Christ' is more than to believe in their existence. It is to believe *what the One promised and the other preached*. God sent Jesus to evangelize His Promises to Israel—Acts 10:36-37, which he began to do in Galilee—Matt. 4:23. He told his apostles that *these Promises* should be preached to the Gentiles—Matt. 24:14, & that whosoever should *believe THEM* should be saved—Mark 16:15-16.

The apostles fully executed their mission—Col. 1: 23. so all who honestly professed to believe that Jesus was God's Son *proved* it by 'receiving his words,' and being immersed. They believed in God's Messenger, and evinced it by also believing His *Message*. The Gospel of the Kingdom was that Message, and he that gave heed to it was *alone* recognized as 'believing on God' and His Son Jesus Christ.

**"But you have forgotten the Ethiopian. He only professed faith in the Messenger."**

Nay, my friend, I have not forgotten him. Do you mean to say the Ethiopian, and a piously-disposed religion-getter of our day, are of like intelligence in Scripture?

**"So it appears to me, judging from the Ethiopian's reply (Acts 8:37)."**

But in deciding upon a case, ought you not to take into consideration all its circumstances?

**"Unquestionably."**

Then why do you not? The story covers not less than 14 verses; & you are satisfied to find an argument—in defence of your justification' by assent to a few historical facts at most—on a solitary sentence insulated from the whole. Now look at the following points—

1. The Ethiopian was a worshiper according to the Temple service in Jerusalem (Acts 8:27).
2. He was a student of the Prophets (v. 28).
3. He was reading about the Son of God in his sufferings (vs. 32-33).
4. He was reasoning with himself whether what he read in Isaiah referred to the prophet or to someone else (v. 34).
5. Philip in explanation 'preached to him Jesus' from the prophet (v. 35).
6. Philip—being the same who had been preaching and baptizing in Samaria (vs. 5-12), and having but 'One Gospel' to preach (Gal. 1:8-9), in 'preaching to him Jesus'—*could only have announced to him the same as stated in v. 12.*
7. Philip convinced him that Isaiah speaks of the Son of God.
8. Isaiah was not then divided into chapters, & though we are told at what place Philip 'began' to expound, we are not told of the limit of his exposition.
9. On the supposition that he did not go beyond the 53rd chapter, even that chapter speaks of the military prowess of the Son of God—  
"Therefore I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong" (v. 12).
10. The details of Philip's discourse are not given; but the question put by the Ethiopian shows that in preaching to him Jesus, he preached obedience as well as faith—  
"What doth hinder me to be BAPTIZED?" (v.36).
11. Philip did not say: "*If thou believest Jesus is God's Son thou mayest*" He said:  
"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."  
Believest what? Hear Jesus!—  
"If thou believest THE GOSPEL, or Good News" (Mark 16:16).
12. What the Ethiopian believed was 'Glad Tidings,' and must therefore have been more than the sentence, 'Jesus is Son of God'; for 'he went on his way *rejoicing*' in hope of the glory of God (Rom. 5:2).
13. His confession, 'I believe the Son of God is *that* Anointed Jesus—is the key to Philip's discourse.
14. The Ethiopian, being a disciple of Moses & the Prophets, was acquainted with what they teach about the Son of God in his *glory*—in other words, with the *Hope of Israel*—before Philip joined company with him. It was what they testify of that Son's *sufferings*—the Mystery hidden from the ages & generations (Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:3-5)—which neither they themselves, nor the Ethiopian, were able to unravel (1 Pet. 1:10-12). That puzzled him: and caused him to say—  
"How can I understand, except some man should guide me?" (v.31).
15. As a result of the whole, he was immersed (v. 38).

Now, produce me any Gentile as intelligent, and subject to like circumstances, as the Ethiopian: & on hearing him make the same confession, I will agree that there is no good reason why he should not be baptized, and his immersion considered valid.

**"That is an enlarged view of the Ethiopian's case, which I confess had not occurred to me. I am much obliged to you for the trouble you have taken in recording these points, and shall certainly consider them with all the candour possible. I have no favourite dogma or theory to defend. My whole aim is the truth in reference to this matter, as it is revealed in the infallible Word of inspiration, regardless of the opinions or actions of others."**

Neither you nor I have any other interest than to know and do the truth. In contending, it is not for victory, but that truth may be evolved. —Herald, May, 1856

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## Answers to Bible Questions

### GOD THE AUTHOR OF EVIL

"James writes (1: 13-17) that God is the Author of every good gift. How are we to reconcile this with the fact of His having planted the Tree of Knowledge of Good AND EVIL, which brought death? Is He not the Author of Evil according to this, and according to Josh. 23:15)?"

GOD is certainly the Author of Evil. He Himself declares it—

"I make peace, and *create evil*" (Isa.45:7).

"Shall there be evil in a city, & the Lord hath not done it?" (Amos 3:6).

"Behold, *I bring evil* on all flesh" (Jer. 45:5).

—and so in numerous instances throughout the prophets.

But how, then, about the statement of James? Well, God and not man is the Author of *every* 'good and perfect gift.' Man takes the credit, but the origin is in God, as even common sense must recognise.

But the fact that all good comes from God is not inconsistent with the fact that He gives evil *also*, when circumstances call for it. Who drowned the antediluvians? Who destroyed Sodom & Gomorrah? Who scattered Israel? Who has subjected the whole human race to evil, for a time? There is only one answer. *God contrives evil as the punishment of sin.*

In that case, says the objector, you make God the Author of sin. Not so. Sin is disobedience. God is not the Author of disobedience as such. God gives the power to obey Him, and calls upon us to obey Him, but leaves it with us to obey or disobey. If we disobey, we sin. This is not God's act, although the power to perform the act is of God, as all things are.

It is the *relation* of things we must keep in view. God inflicts evil as the punishment of disobedience. He is the Author of the evil in a sense in which He is not the Author of sin; for sin is the *wrong use of independent power conferred upon a creature*, and of this He is not the Author. But of the evil inflicted in punishment thereof, He is the Author direct.

But then, says the objector, James has said, 'God cannot be tempted with evil! This is not out of harmony with the other truth. He does not deal in evil for the love of it. Evil presents no attraction to Him, that He should inflict it for the mere sake of it, or draw men by temptation into the channel of it.

He is good, and good only. But He inflicts the evil on rebellion, & this indeed is *part of His goodness*. There should be no difficulty perceiving these distinctions. —July 1892

### **BODY, SOUL AND SPIRIT**

MAN is undoubtedly composite in constitution. Paul's words, 'body, soul & spirit' (1 Thess. 5:23) define the natural divisions of his nature: body, life and mind. A carcase illustrates the first; an idiot the 1st & 2nd without the 3rd; a full-grown efficient manhood presents us with the whole 3 in combined manifestation.

None of the 3 can exist as an individual abstraction by itself. 'Body, soul and spirit' are but names descriptive of different aspects presented by the unit 'man.' And if you destroy the man, where are the aspects? If you destroy the body, you necessarily destroy the life which is but a phenomenon manifested in or through the body.—May, 1892

### **BACKBITING A SIN**

A BROTHER who 'talks reproachfully of his brethren' is a backbiter, and those who countenance him *partake his sin*. But do not be distressed by it (Ecc. 3:16-17; 5:8). Backbiters & their fellow-sinners have been current ever since the Spirit of God expressed its displeasure at such things. There is a 'needs be.' How else are good men to be tried in the virtue of patience under evil speaking? (1 Pet.2:20).

God has a work for the Shimeis sometimes (2 Sam.16:5-12). Doubtless it is a work of wickedness so far as they are concerned, & God brings His punishment on their heads in due time (1 Kings 2:43-46). But it is a something for men of God to submit to meekly in the hour of darkness, like David. —June, 1892

### **ONLY A THOUSAND YEARS?**

IF the Kingdom were to last 'only a 1000 years,' it might be open to your remark about its comparing poorly with the 'endless bliss' of sectarian theology. But the matter stands not so. Tho there will be a 1000 years' reign, the Kingdom will last *for ever*, in the absolute sense: "Of his Kingdom there shall be *no end*" (Luke 1:33).

The '1000 years' only measures the period by which the world will be raised from its present state of evil to a state in which there will be no death. This transition requires, and is effected by, the machinery of the 1000 years.

Jesus, as the supreme Pontiff, reigning in the joint capacity of King and Priest on the throne of David, assisted by the Hierarchy of his glorified people (who will be his representatives and the channels of his power in all the earth), will effectually develop for universal man those conditions of temporal well-being and social harmony that will admit the full play of the spiritual forces then set in motion.

Enlightenment and obedience will quickly become the order of the day. By the close of the 1000 years millions will have become the prepared and accepted candidates for eternal life. This is the great work of the Kingdom of the 1000 years; and it is *this* that men and women are now invited by the Gospel: to become the reformers of the world, under Christ, in the Age to Come.

When the work is finished, and the earth populated with a glorified race, the Kingdom will enter upon a higher and eternal phase—

"Then shall the Son also himself be subject unto Him that put all under him, that God may be all in all"

(1 Cor. 15:16).

There then lies before the blessed of the Lord an 'everlasting felicity' quite equal to anything that was ever imagined by the most fervid orthodox heaven-painter: even an 'ocean illimitable' of life, love, power, faculty, knowledge, peace and joy; but subject to *law and organization*, doubtless, for God is a God of order.

The first-fruits of the human race, who reign with Christ during the 1000 years, will probably have a rank and a function above the millions that will be gathered in at the great harvest at the close of the 1000 years. It is not given us to know the details beyond the first stage of the Kingdom. All we know is—and it is sufficient for all purposes in this dispensation to know this much—that beyond that there is endless life and perfection. God does all things well, and we may depend upon it that the state of things after the 1000 years will be the very best possible.—June, 1892

### THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT TODAY

MIRACULOUS power has *not* 'followed believers in all ages.' This is proof positive that Jesus did not mean that it should follow them when he said—

*"He that believeth on me, the works that I do, he shall do also, and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father"* (John 14:12).

His meaning must be found in the facts. They are simple. Those who believed in him in the age that witnessed his rejection, death, resurrection and ascension, received in themselves—from the outpouring of the Holy Spirit effected by him from the right hand of power (Acts 2:33)—the power to do all the miracles which Jesus worked while he was upon the earth.

This was God's confirmation of the testimony for him (Heb.2:4), and served its purpose when it established the Faith of Christ in the earth on the foundation of evidence adequate to the conviction of good & honest hearts

(Eph. 4:12-14).—July, 1892

### BRO. THOMAS ON PERSONALITY OF THE SPIRIT

WHEN Dr. Thomas in Eur.1:208 speaks of '14 living persons: the Spirit, Jesus, & the 12 Apostles,' he may 'appear to favour the orthodox idea of the Spirit's personality,' but it is only an appearance.

It is the scriptural conception of the Spirit in its largest sense that he has before him: that is, the Deity, Who is Spirit. The Father and the Spirit are one—a unit filling immensity. It is this one Spirit that the Dr. speaks of as a person in the special connection of the sentence. —April, 1892

### GOD'S LOVE, AND THE CRUELTIES OF PROBATION

"I have a difficulty amounting to distress in reconciling the agonies which God has permitted to be inflicted upon His children (by Pagan & Papal Rome, for example, in past centuries) with the declaration that He feels love & pity for them, even 'like as a father pitieth his children.' What explanation do you suggest?"

THE force of any explanation must be lost if we confine our thoughts to the present limited lifetime of the saints, which, as Paul says, is—in relation to God's great work with them—"but for a moment" (2 Cor.4:17). There must be an enlarging of the mind to take in the whole view.

This will show us a brief story, commencing in the cradle, lasting a few fitful years, and ending in the grave. And after the grave, the endless ages. In the endless ages (on which the saints will seem to enter immediately when they die, because there is no conscious interval between death and resurrection), there will be no trouble. There will be the perfection of well-being.

Now, let it be granted that suffering in mortal days is contributive to fitness for the ages to come, and to capacity for the enjoyment of their blessedness, & there can be no difficulty in the tribulation that God permits.

He *has* permitted evil during the whole history of sin upon the earth. Not only so: He has contrived it. He contrived it in the case of Christ—

"It *pleased* the Lord to bruise him" (Isa. 53:10).

He contrives it in the case of all His children—

"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, & scourgeth every son He receiveth" (Heb.12).

"Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of His correction."

"If we receive not chastisement whereof all are partakers, then are we not sons."

It is part of the plan. We see the wisdom of it when we thoroughly know human nature. And we shall see the perfect glory of it when we taste its unutterable sequel (if God permit) with the multitude that have 'come out of great tribulation' (Rev.7:i4). The suffering is but for a short season. When it ends, it ends for ever. When joy comes, it comes to stay. And it will be 10-fold the sweeter for the affliction that precedes, *and qualifies*.

We shall then see God's love and pity in the very afflictions which the distress of blind mortal nature may now cause us to doubt. —July, 1892

### THE NATURE OF THE BREAD AND WINE

THE crotchet on this question is nothing new. It was buzzing about in the days of Dr. Thomas, who had no patience with it. The answer is this—

"Where there is no law, there is no transgression" (Rom.4:15).

Those who say we ought to have unleavened bread and unfermented 'wine' are 'wise above that which is written.' The Lord has left no directions: therefore we are free. Had Christ commanded conformity on these particulars, we must needs have conformed, at however great inconvenience; but there is no such command.

We obey this command when we eat bread and drink wine, though the loaf we eat be differently shaped and compounded, and the wine differently tasted and made. To contend otherwise is to make the observance of the Supper impossible. For if there is anything in the contention, the identity of the bread & wine must be exact, and not approximate. We are not told, simply because it was of no importance to know. We are not under the Law, which required a minute conformity in 'meats and drinks.' —April 1892

### JOHN AS ELIJAH

WHEN John said, in answer to the messengers of the Pharisees (John 1:21) that he was *not* Elijah, he did not contradict Christ, who said he *was* (Matt. 17:12), though it might seem so. John was not the *personal* Elijah, who was taken away from the earth in the reign of Jehoram son of Ahab (1 Kings 2:11), and who will come again to take part in the work of restoring Israel (Matt. 17:11). This is what *John* meant.

But he was the Elijah of the first appearing of Christ, in the sense that he was sent before him 'in the spirit & power of Elijah' (Luke 1:17) to prepare his way. This is what Jesus meant. (See Nazareth Revisited, pgs. 25 & 197).

—Sept., 1892

### CAUGHT 'UP' INTO PARADISE

"How is Paul's statement (2 Cor. 12:2-4) that he was 'caught up to the 3rd heaven ... to Paradise' to be harmonized with the fact that Paradise is to be in the Holy Land?"

BY the fact that Paradise in the Holy Land *will be* the 'Third Heaven' Paul was speaking of visions & revelations' (vs. 1,7). 'Visions & revelations' are exhibitions of *coming* realities, & not of contemporary facts. This may be discerned in the contemplation of Rev. 1:1; Acts 12:9; & Ezek. 40:2.

As for 'up,' there is no preposition in the original. What Paul wrote was *harpagenta* (v.2), and *heerpagee* (v.4)—the passive participle & the 3rd person singular aorist, respectively, of the verb *harpazo*: 'to seize or snatch away—fairly rendered in the Diaglott, 'conveyed away.' It is the idea expressed by John—

*"He carried me away in the Spirit"* (Rev. 17:3; 21:10).

Paul was conveyed forward in vision to Paradise, which is the 3rd Heaven-political: 1) Antediluvian; 2) Mosaic; 3) Millennial.

This is one of the things in Paul's letters to which Peter refers as being "hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned & unstable wrest" (2 Pet. 3:16). It is possible to understand them, however, by a right division of the Word of Truth.  
—July, 1892

### MEMBERSHIP IN GENTILE ORGANIZATIONS

MEMBERSHIP of Gentile organizations is always a dangerous thing for those whose citizenship is in heaven, & whose affections are forbidden to be in earthly directions at present (Col. 3:1). There may be objects unobjectionable in themselves; but the fact of 'membership' seems to put you among those who have other principles of thought & action than those that Christ would approve, and you easily slide from the unobjectionable to the decidedly objectionable. It is like a ball getting on an incline, however slight: you easily go to the bottom.

'Bicycle riding for health's sake' can be done without membership of a club, and the trifling advantages of such membership do not seem worth the risk of doubtful association. —June, 1892

### ANSWER TO PRAYER

"May I ask your experience in the matter of answer of prayer? Has God vouchsafed you of His mercy and faithfulness UNDOUBTED responses to supplication presented through Christ our Lord and Great High Priest?"

SOME things asked for we have received, and some we have not. But we should not feel discouraged if God were apparently to turn a deaf ear to *all* our requests. We should consider that His wisdom required the denial of all our desires, as in the case of Job (6:8-11; 13:24-26; 19:7-11). David had to say sometimes (Psa. 22:2)—

*"O, my God, I cry in the day time, but Thou hearest not!"*

Man is small, and life is short; and the issues of futurity are immeasurable, & can only be truly judged by unerring Wisdom. For this reason, all our petitions should be qualified with the recognition of the will of God as the supreme regulator. We should 'in *everything* give thanks' (1Thess. 5:18; Phil. 4:6), and in all our petitions subordinate our own ideas and wishes to the perfect will of God. Christ has given us an example in his own prayer to the Father in Gethsemane (Mark 14:36)—

*"Take away this cup from me: nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou wilt."*

This qualification makes us certain of an answer to all our prayers, even if we do not get the answer in the very form we may ask it. This is John's reasoning—

"This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything *according to His will, He heareth us*. And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petition we desired of Him."

That is, true children of God would desire nothing that God sees not fit to give. What He sees fit, that He gives. And this being what we ask, we know that we always have what we ask. And here we rest, even in the midst of the most direful experiences, knowing experience of evil is part of the instrumentality by which God is preparing children for Himself, during this transitory age of evil, against the perfect and endless ages beyond.—July, 1892

**The greatest proof of God's love can be not getting our petitions, even those we wanted most.**

### CHRIST'S BODY 'BROKEN'

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

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

All the 4 accounts state this: Matt., Mark, Luke, and Paul in 1 Cor. 11. If the bread was his body, and he broke the bread, it was an intimation of the breaking of his body, even if he had not said:

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

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

This does not conflict with the prophecy that 'a bone of him shall not be broken' (John 19:36). Though a bone was not broken, his flesh was broken; and his flesh was his body, in contrast with his blood. He said (John 6:51, 55)—

"The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed."

His flesh was his body, in the proximate and most visible sense; and this was broken in the terrible process of being 'nailed to the tree.' The Lord has chosen to give us *broken* bread and *poured-out* wine to represent his flesh and his blood offered in sacrifice. We must resist any process of interpretation, with however much show of Greek, that would take away this meaning from the institution, or which, if it have not this aim, is mere word-trifling.—July, 1892

**(After 2000 years, there are no new crotchets: just re-cycled ones.)**

### CREATION: 'BARA'

IT is true that *bara* is the Hebrew word translated 'create.' But it is not true that the word 'create' means to make out of nothing. It has nothing to do with either the metaphysical or the chemical aspect of the process. It has merely to do with the *fact* of the process, leading to a result not before apparent.

God 'creates' in the sense of making things that previously had no existence, but the word *bara* does not tell us how He does it. In itself, as a term, it merely means 'to arrange, to put in order.' The 'how' it does not touch. We have to learn this from express information.

It is not out of nothing He creates. He 'created' man (Deut.4:32; Isa. 14:12). But so far from creating him out of nothing, we are informed that He made him of the 'dust of the ground' (Gen. 2:17). So when He makes the creatures—

"Thou sendest forth *Thy spirit*: they are *created*" (Psa. 104:30).

Heaven and earth are created by His power (Jer. 32:17), which is a *reality*; by His Spirit, which is *substance*; by His word and will, which are far from being nothing:

"By His Spirit He hath garnished the heavens" (Job 26:13).

"Out of Him (*ex ou*) are all things" (1 Cor. 8:6).

"In Him all things exist" (Acts 17:28).

—July, 1892

### "HIS OWN BLOOD"

*"Feed the Church of GOD, which He hath purchased with HIS OWN BLOOD."*

THIS translation of Acts 20:28 is correct, according to most of the early manuscripts; but there are some which have the Greek word for 'Lord' instead of 'God.' Some adopt this. But it makes little difference: 'Lord' & 'God' are in many cases interchangeable, and often used together.

Christ was God's Own Son, and God's Own Lamb for the taking away of the sin of the world. Therefore Christ's blood was 'God's Own blood' in the sense of f™ the blood provided by *Him* for the redemption of the world.

—July, 1892

### 'FAITH CURES'

YOU need not trouble about the so-called 'faith cures' First, because there's not reality enough about them to justify the great noise that some people make; and secondly, because no amount of such reality would prove it to be a work of God, or disprove the authenticated teaching of Christ & his apostles: that *the Gospel and the Gospel ALONE is the "power of God" for the salvation of perishing Gentiles* (Rom. 1:16). There is nothing in the so-called faith cures

at all approaching the gifts of the Spirit. They are only such alleviations of mortal ailments as are within the power of mortal healthy mesmeric energy, brought to bear upon the weak & receptive under favourable conditions.

Let the faith healers mend broken bones in a moment, arrest fever at 30 mis. distance, walk on water, feed 1000 with one loaf, raise the dead—& there will be something to consider, alongside of Christ's achievements.

'Wonderful things' have been done in all ages of the world by the skilful use of man's wonderful power: but it is all natural. The works Christ did were—

"Works none other man did," or can do (John 15:24)

—Sep., 1893

### **PUNISHED FOR ADAM'S SIN?**

"Is it correct to say that God punishes us for Adam's sin?"

GOD does not punish the children for the father's sin. He says so in expostulation with Israel through Ezekiel (18:20)—

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."

We suffer death in consequence of Adam's sin, but not in punishment of it. There is a distinction. To punish one man for the act of another is abhorrent to the ideas of justice that God propounds in His Word; but to make it a law of generation that mortal shall produce mortal, does not bring with it the same idea. It is better to be born mortal with hope of salvation through Christ, than not to be born at all.

Adam became mortal because of sin; and as his children, partaking of his nature, we cannot be otherwise than mortal. But to call it 'punishment' is to confuse our moral perceptions, & to speak otherwise than the Scriptures speak.

—July, 1892

### **REVELATION 22 and EZEKIEL 47**

THERE is a certain resemblance between Rev.22:1-6 and Ezek.47:1-12, but the different character of the 2 prophecies requires the conclusion Dr. Thomas came to that what of the *literal* in Ezekiel is employed in the Revelation is *there* employed with a symbolic import. It is in this way that the literal Mt. Zion of prophecy is figuratively used in Rev.14 to represent the Kingdom that will have its seat there. And the literal Euphrates of Isaiah is used to represent the power of the empire geographically comprehending it. It is a beautiful combination by which we have the advantage of both literal and symbolic without the weakening of either.

—March, 1892

### **NOTICE OF WITHDRAWALS**

IT HAS been suggested—and there would be a good deal in favour of the suggestion—that no withdrawals ought to be published until at least three months had elapsed after the withdrawal.

—April, 1897

'**SPIRIT, SOUL & BODY.**' Paul's meaning in 2 Thess.5:23 ("I pray God your whole spirit & soul & body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ") may be taken as expressed concisely in 2 Cor. 12:9, "This also we wish, even *your perfection.*" His anxiety was to see them perfectly consecrated. 'Spirit, soul and body' covered every aspect of their being.

—Sept., 1892

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*Let us not mistake mere planning for true Purpose, nor mere organization for vital Efficiency. Truly, planning and organization CAN be the essential skeleton of living Purpose and Efficiency, but they can also be a skeleton—and no more.*

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## **Search the Scriptures**

**A SERIES OF LESSON NOTES BASED ON CHRISTENDOM ASTRAY'**

### **THE BIBLE: WHAT IT IS**

LESSON 1 - 'Christendom Astray,' Chapter 1, Part 1

"The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.. They shall turn away their ears from the Truth, and be turned unto fables" (2 Tim. 4:3-4).

"Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them"  
(Acts 20:30).

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

"Their word will eat as doth a canker" (2 Tim. 2:17).

"ALL nations deceived" (Rev. 18:23).

THE above verses, quoted from the Word of God, stand as a warning to all men that the majority of the religious world claiming to be 'Christian' would depart from the Truth of God. We are cautioned also that we cannot leave our instruction concerning the will of God to a separate class called the 'Clergy': ministers, priests & pastors. The only safe and scriptural course is for us to apply ourselves *individually* to the examination and study of God's Word, as the 'noble,' highly-commended believers at Berea examined the Scriptures to check Paul's words—

"They searched the Scriptures *daily* whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).

During the present dispensation, the Bible makes no distinction between a priestly class and the common people. That ended when the Law ended. The responsibility of searching the Scriptures rests with each individual. A humble, prayerful, consistent study of the Bible itself is the best—the *only*—way to arrive at a firm conviction of its truth. We grow closer to God and Christ by this exercise; realizing as we read that the natural mind of man, without this Divine direction, is lawless and unruly.

In studying the Bible, we should always seek the assistance of God in prayer. It is important that we understand that it is God Who gives us wisdom in these things, and can open our minds to see the beauties of His Word, if we seek it humbly. We will realize that the final Purpose of all things is to fill the earth with the glory of God, and that *we are the very highly privileged means He is using to accomplish that Purpose*, if we work with Him, and submit completely to Him.

"Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it" (Psa. 127:11).

But Paul assures us that:

"Our labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).

When we study the Bible, we should read it very carefully, keeping our minds centred on each word and phrase, and endeavouring to understand the relationship of one verse to another. We must, in approaching the study of God's Word, *want to know* AND OBEY the truth. There must be a strong desire on our part to investigate its pages so as to become very familiar with its loving message of instruction to us concerning the Way of Life.

Once we have this living knowledge, we will realize we have a duty to spread this information far and wide to other people. When we understand the glorious message which God's Word conveys of eternal salvation and the blessing of all nations in the Age to Come, we will not rest until we have performed God's work in completely devoting our lives to advancing God's honour before all we meet.

To begin with, we must recognize and accept the Bible as the Divinely-inspired, *infallible* message of God to man. We must believe assuredly that—

"God IS, and is a Rewarder of all who *diligently* seek Him" (Heb. 11:6).

Further evidence will strengthen our conviction of the truth of these propositions, as we advance into a study of the Bible; as we see the internal evidence of its truth and divinity, and the sureness of its prophetic words. From what God has done, we will gain confidence that what He has yet to accomplish in the earth is man's only means of salvation from himself and his natural end.

By our investigation of this matter with an open mind, we will learn that this book, the Bible, does not speak like other books, but speaks with absolute authority, in such phrases as:

*'Thus saith the Lord'* and *'It SHALL come to pass . . .'*

The Bible is a compilation of a number of books, written by many different men over a long period of time: approximately 1500 years. The times & circumstances of its being written—periods of prosperity, and captivity and servitude combine, under God's guiding hand, to bring forth a united message from book to book: unfolding a consistent plan of salvation, & illustrating mankind's need of Divine mercy and salvation, unattainable by its own efforts.

The first 5 books (Genesis to Deuteronomy) were written by Moses, the great lawgiver of Israel. They are of first importance because they form the basis of all that follows. Herein we learn of the creation of the earth, and of its peopling by animals and mankind. We learn of man's sad fall, and his punishment, and God's loving provision for his redemption; and again of man's failure at the time of Noah. We see the beginning of the Jewish race, in Abraham, and the appointing of them as a 'Peculiar People' to God's service and use—

"For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto Himself above all the nations that are upon the earth" (Deut. 14:2).

We find in these books of Moses the laws which God gave Israel to regulate their national existence, yet which throughout beautifully teach higher lessons of the coming of a Saviour for all mankind, and which make constantly clear the exceeding sinfulness of sin in the eyes of God.

The modern world, in its assumed 'wisdom,' generally questions the writings of Moses. But we will learn that *we cannot have Christ without Moses—*

"If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead"  
(Luke 16:31).

"Beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he (Christ) expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27).

"Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me (said Jesus), for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" (John 5:46-47).

If Moses is not true, then Christ is not true. They stand or fall together.

The next 12 books (Joshua to Esther) show Israel's history for 1000 years. And they are much more than just history. They reveal God's attitude, His desires & principles of action in dealing with people and nations. We learn to love God & reverence Him for all He has done and is doing.

Job illustrates the way God chastens and corrects His true sons and daughters, but does not forsake them; but will purify and refine them as gold.

Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon are messages of Divinely-inspired wisdom, portraying acceptable conduct, character, & disposition.

The prophetic books, 17 in number (Isaiah to Malachi), contain the Divine message for Israel nationally, being warnings of coming judgment because of disobedience to God; but also joyfully revealing a day when Israel and the world shall rejoice in universal blessings and peace. The fulfilment of the prophecies on Israel in their *scattering* throughout the earth assures us of the *bright side* of these same messages, which tell us the day is very near when Christ will return to bless all nations, *in the earth*.

Turning the pages to the New Testament, we find first the 4 Gospel records of the life of Christ (Matthew to John), revealing the manifestation of God in His Son, showing us a Way, or manner, of Life, to develop the Divine character:

"BE YE THEREFORE PERFECT, EVEN AS YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN IS PERFECT"  
(Matt.5:48).

The book of Acts illustrates the practical application of Jesus' command—

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned" (Mark 16:15-16).

We learn from this book what it really means to devote our lives in all that we do to serve God and His Truth—and not ourselves and our pleasures.

The 21 epistles (Romans to Jude), letters to various ecclesias and individuals by the apostles of Jesus, expound the basic truths of the Gospel, the Divine purpose with mankind; and show us the way to a godly life, instructing & directing us in daily activities and associations in relation to each other and to God.

The final book, the Revelation of Jesus Christ, gives a panoramic view of nearly 2000 years of world history, from the days of the Apostles to the establishing of God's Kingdom on the earth. It is shown in signs & symbols, whose meaning and application is learned from other parts of the Bible, & is designed to instruct God's servants concerning world events, so they may discern the Signs of the Times.

While the Bible is composed of 66 books, written over a period of many centuries, by different authors from kings to shepherds, it speaks one theme throughout, unfolding over the ages the eternal Purpose of God. Its very character and unity show it to be not possibly of human origin, and confirm the truth that—

"All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God" (2 Tim. 3:16).

Many of the writers sealed their testimony for God with their blood being shed by their enemies. The only way to account for the Bible is to see—in its composition, and its preservation to our time through the centuries—a supreme guiding Hand, inspiring and controlling the statements of its authors, causing them to be in complete agreement in all their records. It is impossible to account for the Bible in any other way.

The Bible can be understood by the man who seeks God in humble faith without the need of theological or churchly training in colleges or seminaries. Such institutions only produce priests or ministers educated or trained to preach the particular doctrines of their sects; whose textbooks are the products of generations of traditions, rather than the Bible message.

We must not leave, we *dare* not leave, our understanding of Bible principles of salvation to such religious leaders. We must apply *ourselves* to its pages in prayerful, humble petition to God to open our understanding. Personal investigation in this manner will open our minds to the beauties of God's Word and Purpose.

Read the Bible daily and thoughtfully. Use the course of daily Bible readings suggested in the booklet, *The Bible Companion*. Stick to it faithfully.

If there *is* a book containing the revealed will of God and the plan of eternal blessing for man, IT IS THE BIBLE. It has no rivals. If it does not reveal a Way of Life, there is none.

The Bible makes all who sincerely study it, better, happier, and wiser.

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#### QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW OF PRECEDING MATERIAL

1. What is the final and most important purpose in Creation, and in God's revelation in the Bible?
2. What frame of mind should we be in as we approach a study of the Bible?
3. What is our duty once we come to a knowledge of God's purpose?
4. In what way is the Bible different from books of the world?
5. By whom were the first 5 books written? State 3 things we learn from these books.
6. What New Testament evidence do we have for believing the words of Moses?
7. What do the books of Joshua to Esther illustrate?
8. What is the theme of the prophetic books?
9. Of what do the Gospel records speak?
10. What is shown in the book of Revelation?
11. What do we learn concerning the Bible from the fact that it was written over many years by different writers, yet telling a consistent and unchanging purpose?
12. Why can we not leave our religious instruction to church ministers or priests?

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*There is a line, by us unseen, that crosses every path:  
The hidden boundary between God's patience and His wrath.*

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## **Sheep and Wolves**

### LIGHT AND DARKNESS

*"This then is the message we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all"— 1 John 1:5*

#### 1 JOHN CHAPTER ONE

THE apostle John, in this chapter, broadly covers the Truth in its personal aspect of our relationship, or fellowship, with our Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ. Starting with that which was from the beginning, the Word of Life, he goes on to bear witness of beholding and handling that Eternal Life that was with the Father & was manifested to apostles in Jesus Christ; so that we, with the apostles, may have fellowship with the Father and Son, that our joy may be full.

Let us expand a little on these first 4 verses, to refresh our minds on the calling we have been called to. In the beginning, the 'Word, or Logos, of Life.' *Logos*: the embodying of all those things in the plan Deity has with the earth and man upon it—mortals, after a satisfactory probation, exalted to immortality, made equal to the angels, associated with Christ. And, ultimately, the Father 'All in All,' a unity of perfect fellowship.

As we know, the one great essential in this plan was the providing of one bearing the frailties of mortal nature, who—responding in love & perfect obedience to the laws of the Creator—would open the way whereby righteous justice could bestow Eternal Life for obedience, even as disobedience had been subjected to death. In the child born of Mary by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, the Word was 'made flesh and dwelt among us'—John 1: 14.

In the emblems before us, we are reminded how mortality can be clothed upon with immortality: for in the risen Christ is demonstrated resurrection by the power of the eternal Creator. And our minds turn again to the words Christ spoke to the apostles—

"Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have" (Luke 24:39).

Again in John 17:3—

"This is life eternal, that they may know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

'Knowing God' is not just acknowledging there must have been a Creator, a First Cause: none but a fool could deny that—Psalm 14: 1. Knowing God is understanding what He has made known in the Bible concerning Himself, and concerning His Son Jesus Christ; seeing in Jesus the attributes of God personified in flesh. When we have this understanding, and confess it by baptism, we are no longer—

"Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no hope, & without God in the world."

But—

"Now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:12-13).

And so here in 1 John 1 —

v. 7: "If we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, we have fellowship one with another, & the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Truly then our joy is full!

Some may say, "Surely God, if He is all-powerful, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, could have created man perfect in the beginning, and so circumvented the crucifixion of Christ, & the untold miseries and tragedies of man's history."

True, the Creator could have done so, and we could simply answer the question by saying that God in His wisdom chose to do as He *has* done—and shall man's wisdom doubt God's wisdom and prerogative? But such an answer, though true, would not satisfy the questioning mind of such an enquirer. God has planned for this earth to be a place of beauty, with a peace and joy *founded in righteousness*, its ultimate inhabitants harmonizing in this tranquillity and beauty, *able to appreciate to the full* the glories which, when fashioned like the angels, they will reflect to the praise and honour of the wisdom of God.

What God has planned for those that love and obey Him is beyond mortal contemplation or comprehension, even when understanding His purpose. We can see and understand only a little about God now, as if we were peering into a poor mirror—not indeed that Christ who reflects the attributes of the Father is a poor mirror, but in that mortal faculties cannot see deeply & clearly enough to fully comprehend.

Nothing that defiles in any form—thought, speech, action or bodily condition, nothing belonging to darkness—can enter His presence—

"God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all" (v. 5).

Hence the provision of our Mediator: a means for us to approach.

To have created a perfect Creation in the manner of robots would only have been another instance of His creative power, like the vast inanimate Universe. It would have been a mechanical affair, lacking the bond of love and unity between the created and the Creator. The Creator, in His wisdom, made man from dust to a living and wonderful organically-made creature, *having a free will*, able to discern (under God's guidance) between right and wrong, able to choose & seek, to practise and appreciate all virtues of beauty, not only in the scenic sense, but in the characteristic sense of brotherly-kindness, patience, sympathy, long-suffering—in fact, all the qualities of true love.

In creating mankind as He did, & in setting forth divine laws, fashioned in a wisdom-guidance that would give true peace and joy & the bond of companionship in love to those who would choose to be exercised by them, God was setting up the yard-stick, or the means of sorting out suitable material from unsuitable; of manifesting, by freewill in mortal bodies, characters suitable for fashioning into immortal beings who would reflect the glory and honour of their Creator, the attributes of higher intellect, the highest morals, the highest form of love and all goodness; and therefore vessels fit for eternal perfection & association & fellowship in the presence of Deity, Who is Light, and in Whom is no darkness at all.

We see the further wisdom of God in causing the human race to pass through a life-span of probation to His laws, in that such a process enables each to appreciate to the full, the final glories of Eternal Life in the Kingdom of God. It is only by experience we learn to appreciate. As is well known, hunger gives the keenest enjoyment to food, cold increases our appreciation of warmth, sickness makes us thankful for good health, personal trouble deepens our sympathy for others. How little would be our understanding of kindness and love if we had never experienced its comfort when under stress and trial ourselves! How little we think of death until it comes close to us! It is the experience with it & with old age that will give appreciation of Eternal Life, free from corruption, age, sickness and sorrow.

When we combine this understanding with recognition of the creative wonders of the universe, and the Power that ordered and sustains them, and reflect upon the righteous equity of His laws; then surely we must acknowledge God is wisdom, and must put our faith & trust in Him Who is Light and in Whom there is no darkness at all.

Brethren & sisters, we did this when after acknowledging the things concerning the Kingdom of God and His Son Jesus Christ, we passed through the waters, and rose to that New Life, the state John describes—

v. 3: "That which we have seen & heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us. And truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ."

Did baptism forge a bond of fellowship that *cannot* be broken? In vs. 6-7 John makes a stipulation, a necessary requirement for *continued* fellowship, when he contrasts Light and darkness—

"If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the Truth."

"But if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Paul in Heb. 3:14 & onwards, gives one of his many warnings on this aspect of the Truth:

"We are made partakers of Christ, IF we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast UNTO THE END." —& in the following verses he illustrates how many of Israel that came out of Egypt failed to attain to the Promised Rest, because they ceased to believe God's Word by Moses. They listened to a strange voice. Paul sums up:

"So we see they could not enter in *because of unbelief*" (Heb. 3:19)

*"If we walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the Truth."*

v. 8: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us."

By our gathering at this memorial table, we acknowledge the truth of these words. We are sinners, ever in need of forgiveness, though daily we strive to subject this mortal flesh to the decrees of God. But these weaknesses do not necessarily cut us off from Light, or make us walk in the darkness John speaks of in v. 6. The darkness he refers to here is that of unbelief, of having turned from Light to darkness. Paul says:

"Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye Light in the Lord. Walk as children of Light" (Eph.5:8).

The Psalmist expresses what changed us from darkness to Light—

"The entrance of Thy Word giveth Light" (Psa. 119:130).

And John records Jesus praying for those of Light—

"Sanctify them through Thy Truth: Thy Word is Truth" (John 17:17).

Paul links the 'Truth' and the 'Gospel' together (2 Thess.2:13-14)—

"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the *Truth*, whereunto He called you by our *Gospel*, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The Word, the Truth, the Gospel of the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God, are one. It is the understanding of the Word of the Gospel, & our manifestation of belief & acceptance by baptism into Christ, that gives Light and Fellowship. 'Walk as children of Light,' says Paul, and—

"Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph.5:8-11).

John, as we have seen in vs. 6-7, sets the basis of fellowship—

"If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the Truth. But if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

*John defines Light as the necessary bond for Fellowship.* Paul speaks with equal emphasis and clarity and urgency in 2 Cor. 6:14—

"Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And *what communion hath LIGHT with darkness?*"

Surely these scriptures—and there are others as emphatic—teach a clear line of demarcation in fellowship between light and darkness, Truth and error. Christ our Shepherd recorded a warning—

"Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves"  
(Matt. 7:15).

This is from our Shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep of his flock. The foregoing scriptures surely tell us how we must treat wolves. And in John 10, Jesus demonstrates—under the figure of shepherds, sheep, and wolf—the lessons of Light and darkness. The sheep and the wolf are opposed to each other, have nothing in common, *no communion*. Make no mistake of that. A wolf is not a sheep, or part of the flock.

A sheep has the characteristics of chewing the cud & is cloven-hoofed, the identification of a clean animal. The wolf is an unclean animal, ever striving to scatter & kill the sheep. The wolf is a cunning creature, none the less so when apt to quote Scripture as a disguise, as, for instance—

"How think ye? If a man have 100 sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the 99 and goeth into the mountains & seeketh that which is gone astray? (Matt. 18:12).

It is a dangerous and erroneous exposition of this verse to disguise a wolf as a strayed sheep. Some appear to confuse the issue, using the straying sheep aspect as a cover for toleration of a wolf in their midst. It may be made in the spirit of compassion, but it is compassion misplaced, & which exposes lambs & sheep to scattering & death.

Paul in 2 Thess. 3:6 commands that even a brother (a sheep) be withdrawn from, if persistently unfaithful and disobedient—

"Now we command you, brethren, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdrawn yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition (teaching) which he received of us."

In vs. 14-15 he shows how to deal with such an one—

"If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man and *have no company* with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him *not as an enemy*, but admonish him *as a brother*."

We can and must seek this strayed sheep in the admonition to repentance, and so a return to the fold. But how sad our plight if we cannot distinguish between a strayed sheep and a wolf.

When David killed the lion and the bear, intruders into the flock, he showed no mercy, and left an example to be followed by any claiming to be shepherds. The one true Shepherd gave his life to destroy the adversary, that we the sheep might live.

We do well to remember that we are the *sheep*, and that the Shepherd, the one true Shepherd, is Christ; and that his voice still calls to ears attuned & listening—which 'know his voice,' and follow him, not heeding the voice of strangers.

When Christ said to Peter, 'Feed my sheep,' he was not removing Peter from the sheep & making him something different. He was simply making him a leader, an elder, one to guide the flock to the good pasture, the Word of Truth, and to the life-giving waters, in obedience to the voice of the Shepherd. Anyone experienced with sheep knows there are leaders: older sheep who lead the flock to pasture. But can we imagine Peter tolerating a wolf in the flock? Is this what Christ required of him when he said, 'Feed my lambs'?

A wolf is darkness, an adversary to sheep. To condone in any form that a wolf can be tolerated in the flock is tantamount to putting a fleece of disguise on the wolf. How strange we would think it, to see in natural life a shepherd tolerating a wolf in his flock, just warning the sheep about it, but doing nothing to get it out of the fold. Would we be favourably impressed with such a shepherd?

The shepherd may claim not to have run away and left the sheep to the wolf, may make a play of words on not deserting the sheep, but *the presence of the wolf with the sheep demonstrates that he has left the sheep to the wolf*; that he has lacked the courage to CAST OUT the adversary, the unclean & predatory animal; and has shown a willingness to combine Light and darkness in fellowship.

Sheep, at the sign of danger, crowd together in a compact group facing toward that which threatens. Therein lies their defence: a close-knit united flock keeping *out* the danger. True unity, true fellowship, is bonded together by Light. Darkness has no part nor place—

"For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath Light with darkness?"

Because the sheep group together and exclude the wolf, there are those who liken them to hireling shepherds! How illogical, how unscriptural! Firstly, they are not the Shepherd, they are the *sheep*, listening to & *obeying* the voice of the true Shepherd, who tells them that Light has no communion with darkness. They are not cutting off straying sheep: they are keeping the wolves out of the flock—be they Catholic wolves, Protestant wolves, or wolves disguised as brethren.

Quickly reflect on the Truth's history since the day of bro. Thomas. Which kind of wolf has created the greater havoc to the flock? Which is to be mostly feared by the sheep: the obviously outside, or the disguised inside, wolf? Undoubtedly the latter has scattered, torn down, and caused the greatest havoc; has been the greatest danger; has necessitated the greatest vigilance & defence. Yet in removing the wolves from the flock, the sheep are charged with 'fleeing' from them! Should not the sheep flee to safety from the wolves? Should they associate in fellowship with them, and expose their lambs to their fangs?

\* \* \*

There was a time when we were not sheep, were not of the Light, but were:

"Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, without hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12).

In the mercy of the Father, our eyes were opened to the Glad Tidings of the Kingdom and the Name of Jesus Christ. And so by belief & baptism we rose from the waters new creatures, sheep of the sheep fold, Jesus Christ our Shepherd leading and calling us in the pathway of Truth & Life, no longer creatures of darkness, adversaries of Light.

As creatures of Light we must radiate true Light, that it may penetrate the darkness of the fleshly mind of man. We must strive with all our might to *manifest God* in our lives and characters, so that other creatures of darkness, like we were, may be attracted by the divine Light to seek & comprehend the Glad Tidings, & by belief rise from the waters of baptism new creatures, no longer dark and unclean. It is only by this process a wolf can become a new creature, a sheep, able to hear and heed the voice of the true Shepherd, and enter into the flock, & have fellowship with one another & the Father and Son.

Christ our Shepherd, who warned us against false shepherds, false teachers, strange voices, ravaging wolves, gave us this warning too—

"He that loveth father or mother or son or daughter more than me is *not worthy of me*" (Matt. 10:37).

Possibly the upholding of this scripture presents the greatest test in how we respond to true scriptural fellowship. Certainly these words are as applicable to fellowship as to any other doctrine of the Truth.

How great the demands they make on our affection! How pointedly they emphasize the lesson that our Heavenly Father and His Son must have first place in our lives, if we are to have fellowship with them now and in the Kingdom! '*Not worthy of me.*' What crushing & terrifying words to be addressed with at the judgment seat—just for loving our own out of proportion. God *must* be first. These are words of affliction and death: a closed door to fellowship with Christ and the saints in the Kingdom. Surely all must examine self seriously in the light of these words of our Shepherd and Lord. *He meant what he said.*

The serpent beguiled Eve into believing God did not really mean: 'Thou shalt surely die.' Shall we deceive ourselves into thinking fellowship is not really important, as long as we are shouting against the wolf, or arguing with him as he goes about his destructive work in the fold?

Truly in the present probation, sound fellowship is the mode of formation to that ultimate goal held out to us: fellowship with the Father and His Anointed Son in the eternal glories of the Kingdom. How earnest are we in desire for this fellowship? Remember, nothing shall enter that 'defileth or maketh a lie—Rev. 21:27. Surely this is a lesson and example for us today. The teacher of a false doctrine 'maketh a lie,' & is the wolf of darkness, excluded from fellowship; for—

*"If we walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the Truth. But if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."*

We come then to this memorial table today, confessing that when we have done our best at obedience, we are still sinners. But there is a distinction between sinners. There are those who are striving to the limit of their powers, ever seeking improvement and overcoming, & forgiveness through the sacrificial blood. And there are those of darkness, rejecters of part or all of the Gospel; not cleansed by the blood, their feet not in the path of life; no fellowship with the Father and Son.

But what of the sheep? Sadly, there are straying sheep, & though their feet once trod in the pathway of life, some become so dull of hearing that they fail to heed the Shepherd voice, wandering far away from the good pasture of Truth and the Water of Life. Some listen to strange voices, and become the victims of the wolf of darkness. We all tend to stray, but if our Lord is our first love, then our ears are open to the Shepherd, and we return quickly to him with a contrite heart.

This can be illustrated in the case of Judas & Peter. Though both sinned, how different the end! Judas was tempted and drawn away by his own lust, and enticed by silver. And when his lust had conceived it brought forth sin; & sin when it was finished brought death.

Some hours later, Peter denied and disowned his Lord, cursing & swearing. But his quick reaction was to go out & weep bitterly, manifesting a broken and contrite heart. The sin of Peter was a spontaneous one from fleshly weakness, not born of lust. His life afterwards was a living testimony to heeding the voice of the true Shepherd—a manifestation of where his 'first love' lay. To him the Lord entrusted the work of leadership: 'Feed my sheep, feed my lambs.'

Reference was made earlier to how God has ordained a *probation of testing* through response to His divine laws of guidance in wisdom. How we respond is the yardstick, the means of sorting suitable material from unsuitable, determining whether we will experience the ultimate of fellowship in the Kingdom of God.

Basic doctrinal truths are a first priority to be upheld. We cannot bypass one of them. We may be able to expound freely on prophecy, have the ability to develop charming allegories from all verses of scripture, may even claim to do many works in his Name. But if we fail to hold the confidence (essence) of our Faith firm to the end, to uphold first principle doctrines, then we are not upholding that Truth which only can give Light. And only walking in Light can give fellowship.

Eternal fellowship with the Father and Son in the Kingdom! Truly, mortal minds cannot begin to grasp the wonders and joy of it all, the exhilarating perfection of Spirit-energized bodies, with mental capacities that exclude all evil; to be in the immediate presence of Christ Jesus our Lord, to witness his smile upon us, to literally hear his voice, and finally, to come to the stage where Deity will be All in All.

Truly we only glimpse the magnitude of the glory our Father has prepared for those that love and obey Him. Do we really love Him as He requires? Can we rise to the test?—

*"He that loveth father, mother, son, daughter, more than me is not worthy of me."*

The pathway of probation is not easy, and it is narrow; but it leads to the highest & most glorious of all goals: fellowship with the Father and His Son, and the perfect cleansing of our sins and nature.

My brethren and sisters, that Deity condescended to offer us weak mortal creatures eternal fellowship with Himself, expresses a love and mercy whose magnitude we only dimly perceive in awed amazement and grateful humility. But let us never forget that it will become eternal reality *only to those* who strive with all their might to emulate the lesson of obedience manifested by works, as exemplified by him this bread and wine symbolizes: by him who walked in Light, taught and upheld Light, had no fellowship with darkness—and so passed to the right hand and fellowship with the Father Who is Light, and in Whom there is no darkness at all.

*Fellowship:* This is what our life should be all about. In this day of probation it should be patterning our lives, teaching us to walk in Light, that we may know the present joy and bond of fellowship; preparing and instructing us, as John declares (vs. 3-4)—

*"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us. And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, THAT YOUR JOY MAY BE FULL"*  
—R.W.H.

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## **'Christmas' Is Pagan Catholicism**

From a scriptural Children's Magazine of many years ago.  
*"Touch not the unclean, and I will receive you"*—2 Cor. 6:17

DEAR children, it is very desirable you should know about the origin of 'Christmas,' so please read this article carefully. The word 'Christmas' does not occur anywhere in the Bible. It is made up of two words: 'Christ' and 'Mass.'

We all believe and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. We know there can be no everlasting life for those whose sins are not forgiven for his Name's sake.

But the 'Mass' is a Roman Catholic Church institution, and *we will have none of it*. As our Hymn 75 has it—

"We other priests deny, and laws and offerings, too:  
None but the Priest on high the mighty work can do."

Christmas Day, we are told, is the festival held to commemorate, or keep in mind, the day of Christ's birth. Was Jesus born on Dec.25? The Bible nowhere tells us the day of the week, the day of the month, or the time of the year when our Saviour was born. Indeed, it is the opinion of many learned men that Jesus was not born in winter at all.

Nights in Palestine are cold and piercing from December to February, and it is not the custom for the shepherds to watch the flocks in the open fields later than the end of October.

Neither is it likely that any government would order its people to travel long journeys (men, women, and children, even babies in arms) to their own cities to be taxed in the depth of winter. You will remember Jesus' words to his apostles—

"Pray that your flight be not in the winter" (Matt.24:20).

Snow occasionally falls even in Jerusalem itself. The last week in December is said to be the height of the rainy season.

In past ages, Christmas has been held in January, April, May, and December. There is no Jewish festival that corresponds with Christmas: neither was it kept in the very early days of Christianity. The French writer Ernest Renan has said—

"Religious festivals do not come into existence all at once, springing suddenly from the brain of some apostle or enthusiast."

He should have said '*Church* festivals.' His remark applies very well to Christmas, for here we have the growth of ages. *It is a Church festival, NOT a Bible one.*

On the other hand, the 3 feasts of the Jewish year—Passover, Pentecost & Ingathering—*did* 'spring' into existence, at the Word of the Lord (Exod. 23:14-17).

In 273 AD, the Emperor of Rome instituted a festival in honour of Mithra, the Sun-God, on Dec. 25. This was called the 'Birthday of the Unconquerable Sun.'

Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, applied to Pope Julius I to fix the date [of Christ's birth]. The doctors of the Roman Church were called together, and Dec. 25 was agreed upon. After being adopted by the Western Church, it gradually passed on to the Eastern, and became universally accepted. Naturally, as the day coincided with the Roman pagan feast of Saturnalia, and was connected with the Celtic Beltan, many heathenish customs remained attached to it.

Two centuries later, Pope Gregory wrote to the 'Christians,' after they had begun to establish themselves among the Gauls, that—

"To cut away everything at once in these uncultured natures is an impossible undertaking. Whosoever aims to gain the summit must mount by steps, and not by bounds."

In another letter, he writes:

"Take care not to destroy heathen temples. Destroy only the idols, and replace them by relics."

And so it has come about that many heathen and Druidical customs have survived to our own day. *Most of the customs connected with Christmas appear to be either heathen in origin or IDOLATROUS in connection.*

The Gauls used to light fires in honour of their god Belen (evidently Baal) at all the great feasts. The words Yule & Noel are derived from Gallic dialects in which the sun is called Hoel, Heol, and Joule.

Two customs were very common among the northern tribes of Europe—sun worship & human sacrifice. The first probably accounts for the wax candles, & the latter for the dolls, so much in use for presents at Christmas. At the Roman feast of Saturnalia, wax tapers & clay dolls were the presents most commonly given.

The Yule log is a link with the very distant past when our Scandinavian ancestors worshiped the sun & burned fire sacrifices to the sun-god Beil. This is the present Halloween bonfire; & the Yule log is their symbolic fire wheel.

The waits & carol-singing are a remnant of the Church music of the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages.

The boar's head seems to go back to hoary antiquity. It was fabled that Adonis (the Tammuz of Ezek. 9:14) was killed by the tusk of a wild boar. On Christmas Day the continental Saxons offered a boar in sacrifice to the sun.

The mistletoe was held peculiarly sacred by the Druids. It was cut with the greatest ceremony on Jan. 1, with a silver sickle.

The Christmas Tree was common in ancient Rome, where a fir tree was used.

On St. Nicholas' Day cattle were slaughtered to save feeding them all through the winter months. This brought in money, so the children were treated with nuts & dainties. From St. Nicholas we get Santa Claus, the mythical toy & doll provider for children. Santa Claus is sometimes represented as an old man with a long white beard, driving a reindeer sledge. Sometimes he's identified with Knight Rupert, and sometimes with Robin Goodfellow. Sometimes he is represented as an ugly dwarf called Crampus, who runs away with naughty children.

Perhaps, dear children, I have said enough to show you *there is nothing Biblical about Christmas AT ALL.*

Now please read Gal. 4:10-11—

"Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. *I am afraid of you*, lest I have bestowed upon you LABOUR IN VAIN."

—Christadelphian Children's Magazine, May-June, 1914

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A sister in Texas has for rent, along side of her own home, a large, completely-furnished 3- bedroom, 2-bathroom house trailer, with roomy closets & drawers. It has 3 air conditioners, cooling the large living room, kitchen-dining room, & 1 bedroom. She would very much prefer to rent it to Christadelphians, and is offering it to the brethren & sisters before seeking other tenants. She would enjoy Christadelphian companionship. Rent is very reasonable. It is about 20 miles from Lampasas ecclesial hall. If interested, please contact her as soon as possible: Sis. (Mrs.) Mary Cooper, Route 1, Box 49, Lometa, Tx 76853, phone (512) 752-3468.

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*WE create our own unhappiness by desiring what it would not be good for us to have, or what God in His love & wisdom does not see fit to give. If we truly believed that 'ALL things work together for good to them that love God,' we just could not be unhappy. Happiness is contentment with reality, & harmony with God.*

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## **Current Events Fulfilling Prophecy**

**NEW COLD WAR?** Scarcely year ago, Carter was rejecting his critics' 'inordinate fear of Communism,' & ridiculing them. Latest crisis in Africa has brought him to a different line. How are US & its allies to cope with strong Soviet-Cuban campaign in Black Africa? Three years ago, Cubans helped set up Marxist regime in Angola. Last year they helped Ethiopia drive the Somalis out of Ogaden. Now they're helping Ethiopia in attack on Eritreans. Castro has 43,000 troops in at least 14 African nations.

Carter's advisors are divided: Vance thinks Russia is just reacting to opportunity; Brzezinski believes Russia has grand design for Africa & Mideast. In addition to seizing commanding position on rim of the crucial oil routes, their goal is to gain access to warm waters of Indian Ocean, a dream that goes back to czars.

Carter is dismayed that Russia is widening its influence in Africa, & surprised that he has so little luck in persuading even moderate African leaders to take a strong stand against the Russians & Cubans in their midst. In dealing with African nations, the Communists have advantages over the West: they are untarnished by the history of African colonialism. Russians are free to identify themselves unambiguously with the African liberation movements. US can rarely do this because of its close relations with the former colonial rulers. (Tm 6:5)

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Tensions between US & Russia are at highest level since detente began. A systematic Soviet challenge to Carter: 1) Escalating military involvement in Africa; 2) Mammoth military build-up; 3) Harsh sentences against civil rights leaders in Russia; 4) Bugging of US Embassy in Moscow. Brzezinski says:

"Russia is engaged in a sustained & massive effort to build up its conventional forces, to maintain a vitriolic worldwide campaign against US, to encircle & penetrate Mideast, & to stir up racial difficulties in Africa."

He is convinced Russia is exploiting US's post-Viet paralysis of will to mount a global expansion drive. What US has done so far is unlikely to deter Moscow from further adventures in Africa. In his 'tough-talk' policy toward Russia, Carter's being challenged openly by his own UN Ambassador Andrew Young. (USN 6:12)

\* \* \*

In his 16 months in office, Carter has a fluctuating record regarding Russia, & has failed to take action to let the Russians know how far they can go. In last few years, US & its allies have watched with alarm—but little response—as Russia built up its armed forces & its ability to project its power around the globe.

NATO now finds itself badly outgunned, & many fear Russia means either to launch a nuclear war or crush West Europe in a conventional attack. And Russia's new arsenal has given them a new ability to project their military power to distant corners of the globe. US is now outnumbered 5-to-1 in tanks, 4-to-1 in artillery pieces, & 3-to-1 in subs.

Soviet military doctrine on how to use this power makes frightening reading. Their book, 'Military Strategy,' asserts: "A third world war will be a missile & nuclear war . . . Entire nations will be wiped of face of the earth." But they insist they can survive & win a nuclear conflict. In conventional warfare, their aim is to overwhelm their enemies in one lightning stroke.

Considering the awesome size of the Soviet military machine, West analysts conclude that Russia means to attack NATO. Attainment of nuclear parity with US has ended Russia's oldest nightmare: strategic encirclement by the capitalist powers. That & the diminished US world role in aftermath of Vietnam & Watergate, has emboldened Kremlin leaders to pursue their 'historic mission.'

Brezhnev is 71, & in poor health. The real power struggle for succession will be among relatively younger men. Each of these contenders will need support from the armed forces, which may compel them to take a hawkish stand.

Carter has launched a campaign for easing of Congressional restraints on his freedom of action in foreign affairs, but congressmen in both parties think he doesn't know what he's doing. He's getting very tough with the Russians, but only verbally: the deeds are missing. The worst problem, as seen from Europe, is how his hands are tied by Congress. (Nwk. 6:12)

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Week of tough talk: US-Soviet relations worsen. SALT talks stalled. NATO leaders plan build-up of forces. East-West relations lowest point in years. Russia in no mood to budge. They're not backing down an inch.

Carter attacks on Russia are major policy change: since entering office, he has tried amiable cooperation. Instead of reciprocating, Moscow got bellicose.

NATO plans to spend an extra \$80 billion in next few years. Carter reaffirmed US determination to defend Europe, with nuclear weapons, if necessary.

NATO sidestepped serious problem of hostility between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus. It's a serious menace to NATO's east flank, perhaps to Alliance's future. It's a terrible wound. Making it worse is Congress' embargo on weapons to Turkey, which, says Carter, has driven a wedge between US & Turkey & 'very seriously shaken NATO's cohesiveness.' (Tm 6:12)

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Seldom in recent years has US President denounced Russia in such a fashion. Carter said: "Russia can choose confrontation or cooperation: US is adequately prepared to meet either." He spoke scornfully of Russia's human-rights abuses, its inferior standard of living, & its inability to feed its own people.

Amid all the rhetoric, exiled Soviet author Solzhenitsyn issued his own call. In contrast to Carter, who spoke of the American way of life in evangelical terms, he warned West had lost moral courage to compete with Communism. (Nwk 6:19)

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Solzhenitsyn said, in speech at Harvard: "The Western world has lost its courage, in each party, each country, each govt., & in UN. From ancient times, decline in courage has been the beginning of the end.

"If I were asked if I could recommend the West as a model to Russia, I would have to say No. The Western system in its present state of spiritual exhaustion is not attractive. How did the West decline from its triumphal march to its present sickness? By Nationalistic humanism: repudiation of a Higher Power above man; worship of man & his material needs." (Tm 6:19)

\* \* \*

Carter's latest warnings are causing little more than ripples in Russia's serene outlook. Russia feels Carter can't—or won't—follow words with actions. They believe West allies disagree on his militant approach. They consider Russia strong enough to meet any US challenge. (USN 6:19)

\* \* \*

Carter's sudden & enthusiastic interest in China will continue & intensify. It has less to do with China than Russia. With SALT stalled, & with an increasingly aggressive Soviet policy in Africa, US is groping for a credible political weapon against Russia. Overture to Peking seems to be only weapon available.

US has nothing much more to fall back on. It has no stomach for military action either in Africa or against Cubans closer to home.

But is the 'China card' worth the effort? Prospect of 'normal' relations with China is useful only as long as it remains prospective. Real normalization on basis of what China would demand probably goes beyond what US could deliver. Chinese demand that not only diplomatic recognition, but economic & military aid to Taiwan by US must end. (BsWk 6:12)

**IT SEEMS like Munich all over again, but with one great difference: then there was a mighty & self-confident US outside of the conflict zone who could, in safety, gird for war while Britain held the foe at bay. And Hitler, for all his might, had absolutely nothing to compare with what Russia has—apart from Russia's vast hinterland which makes her virtually impregnable, as both Napoleon and Hitler discovered.**

**Today US is on the front line, & there are no backups to support her. She is woefully unprepared for the conflict that is inexorably closing in, her navy a shrunken ghost of that which once totally dominated the world's seas, and her army a sad shambles.**

**Russia has 4 million under arms, & a vast reserve, based on conscription & universal military training. US has 2 million, with only 300,000 reserves, and no conscription apparatus or national military training. US News says (6:5)—**

"With the abolition of the draft, the Selective Service System has been dismantled. It would take 110 days to rebuild the system before the first inductee could be drafted, & another 40 days before 100,000 soldiers could be conscripted. By the time they were trained & ready for combat, the war in Europe would either have been lost, or gone nuclear. All of this has alarming implications. If other nations believe we can't fight, they are tempted to flout our interests; & that is what they are doing."

**They ask what can be done, but they have no real answers. They recognize that US in its present mood would not accept peacetime conscription or universal military training, & in this present jungle world, those are the only practical solutions to US's peril.**

**Playing politics with Communist China, & betraying free-enterprise Taiwan, to whom US has made solemn promises of alliance & support (when it suited them), hardly seems a course worthy of a great nation, & is a ploy we believe US would have had too much self-respect to sink to up to a very short while ago. But fear paralyses conscience, and necessity knows no law. It will hardly be much of a confidence-builder among other trustful & dependent allies who can foresee themselves becoming expendable, & being thrown to the wolves.**

**Solzhenitsyn has put his finger on the cancer that is devouring the West. An enforced fugitive from Russian oppression, he is appalled by the shallow, empty, blatant, soulless, selfish tinniness of the West's way of life—the masses wholly oblivious in their crude pleasure-seeking & lust-fulfilling, as Russia girds for world conquest. His words make very thought-provoking reading, especially in the light of both history and prophecy.**

**ZAIRE AFTERMATH.** Still being pieced together is bloodiest slaughter of Europeans in modern African history. Up to 200 Whites—men, women & children massacred by Black guerrillas: 70 more missing.

Surprise attack by 2000 guerrillas at dawn May 13. Many had previously infiltrated in civilian clothes. The 2300 Whites in Kolwezi barricaded themselves in their homes for the next 6 days, while invaders ran amok. Many Zairian soldiers deserted when the rebels took over. The agony ended May 19 when 600 French troops parachuted into Kolwezi. Many of the rebels fled.

Less than dozen of the 2300 Whites chose to stay. Kolwezi almost overnight became ghost-town, a rubble filled wreck void of food, water, power, or sanitation.

The carnage stirred fears among Whites in other Black countries. "Little sand is left in the hourglass in this part of the world," said a White leader in Namibia. "The tiger of violence is loose in Africa."

The rebels clearly gained 2 goals: they forced the Whites to flee, & they crippled Zaire's nearly bankrupt economy. Shaba's copper mines are among richest in world, & are main source of Zaire's income. Shaba also produces 60% of world's cobalt. White engineers are needed to run the mines. (USN 6:5)

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Carter said Cubans trained & equipped attackers. Prisoners said Cubans trained them in Angola & accompanied them on raid. Fleeing guerrillas left trail of death & devastation. No one knows when vital copper mines will be back in operation. Strong doubt that Zaire's inept army can protect region. African peace-keeping force taking shape: Moroccan troops already there. So far, US policy on Russian threat in Africa mostly a matter of jawboning. (Nwk 6:5)

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Kolwezi was a city of the dead: streets littered with unburied bodies rotting in the hot African sun. When the French paratroops arrived, the rebels faded into the bush. The retreat was well organized. They took 350 stolen vehicles. Re-fuelling vehicles came from Angola: the retreat had a holiday air.

Most surviving Whites said they'd never go back. A White exodus would mean economic disaster for Zaire. Even if all Whites could be lured back, it could take up to year to get mines working again. If the Whites aren't returning, the rebels almost certainly will. (Tm 6:5)

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In its 18 years of corruption, misrule & tribal enmities, seldom has Zaire's future looked so grim. Rebels are gone, but damage will take long to repair.

For US, most pressing & stormiest question is nature & extent of the Russian-Cuban role in the attack. Though Mobutu is as inept as he is ruthless, Western govts. see no alternative to him in sight.

Last week, US planes began flying the French troops out & replacing them with Moroccans as first units of a peace-keeping command. But a Western diplomat in Zaire says, "If the European troops leave, the remaining 12,000 Whites in Shaba will leave too." For Mobutu & Zaire, that would be disaster. (Tm 6:12)

\* \* \*

US & West allies now turning to the larger problem: how to save Zaire from itself. US, France, Britain, Belgium, W. Germany, Japan, Saudis & Iran meeting to devise economic rescue plan. Bankrupt Zaire's debts already \$3 billion, & its chief source of revenue, the copper & cobalt mines, will be closed for months.

US is fully aware of African criticism of the Western role in Zaire; & of the danger that—if they create a pro-West African 'peace-keeping' force, Russia & Cuba may respond by assembling a radical African military power capable of causing great trouble in Rhodesia and other hot spots.

Rampant corruption has grown worse & worse during Mobutu's 12-year rule. It's doubted if many around him are concerned with anything other than filling their pockets. In return for saving him again, West is determined to insist on social & economic reform. But Mobutu in an interview last week said, "We'll accept aid, but we won't accept involvement in our internal affairs." (Tm 6:19)

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Belgian Prime Minister Tindemans said last week: "Africa is the prime target in the planetary conflict. There is a Soviet grand design. If Europe's sources of raw materials fall under control of Marxist regimes which give Russia air & naval facilities, then Europe will be 'Finlandized'."

Another embarrassment for US was the boast by Rhodesian guerrilla leader Nkomo [whom US supports] last week that his troops are being trained by Cubans. Also last week, Tanzania's Pres. Nyerere defended Russia's policies in Africa, and said US was dominated by hysterical voices.' (Nwk 6:19)

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The destructive invasion of Zaire by Cuban-trained, Russian-armed rebels has forced Carter & Congress to rethink US policy. Carter's right when he complains that Viet-born restrictions by Congress tie his hands. But immediate problem is not congressional restraints but Carter's lack of a coherent policy. His policymakers are deeply divided. Brzezinski thinks the Russian-Cuban incursion into Africa is major threat; Andrew Young denies there's any real problem. (BsWk 6:12)

**MORE & more, the Zaire invasion is seen as a vast victory for the Russian policy in Africa, & a portend of the doom of the West there. How easily a handful of Russian-armed invaders paralyzed Zaire's prime industry & source of income, & sent the Whites fleeing in terror! It was easy because they merely had to puncture the shell, & expose the inner rot.**

**Europe and (to a lesser but still major extent) US depend upon the raw materials of Africa, as they do on Mideast oil. And they have to support men like Mobutu to maintain their increasingly precarious hold on these raw materials & minerals.**

**Russia, of course, is 'just as bad' in its callous support of such murderous creatures as Uganda's Amin & Ethiopia's Mengistu. But when the Black Africans are faced with choice between 2 'just as bads,' they naturally lean to the side that promises them (& delivers) active support toward complete elimination of White govt. power in Black Africa.**

**BEHIND THE SCENES IN AFRICA.** Roland Rowland is head of the London-based conglomerate Lonrho, one of Africa's biggest commercial empires, with vast investments not only in Rhodesia, but mineral concessions, sugar & tea plantations in Malawi; textile mills in Ivory Coast; newspapers, copper mines, breweries in Zambia; coal, platinum & copper mines in So. Africa. It has diversified far beyond Africa, with 100,000 employees in 600 subsidiaries in 43 countries.

Rowland has favoured friends: both among the leaders involved in Smith's 'internal settlement' & among the Patriotic Front leaders who are fighting them.

Rowland has been funnelling money to Nkomo, co-leader [with Marxist Mugabe] of the Patriotic Front. Nkomo admits the Cubans are training his forces.

Last September, Rowland flew Smith in a Lonrho plane to meet with Zambia's Kaunda. Meanwhile, Lonrho's Rhodesian subsidiaries were supplying easy credit to followers of Rev. Sithole, one of the 3 Black leaders ruling with Smith. Sithole followers, once known to be virtually penniless, have bought expensive houses & farms, & ride around in Mercedes cars, that younger Africans describe sardonically as 'Lonrhobiles.'

Tanzania's Pres. Nyerere is upset with Rowland's maneuvering in Rhodesia, & is nationalizing Lonrho's 18 affiliates in Tanzania. He hoped other Black African countries would follow his lead. No such luck. Zambia's Kaunda, whose country's ailing economy might collapse without Rowland's enterprises there, made it clear that he would not touch Lonrho. (Tm 6:19)

**THIS is very revealing. It give a tantalizing little glimpse of how little we are really being told of what is actually going on; of the shakiness of the Black dictators like Kaunda, dependent on White wheeling-&-dealing; of the pervasiveness of corruption & the power of gold.**

**In the face of these things, the Russians can make a good case to the common African man for a complete & violent house-cleaning, & a rebirth in Russia's image.**

**AFRICA'S GENDARMES.** Zaire is only one of a growing number of African nations where France has deployed its forces. In addition to those who drove the rebels out of Shaba in Zaire, French soldiers are fighting in Chad's civil war, and French planes & pilots are supporting Mauritania in the war over West Sahara. France also has garrisons in 4 other African nations. The troops help protect her interest in raw materials, including copper in Zaire & uranium in Chad.

Libya-backed rebels threaten the pro-West regime in Chad (south of Libya, beside Sudan). A victory for the rebels would endanger nearby Niger (also south of Libya, west of Chad), and further the ambitions of Kaddafi to unite the Saharan peoples across north Africa into a radical Muslim nation.

Algeria's bitter fight for control of the former Spanish Sahara (on the Atlantic coast below Morocco) endangers 2 staunch French allies, Morocco & Mauritania. [Getting Spanish Sahara would give Algeria an Atlantic coastline].

Djibouti, the former French colony at the mouth of the Red Sea borders on the battlegrounds in the Horn of Africa, & guards the vital oil lanes to the West. It is of great strategic importance: France has troops there. (Nwk 6:5).

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France emerging as the 'gendarme of Africa.' Giscard believes only France has the will to block the expansion of Soviet-Cuban influence in Africa. If Marxists gained control of Chad, they could forge a dangerous link between Russian-backed Arab lands in North, as Libya, & south areas where Russia is strong, as Angola.

Not many years ago, Africans looked to US to frustrate Soviet intrusion into Africa. Vietnam changed all that. US reluctance to challenge Russia these days explains Africans' reservations about US's will. (USN 5:22).

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France reported about to offer arms and aid to Somalia, bordering Djibouti on the Horn of Africa, & threatened by Russia/Cuba-supported Ethiopia. Somalis charge US with abandoning them after promising support. (BsWk 5:22)

**IT IS very interesting to note France's growing activity in the fiercely boiling African pot: especially so when we recall that earlier this year, the Socialist-Communist alliance was expected to take over the reins of France in the recent elections, with Communists demanding & being promised key positions (as police & defence) in the new govt. (From which, of course, as they did in East Europe in the late 40s & early 50s, they would soon move to consolidate their grip, & oust the simple Socialists on whose coattails they had risen to power).**

To everyone's surprise, the Socialist-Communist alliance did not win the recent election, mainly because they fell prematurely to bickering among themselves over division of the anticipated spoils. But the threat is still there: & they may be wiser next time.

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## First Himself

### CHRIST NEEDED AND WAS SAVED BY THE CLEANSING EFFICACY OF HIS OWN PERFECT SACRIFICE FOR SIN

This is the key and pivot of the Divine Plan of Salvation, which condemned and repudiated the whole constitution of sin in all its ramifications, and manifested—in the voluntary, loving, submissive, obedient sacrifice of Christ—God's holiness and righteousness and justice, and thus laid a foundation of mercy.

This is the heart of sound Christadelphian teaching from the days of our pioneers. Some are losing sight of it. Loss of this has been the crux of most error.

The following Ten Point Statement, with which older Christadelphians will be familiar, was put forward in the 1940s by the side which had previously been unfaithful on this issue, with the promise that it would be made the foundation of a sound reunion. Unfortunately, the fulfilment of this promise did not materialize. When reunion momentum was achieved on its basis, this statement was jettisoned because it was objected to by some on the erring side. We do not say there was subterfuge. The promise may have been sincere when made, but it was found that it could not be delivered: —

#### FOUR ERRORS TO BE REJECTED

1. That the nature of Christ was not exactly like ours.
2. That the offering of Christ was not for himself, and that Christ never made an offering for himself.
3. That Christ's offering was for personal sins or moral impurity only. That our sins laid on Christ made him unclean and accursed of God, and that it was from this curse and this uncleanness that Christ needed cleansing.
4. That Christ died as a substitute. That is, that he was punished for the transgression of others, and that he became a bearer of sin by suffering the punishment due for sins.

#### SIX STATEMENTS OF TRUTH TO BE RECEIVED

1. That death came into the world extraneously to the nature bestowed upon Adam in Eden, and was not inherent in him before sentence.
2. That the sentence defiled him (Adam) and became a physical law of his being, and was transmitted to all his posterity.
3. That the word 'sin' is used in 2 principal acceptations in the Scriptures. It signifies in the first place 'the transgression of law,' and in the next it represents that physical principle of the animal nature which is the cause of all its diseases, death, and resolution to dust.
4. That Jesus possessed our nature, which was a defiled, condemned nature.
5. That it was therefore necessary that Jesus should offer for himself for the purging of his own nature, first, from the uncleanness of death, that *having by his own blood obtained eternal redemption for himself*, he might be able *afterward* to save to the uttermost those that come to God by him.
6. That the doctrine of substitution—that is, that a righteous man can, by suffering the penalty due to the sinner, free the sinner from the penalty of his sin—is foreign to the Scripture, and is a dogma of heathen mythology.

*These are the teachings of bre. Thomas & Roberts—amply shown in recent Bereans.*

Let us remind ourselves, also, of these clauses of our Statement of Faith:

V—That Adam broke this law, and was adjudged unworthy of immortality, and sentenced to return to the ground from whence he was taken — a sentence which defiled and became a physical law of his being, and was transmitted to all his posterity.

VIII—That these promises had reference to Jesus Christ, who was to be raised up in the condemned line of Abraham and David, and who, though wearing their condemned nature, was to obtain a title to resurrection by perfect obedience, and, *by dying, abrogate the law of condemnation FOR HIMSELF*, and all who should believe and obey him.

(The fact that it says 'by dying he abrogated the law of condemnation for himself AND all, etc' shows that what is here meant is not a mere dying and passing out of something, but a sacrificial, cleansing death).

XII—That for delivering this message he was put to death by the Jews and Romans, who were, however, but instruments in the hands of God, for the doing of that which He had determined before to be done, namely, the condemnation of sin in the flesh, through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all, as a propitiation to declare the righteousness of God, as a basis for the remission of sins. All who approach God through this crucified, but risen, representative of Adam's disobedient race, are forgiven. Therefore, by a figure, his blood cleanseth from sin.

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Christadelphian

**One Hundred Years Ago**

Magazine, Aug., 1878

**ALL of Britain, & especially the Brotherhood & the Jewish community, were agog over the British 'annexation' of the Asiatic Turkish Empire. Dreams of expanded Empire and rich commerce were interwoven with religious excitement, almost awe, at having fallen heir to all the storied lands of the Bible, with their histories, & associations, and great monuments of past greatness. The British Empire was at its peak, the British were incredibly active all over the world, and this promised to be Britain's crowning glory. If the then immensely popular & charismatic Disraeli had maintained his popularity, doubtless this would have become a permanent reality, & the Jews would have streamed back to become the power-centre of a rejuvenated Mideast. But—like Moses—it was 40 years ahead of the Divine Plan. Bro. Roberts—**

"The news this month is aptly described by a sister as 'good tidings to Zion.' Another says it's almost too good to be true. A brother says it's like a dream.

"England, besides obtaining possession of Cyprus, has openly thrown the shadow of her military & administrative protection over the whole of Asiatic Turkey, & consequently over the Holy Land as well . . .

"The general result is to establish peace on the basis of a partition of Turkey, & under circumstances to bring England & Russia face to face on the remaining Turkish frontiers, as the principals in the next outbreak of war in these parts.

"These arrangements are now part of the law of Europe, & their combined result is to make visible the mud banks at the bottom of the Euphrates, whose waters, it may be, are now sufficiently dried to prepare the way of the kings of the east."

**There are 9 pages of Signs in small type, mostly newspaper quotations. A few of them—**

*Berlin National Zeitung*: "With the occupation of Cyprus, the Turkish question enters a new & dangerous stage. The next act in the drama is to be played in Asia. An early conflict there, between Britain & Russia, is inevitable."

*St. Petersburg (Russia) Gazette*: "The Congress of Berlin has not cemented peace, but merely signed a simple truce which will serve only to prepare for a new struggle on a gigantic scale. The Russian nation will never abandon its cause: it will remain under arms till the occasion presents itself for resuming the incomplete work. The object of the next war will be the extirpation, not only of Turkish domination, but of English influence."

*Daily Telegraph*: "Asia Minor will henceforth be under the direct Protectorate of England. No further Russian encroachment will be possible. The position of Cyprus will give England absolute control over the Euphrates valley."

*The Highlander*: "Occupation of Cyprus by Britain under leadership of a Jew! What would Dr. Thomas, author of *Elpis Israel*, say to this? Every Briton must feel his whole being moved: Palestine under Britain's guardianship, & the Jews returning under British protection!"

*Daily News*: "The Treaty is practically an admission of the breakup of the Turkish Empire. The government of the whole of Asiatic Turkey will gradually fall into our hands. We may find ourselves with another Asiatic Empire."

*The Times*: "There is much to fire the imagination in the bond which adds Cyprus to the English crown. The old records of our civilization begin in those lands. British rule will bring capital, and offer a rich field for commercial enterprise. It will enable our ships to be always in the neighbourhood of the Canal. At the same time it makes Britain the practical master of Syria."

*The Gaulois (France)*: "The sensation in Paris is a compound of astonishment, regret, admiration, & jealousy. The Ottoman Empire disappears under the powerful protectorate of England."

*Vienna Presse (Austria):* "Preponderance of English influence in Asia is henceforth secured. Egypt, with the Suez Canal & the maritime road to India; Asia Minor, with Arabia, Syria, & the rich Euphrates districts; Turkey, on both sides of the Bosphorus, together with the road over Persia to the vassal states of Central Asia, are now all under the powerful dominion of Great Britain."

*Liverpool Courier:* "England is not unmindful of her great destiny. She now takes a bold & unhesitating step against the insidious encroachments of Russia in the East. The policy of Russia is to make successive advances south & west, & gradually to creep across England's highway to India."

*Edinburgh Review:* "To save from Turkish pollution the hills of Judea & the plains of Esdraelon—to establish in Palestine & throughout the historic lands of the Bible, a well-ordered government to protect all its varied peoples—that indeed were a mission worthy of a great nation! Does not the thought stir the heart of every Englishman? It is Lord Beaconsfield's master-stroke, a brilliant & magnificent coup, characteristic of the genius of the man."

**It all sounded so wonderful, but it was just a dream. It all hung on the momentum of Disraeli's meteoric star, then brilliant in the heavens. In a year & a ½ he was out of power; in another year he was dead. England had no more leaders with his imperial vision.**

*SALVATION is so wonderful & marvellous & glorious a thing that—if the whole mind is set on it, & the whole life directed toward it, & everything else is put resolutely aside—there can be no unhappiness. Unhappiness is vision-failure.*

## Bible Questions

Complete separate (stand-alone) statements by Christ  
Each dot is a letter ! = command ? = question

- |   |   |                              |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| 1. M . . .                              | 9. Th . . sa . . . .                                | 17. Th .. sa . . . . i.      |
| 2. C . . . !                            | 10. F . . . . m . !                                 | 18. Wha . s . . . y . ?      |
| 3. An . . . .                           | 11. I . i . en . . . .                              | 19. Who . s . . . y . ?      |
| 4. I a . h .                            | 12. S t . . f o . . . !                             | 20. Ta . . . . . , c . . . ! |
| 5. I t . . . . .                        | 13. Wh . . t . . . . ?                              | 21. Fe . . m . I . . . . !   |
| 6. A . . h . . .                        | 14. Ma . . , a . . . . !                            | 22. Co . . a . . d . . . !   |
| 7. We . . n . . !                       | 15. I . i . fi . . . . .                            | 23. Fe . . m . s . . . . !   |
| 8. Ep . . . . . !                       | 16. Co . . a . . s . . !                            | 24. Wh .. wi . . t . . . ?   |
| 25. Pe . . . , b . s . . . . !          |   |                              |
| 26. W . . to . . . . m . ?              | 42. Ha . . y . he . . a . . m . . . ?               |                              |
| 27. Y . s . . th . . I a .              | 43. Th .. h . . . ri . . . . . j . . . . .          |                              |
| 28. Wh . . i . t . . na . . ?           | 44. Wh . . . ha . . y . I . . . h . . ?             |                              |
| 29. Pe . . b . un . . y . .             | 45. Br . . . t . . . h i t . . t . m . !            |                              |
| 30. G i . . m . t . d r . . . !         | 46. Wh . to . . . . . m . c . . . . . ?             |                              |
| 31. Be . . . . t . . m . . . . !        | 47. G . , a . . d . t . . li . . . . . !            |                              |
| 32. Su . . . . y . t . . fa . !         | 48. Fa . . . . , gl . . . . . T . . n . . !         |                              |
| 33. La . . . . . , c . . . f . . . . !  | 49. Ar . . . . , a . . b . n . . a f . . . . !      |                              |
| 34. Gi . . y . th . . t . e . . !       | 50. Ho . m . . lo . . . . h . . y . ?               |                              |
| 35. Wh . . . i . y . . fa . . . ?       | 51. Wi . . t . . b . ma . . wh . . ?                |                              |
| 36. Th . s i . . a . . f . . . . .      | 52. Th . b . . . . . sh . . . r . . a . . . .       |                              |
| 37. Wi . . y . a l . . g . a . . ?      | 53. Ch . . . . . , ha . . y . a . . m . . ?         |                              |
| 38. I w . . . , b . t . . c l . . . !   | 54. B . n . . af . . . . , o . . . b . . . . . !    |                              |
| 39. Wo . . . , be . . . . t . . s . . ! | 55. Th . . t . . d . . . . , d . q . . . . . !      |                              |
| 40. St . . . . . fo . . . t . . h . . ! | 56. Wh . . d . . M . . . . co . . . . . y . ?       |                              |
| 41. Ta . . y . a . . t . . s t . . !    | 57. E . . . , E . . . , I . . . s . . . . . . . ?   |                              |
|   | 58. Fr . . . . , wh . . . . . a . . t . . c . . . ? |                              |

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Australia subs (\$4.00) to bro. Ray Hodges, 2 Emily St., Esperance, W. Australia 6450

