

The Berean Ecclesial News

A newsletter devoted wholly to the Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial welfare, with the object of providing ecclesial news and information of fraternal interest to the Brotherhood.

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God Willing, The Berean Ecclesial News will be published monthly as an avenue of providing information of ecclesial interest to the Brotherhood. Ecclesial news and correspondence, Fraternal Gathering notices, special activities and upbuilding exhortations are welcome. We hope this effort will upbuild and prepare us in heart and mind for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

ECCLESIAL NEWS

HOLLADAY, Tennessee

Bro. Warren Rankin, 699 White Tail Rd, Holladay, TN, 38341; phone 901-584-3925

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

The Holladay Ecclesia has Sunday School at 9:00 AM and Memorial Service at 10:00 AM. We have had a few visitors during the last year - sis. Brenda Britton and sis. Cindy Hurst and their children, and bro. Tim and sis. Kay Stinchcomb and their children.

We thank bro. Tim for his words of Exhortation. We welcome any who are coming through Tennessee to stop and visit at anytime. We see how the time is short until Christ's return, let us heed the warnings and beware, for the day draweth nigh.

Love in the Truth,

Bro. Warren Rankin, Recorder

BRISBANE, Queensland, Australia

Bro. Ted Mingham, 1 Goodge Court, Birkdale, Queensland 4159, Australia;
 Phone: (011)-617-3245-1971, Fax: (011)-617-3245-1991

We have received notice from the Brisbane Ecclesia that they wish all to correct their address directory for correspondence to their ecclesia. It should be addressed as follows:

Brisbane Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia
 1 Goodge Court
 Birkdale, Queensland 4159
 Australia

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES (To be held God Willing)

LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING..... June 11-13, 1999

Please call or write to: Bro. Rusty Stephen at: 512-556-6771 Box 16A HC3, Lampasas, Tx 76550

RICHARD FRATERNAL GATHERING July 2-5, 1999

Please call or write to: Bro. Dan Jackson at: 306-445-8677 R.R. #1, North Battleford, Sask., Canada S9A 2X3

HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING July 21-28, 1999

Please call or write to: Bro. Curtis Hurst at: 915-985-3868
 Rt 1 Box 40, Mullin, Tx 76864

IN REMEMBRANCE OF HIM

This morning we come together to remember our Lord and Savior in the partaking of the emblems - the focus point and the summit of this gathering. This exhortation is not going to be any new information for you, but it will be a reminder for both myself and for you. Hopefully about why we are here this morning and in preparation of the emblems that are here before us.

This week we have had an excellent week, by the exhortations we have received, the discussion groups that we have had, lectures, comments on the readings - everything has come together wonderfully. We've enjoyed one another's company and had many good visits, both in the tabernacle and on the grounds, and over a lot of good food. Truly some memories were made here this week and now, today, as we travel homeward, we will take these memories with us and share them with those in the ecclesias that we belong to that are not as fortunate as us to be able to be here. Memories are what we treasure the most, especially, at gatherings such as these. We remember from year to year, week to week and day to day.

The thoughts that I have based for this morning are on memories and remembering. These have carried a main theme for me whenever I've been able to speak at gatherings or give words of exhortation and those in my ecclesia will remember hearing these words over and over again. But I find they help me tremendously. And that is, get in your mind this one quote, - "I want to be in the Kingdom of God more than anything else in this world."

I was once told that our life can be like a rocking chair. You move all day, but at the end of the day you have gotten nowhere. The truth can certainly be like this, brethren and sisters. It may seem like we are doing lots, but we have to take stock whether we have gone anywhere at the end of the day.

Throughout the year we have various holidays, both in Canada, the United States, and I'm sure throughout the world. Holidays that are set aside for a reminder of some sort of past event or some holiday that is to take place. New Years is always the remembrance of a new year. There's Easter and Christmas, and of course they remember Christ's birth. Remembrance Day, remembering the war, July 4th, Columbus Day, Birthdays, remembering the birth of a child, Canada Day, Thanksgiving Day, etc. Each day is a reminder of something that was supposed to be phenomenal and fantastic. We are told also in Deut. that we have a day to remember just the same. Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, as not a day, that is our life. We are told of the pleasure this gives Him when we do remember Him. David was famous for this in the Psalms, but he says, "For the mercy of the Lord is from

everlasting to everlasting on them that fear Him and his righteousness unto his children's children. To such as keep His covenant, unto those that remember His commandments - to do them."

The saying that we have associated with remembrance day is where the soldiers that have gone out and fought in the war and died, are remembered. They have a saying on remembrance day, "Lest We Forget." Brethren and Sisters, "Lest we forget." This should be our saying each Sunday as we gather here to partake of the emblems. We ask ourselves the question, "Why are we here? Lest we forget."

If we turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 11, we are reminded of the ever famous chapter and verse where we are commanded to remember him. In verse 23 it says: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." To insure that we would not miss this command, he mentioned this twice, "Do this in remembrance of me."

So how do we remember? How do we show our remembrance of him? If we look today at the professional athletes, we can find the answer. The other morning we had the Hye Run (a 5 kilometer race). And it shows what consistent training can do. Practice is the answer. Athletes are consistently practicing their skills, not only to remember what they have learned, but also to continue learning and to keep in shape. We see baseball players are always practicing their throwing, even between innings. If they strike someone out, they cannot go around the bases. They don't have to do that, but it is constant practicing. Golfers are putting, chipping, and driving. Basketball players are shooting hoops, and runners are always running.

Why should our days in the truth be any different. Are we here to stir up strife or are we consoling, understanding and forgiving? Are we here just because we have to be here? Are we here because we want to be here? Is it habit, or is it need? Verse 28 says in the chapter we just read: "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." That is a very big word in that verse, "Examine." Don't fool yourself, because that is the only person you are fooling.

My purpose of coming here this day to bring these words of exhortation to you was not to come here and preach the truth to you, because I believe we all have it. But it is to build, strengthen, to edify, and to remind us of our high

and holy calling. To remember our Lord, who went thru the various trials and temptations, yet without sin and to remember the finality of his death, which we just read about in Matthew Chapter 27, which Psalm. 22:12 so aptly describes, "Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan. They set me around. They gaped around me, they gapped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hart brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture."

Yesterday, while having supper, we were talking to a brother and sister who were telling me that his father was cutting and pruning trees, and the ladder kicked out from underneath him, and there he hung. Hung on for dear life, because the next step was the ground. He hung there so long and finally dropped as a result of a heart attack. This brother is still with us, but the point is this, Christ also hung on the cross, and I don't know if you realize what hanging can do to a body. These verses show the agonizing suffering of Christ's crucifixion. The suffering of crucifixion was intense, especially in hot climates like Israel or Texas. The hands would have been hanged over the head, nailed to a wood cross. Severe local inflammation, bleeding from jagged wounds, traumatic fever, the grotesque straining of the body and insufferable thirst. The wounds swelled above the rough nails and torn and lacerated tendons and nerves caused excruciating agony. The strain on the heart was tremendous, for the enormous traction on the arms keeps the chest in full inspiration. Breathing was only possible by pressing down to take the weight on the feet and thus raise the body. Muscular cramps and exhaustion finally made this impossible and the victim died.

"Greater love hath no man, than that he laid down his life for his friends." Remember this brethren and sisters as we partake of these emblems. The suffering, for himself and us, that we might have the glorious hope of eternal life. "Do this in remembrance of me." Each and every minute, each and every day, each and every month, each and every year, all our life - we must remember him.

We will all leave here and go our various ways back into the world of darkness, to our jobs, to our schools. And if we can keep in the forefront of our mind, "I want to be in the Kingdom more than anything else in this

world," then we will slowly pattern our life after this saying, and we will slowly pattern our lives after Christ. By reading and meditation of the Word daily, helps to strengthen our morals and our knowledge of his plan and purpose with us and 65 this world. The Bible contains the daily morals that we need and the lessons of life each and every day, and this is why it is important that we read the daily Bible readings each and every day with our children, that they, too, might learn the morals of God.

In everything we see around us, we see the glorious hand of God. The weather that we have had, the health, the food, the flowers, the animals - we heard this in an exhortation, and they remind us of God's glorious beauty. We are reminded of his goodness daily. We know that there is no one that lives and sins not, it says that in the Bible. Yet this is the only way we will ever learn lessons that will shape us on the road to the Kingdom. We have comforting words again from Psalms 103:10, "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." If that is not encouraging words, brothers and sisters, I don't know what is. If we make our goal to assist as many people to the Kingdom, to assist as many brethren and sisters that may be ailing, then we will find ourselves doing what is right in the eyes of our Creator.

We can look around us and see the ever changing world. See the signs that we are told of, happening before our very eyes. These signs should not make us fearful, but rejoice. If we are fearful, I mean, afraid fearful, then we should take stock of our lives and make changes right now.

We have each other in the ecclesia to turn to in time of need. And we have our Heavenly Father in prayer to turn to at all times. Prayer is the most comforting form of meditation that we have, knowing that we are speaking to our Creator. The Bible says, "pray without ceasing," thru good times and bad. "Pray for each other" , we are told in Thessalonians, "Remembering, without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love; and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of God our Father. We give thanks to God always for you all making mention of you in our prayers." Pray that God will remember us in our trials and tribulations. Remembering Christ goes far beyond our showing up here to break bread and partake of the wine. We must follow his example in our daily life and the example to others. Phillipians says in chapter 2:12-16, "Wherefore my beloved, as he hath always obeyed, not in my presence only, but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you by His

will and to do of His good pleasure. Do all things without murmuring and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."

This is Paul's letter to the Phillipians and yet it applies to us this day. He continued later on in chapter 4: "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing: but by every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds thru Christ Jesus. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report; if there be any virtue and if there be any praise think of these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."

"Work out your own salvation." he says, by keeping these things in the forefront of our minds. "Murmuring." is grumbling in Strong's. We are reminded of the children of Israel traveling from Egypt to the promised land. Do we catch ourselves grumbling, because we don't have enough food or water? I doubt it. We could, however, catch ourselves grumbling about the weather, not enough money, grumbling because our parents won't let us do what we want to do, grumbling about how our ecclesia is run or situations handled, our car may be broken, etc. etc. and it goes on. Most things we can change, but for those we can't, we must learn to accept that it is God's will. "Disputing," by Strong's definition is: "discussion by external debate."

We are told to suffer ourselves to be defrauded. We have no reason to get ourselves into a position of external disputes, which are referred to as small matters, usually of opinions. Christ did not dispute, but he humbly showed lessons in a quiet manner. For example, when they brought the woman to be stoned, he stooped down and wrote in the sand, possibly the names of those that had brought her and the sins that they had committed. And he looked up and said, 66 "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone."

We must not gossip about others, as gossip only leads to hurt feelings and possibly leaving of the truth. I wonder, have you ever played that game, its a gossip game. Its not a good game, but it's a game, where you tell the person next to you a story and later on at the end, by the time its makes the circle in the line and you asked what the last person has for the story, that was maybe in relation to the first person that was told, quite

often it is mixed up. We played it one time and the original story was this: There was a man who had a dog named Rover. He took him with him wherever he went. He was offered a lot of cash for him, but he turned it down and they lived happily ever after. This was passed to the second person, the third person and on down the line passed to 14 or 15 people. By the time it got to the end it was like this: There was a man that owned a Land Rover, that got into a crash and he drowned and lived happily in the ever after. Gossip is never the truth and we know that Matthew 18 is the only answer to gossip.

We have been exhorted this week to love one another. We've been exhorted not to offend one of these little ones. We've been exhorted not to give the appearance of evil. You know what God says about the things we need to change and we need not deal with them that long this day. We need encouragement to continue going forth in the straight and narrow path which leads unto life. Psalm 103:2, "Bless the Lord, Oh my soul, and forget not all his benefits." Forgetting not means remembering. He's warning us about the good gifts, which God has given us. God can be forgotten in the very use and enjoyment of His gifts. Are we inclined to forget His gifts that we are so accustomed to receive? Being absorbed with the bounty makes us forget the giver. Being so involved in the pasture, the Shepherd is forgotten. The very plenteousness we receive may impede our union. We need to guard against absorption by outward things that rob us of time. We should pursue the things which strengthen our peace, rooted as they are in the scriptures.

If we more diligently drew waters from the fountains of our savior, our devotion would be a continual current safe against the barrenness of frequent droughts of forgetfulness. To put things in our minds to blossom there is the only way we can remember. And I tell you, the first thing I remember from this week, on Sunday night when we got here, that I locked into my mind, was the critter list. It was so real in my mind that I locked it there and I felt many critters on me that never existed and I know a lot others did too. But this is how much we must feel the truth, brethren and sisters. We must lock it in there and make it so real that you might say, "I want to be in the Kingdom more than anything else in this world" and you want to feel it. Repeat this over and over and soon you will feel the power of mind over matter.

Cameras have flashed all over during this gathering and I noticed before we started our Memorial Meeting everyone was running around trying to get everybody's picture while they were dressed in

their Sunday best, including myself. Remembering our trip is all locked inside this camera now. Everything we did this week we'll take home is inside this. When we get home and we develop the pictures, we will tuck them inside a photo album, which will perform a story of our trip. In fact, all the important things that we have in our life are always kept inside something, as a safety deposit box, our wallets, china cabinets, just think about it, everything that is important is inside. And this is what God and Christ ask us to do with His Words and most importantly with these emblems, which we are about to partake. We must lock these in and remember them in our heart to take them with us wherever we go, whether its our jobs, schools, friends, it doesn't matter. John 6:53 says: "Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."

That's the perfect example. To lock it inside. Meditation of the Words can be done at any time. Again I use the Word from Psalms where he says: "But his delight is in the law of the Lord and in his law cloth he meditate day and night." Day and night - that's all day. Do you meditate on the readings. Did we meditate this weekend or this week on the talks and the exhortations that were given? Did we meditate maybe just on God's beauty and His creations? Discussions that have taken place this week are also healthy and recommended by the Scriptures. In Malachi 3:16: "Then they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name." This week was a perfect example of this Scripture.

Those that thought upon His name, those that spoke often one to another regarding His name. That is how we build ourselves up, that is how we remember, and that is how we lock it in our hearts. We are told that God remembers us if we remember Him in all our conversation, in all our thoughts and in all our actions. We have come here today to remember our Lord and Savior. To remember the goodness of our Heavenly Father for opening our eyes to the life of a saving Word. Let us not waste the little time we have left. Examine yourself today, tomorrow

and beyond. Tell yourself daily, "I want to be in the Kingdom more than anything else in this world." I leave you to meditate upon the Words of this poem:

Lord, keep me. Lord keep me ever on my knees, in posture so to pray. To learn from thee my cross to bear, to tread the narrow way.

Lord keep me ever in God's fear, true son like you to be. In all obedience to God's will, right up to Calvary.

Lord keep me in Gethsemane, to watch to pray to weep. My will, my life to God submit, God's love forever keep.

Lord keep me in true faith to stay a sheep within your fold. Your rod and staff my guard, my guide, your presence to behold.

Lord keep me so that I may be a true brother in your name, called out to spread the Gospel truth, God's Kingdom and your fame.

Lord, keep me ever more, dear Lord, in loving care, that when you come to reign on earth God's glory I can share.

Brethren and sisters, "I want to be in the Kingdom more than anything else ,in this world, do you?"

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Bro. Dan Jackson

AS YE SEE THE DAY APPROACHING

Hebrews 10:25

In this day of terrible apostasy and corruption, brethren and sisters, we must hold fast against bitter opposition and misunderstanding from those around us in the surrounding darkness. The darkness is so intense - like the Egyptian darkness - it can be felt by all who have eyes to see and who walk after the spirit. We have been called that we may be lights in the surrounding darkness. We are collectively the light stand in the earth in these, "times of the Gentiles." We must put forth the clear light of the truth as it is in Jesus, not allowing the lamp to give smoky, uneven, or uncertain light.

We must make sure that the oil in our lamps is the pure, beaten-out olive oil, typical of the Word of Yahweh. For it is His word that must ever be in combustion in our minds. That is the goal and the duty for each of us. We must each actively search out and gather the words of the Deity and think upon them and apply them in our daily walk and conduct before Him. We must ever keep in mind that we are ever in His sight. He is the omnipotent and omniscient! I think of the words of David who said in Psalm 139:1-12,

"O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thy hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."

The world around us, in the darkness, does not really know or understand these wonderful and Divine attributes. They do not care to know. They are willingly ignorant of the Deity, not wanting to retain Him in their thoughts nor caring for the things associated with Him. They revel in their love of pleasure and in their wickedness, totally oblivious of the catastrophic judgments that will sweep them all away as the, "chaff of summer threshing floors." This knowledge of the Deity and of His holy word, if rightly held and applied in faith, is our wisdom. We are told in Proverbs 3:32-33, that the secret of the Lord is with the righteous!

"For the froward is abomination to the LORD: but his secret is with the righteous. The curse of the LORD is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just." 69

As we see the falling away so clearly foretold of in scripture, we need to take sound scriptural counsel. There is much advice there for us, as we know that the Holy scriptures are able to make us, "wise unto salvation." They are, "given by instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Timothy 3:15-17)

We must, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." (1 Thessalonians. 5:21) Paul instructed Timothy to "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep..." (2 Timothy 1:13-14) We are Christ's house, "if we hold fast the

confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Hebrews 3:6) The counsel of Hebrews 10:23 reads: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering..."

In Revelation 2:25-26, the faithful in the Ecclesia at Thyatira were counseled of the Spirit, "Moreover that which ye have, hold fast to the time that I may have come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my appointments to an end, I will give him dominion over the nations..." (Translation by Bro. John Thomas) To the members of the Sardian Ecclesia the command was given: "Be mindful therefore what thou hast received and heard, and strictly keep it, and be changed. If then thou have not been vigilant, I shall come upon thee as a thief, and thou mayest not at all have known at what hour I shall be come upon thee." (Revelation 3:3 - Translation by Bro. John Thomas)

There is comfort in knowing that we will not be tempted above that which we are able. Yahweh will with the temptation make a way of escape. That way of escape is to come to God in prayer through Christ Jesus our Lord. Though the darkness may sometimes frighten, the heavenly Father is there, as is our Savior Jesus Christ to strengthen us in our time of trial and need. Paul said to Timothy in 2 Timothy 1:7-8 "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner..." The apostles were considered to be the filth and off scouring of the world. They suffered the loss of all things for the sake of the Lord.

We have not been called upon to suffer as they. Paul spoke of his trials and sufferings as a light affliction, which was but for a moment. In light of these testimonies, we should look on what we may be called upon to endure as nothing in comparison. We are at the end of the age! We are in the sixth vial period, just before the second coming of Christ! What joy should fill our hearts, knowing that the time is very short. We should lift up our heads in light of all the signs we are seeing around us. The whole creation, "groaneth and travaileth" under terrible weight of iniquity, violence, corruption, and pollution.

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Though these things may be depressing and seem hard at present we know that Joy cometh in the morning after this night of tears, which has been to the people of God. The days of oppression are nearly over for the down-trodden saint community. The time to judge the great harlot that sits

atop the scarlet colored beast is about to arrive. Judgment shall be given to the saints. We have first to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. The approved will walk with the Lord in fine and white linen! They will execute the judgments of the seventh vial, which will bring to pass the complete and irreversible overthrow and ruin of Mystery Babylon The Great. All of the harlot daughters and names and abominations will be utterly destroyed! People will be freed of the lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit. The veil of gross darkness will be removed from off the earth's multitudes. Instead of being blinded in their minds by the god of this world; the light of the glorious Gospel will shine into their hearts! People will be emancipated and rejoice in the truth as it is in Jesus.

Instead of the tyrant shall be the one truly enlightened despot - The Lord Jesus Christ - enthroned upon the restored and firmly established Throne of David! Restored by Divine fiat, that throne will never be overturned or thrown down. Christ will be the absolute ruler over all the earth. The saints will reign with him for a thousand years over the whole earth in righteousness and peace. There will be Glory to God in the highest from among the enlightened tribes of the earth. As a result of this, Yahweh will grant the peace so longed for. The earth will yield her increase, every man sitting under his own vine and under his own fig tree. The mortal, subject populations of earth will live long lives as the days of a tree. "They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." (Isa. 65:22). Christ's word will go forth unto earth's utmost bounds and will be swiftly executed. Truly the nations will be blessed in Abraham and in his seed, Jesus Christ the, "Adon." of the future age.

Let us not faint or be discouraged at the conditions that are in the earth at present. These signs of the times only indicate that the God of heaven is about to send his only begotten and well beloved son to set up that kingdom which will never be destroyed or left to others. A door is about to be opened for us (God willing) into the political heavenlies of the earth. We must keep our eyes on the Middle East, which will be the theater of war. We must watch Russia, as the signs indicate that it may not be long before events bring about radical change. The political and economic instability in all countries can bring about change overnight.

Let us hold fast and not be caught sleeping as we see the day approaching.
Bro. David VanPelt

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

Although we are familiar with the Scriptures, our life and customs are so different than those of the Bible we sometimes come across expressions and customs that do not make sense to us. It is our hope in this series to explain some of the "strange scriptures" that may perplex our western mind.

WATER ON THE HANDS OF ELIJAH

"But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD, that we may enquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said. Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat, which poured water on the hands of Elijah." (2 Kings 3:11)

It is customary to refer to individuals for the thing that they are most noted for. We may talk of Saul, (the first king of Israel) or Mary, (the mother of Jesus.) Elisha was a very great man in Israel, (he received a double portion of the spirit given to the great prophet Elijah.) For this great man to be introduced as the one "which poured water on the hands of Elijah" may seem strange to us. Surely that is not the most notable thing he accomplished in his life so as to be introduced to the king in this way.

What did he mean? When we wash, we put water into a sink that is used only for ourselves, but it was not the custom to fill a sink or basin to wash in as this requires a lot of water. If you used only one basin full of water then the first person using it to wash his hands and feet would foul it for those following. The custom was, and still is today, for the servant to pour water from a basin over the hands or feet of the person they are serving. Thus this introduction is the equivalence of introducing him as the "servant of Elijah."

In the practice of washing another's hands or feet there is the combination of humility and affectionate attention. What introduction could be more fitting for Elisha who followed Elijah with such love and devotion while serving him? Christ gave his disciples, and all of us the clear lesson of humility and affectionate attention to one another's needs, by his example of washing his disciples feet.

"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

If our Master has performed a service so needful and yet so lowly, would Elisha have a problem with the above introduction? I don't think so! But the more important question is, do we have a problem being servants to one another? Are we willing to "spend and be spent" for one another?

"Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto ohe of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

We must consider any labor of love, no matter how lowly or insignificant, as the most important aspect of our life.

LOVE DIGNIFIES ANY SERVICE!

bro. Jim Sommerville