

The Berean Ecclesial News

A monthly magazine devoted wholly to the Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial welfare, with the object of providing Ecclesial news, exhortations, articles and information of fraternal interest to the Brotherhood. Upholding the Truth since 1923.

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B.E.N.'S PAGE

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 up building exhortations are welcome. This is an effort to up build 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

WANAQUE, New Jersey - Memorial, 11:00am; Bro. David Van Pelt, 224 Conklintown Road, Wanaque, NJ 07465, phone 973-831-8815; e-mail, DCVanpelt@aol.com
Greetings of love Brethren and Sisters,

Since our last report we have had no visitors, but hold Memorial meeting each week and strive to hold fast through reading and writing on the truth. This past October we had the pleasure of attending the Northeast Fraternal Gathering out in Detroit. It was such a joy to be with all who gathered there of like precious faith. The exhortations and lecture were excellent and so edifying!

We plan (Lord willing) this next weekend to visit with the brethren and sisters of Boston and attend their Sunday School program. It gives us pleasure to speak with others of the glorious hope set before us where we have opportunity. We appreciate very much the encouraging words and other communication we receive from the brethren and sisters from far and near. We do welcome any and all of like precious faith to visit with us here in Wanaque at any time.

Your brother in Christ,
David Van Pelt

DETROIT, Mich.—S.S. & Study Class, 10am; Memorial, 11:30am, Meeting at 46093 Rex Court, Chesterfield Twp., MI 48051; Bro. Fred J. Higham, 20116 McKishnie, Clinton Twp., MI 48035 810-790-2156; email lhigham@netzero.net

Greetings to all of like precious faith,

We have been blessed with several visitors lately, which started our New Year off with much encouragement for us all.

On January 2, 2000, from the Richard Ecclesia, we welcomed Bro. Terry and Sis. Lisa Readman and Bro. Gordon and Sis. Linda Jones; and from the Canton Ecclesia we welcomed Sis. Elizabeth Phillips. We are grateful to Bro. Gordon for giving us the words of exhortation.

On February 6, 2000, Sis. Elizabeth Phillips returned and broke bread with us again. These visits are most welcome and encouraging and we hope any who can will come and meet with us.

Since the later end of October, we are holding our Sunday school and Memorial meetings at the home of Bro. Tim and Sis. Kay Stinchcomb at 46095 Rex Court, Chesterfield Twp., Michigan.

Many in the Brotherhood are experiencing severe trials in these last days before Christ returns. We are praying for all of you and we need to bond together and help each other hold fast to our faith.

42 The time is short for us to wait and we want to be watching and ready when our Master calls.

Fraternal Gathering Tapes

Tapes of the Hye and Detroit Fraternal Gathering are available from Sis. Pam Naglieri, 13 Old Coach Road, Husdon, NH 03051, 603-598-1745

At this time we would like to take the opportunity to thank you all again for your continued support, help, and contributions to the Berean Ecclesial News Magazine. Our most pressing need is for articles and exhortations from the Brotherhood. These can be sent to us as tape recordings, handwritten, typed or emailed.

Love to you all in the Bonds of the Truth,
Bro. Fred J. Higham

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES (To be held God Willing)

HENGOED FRATERNAL GATHERING March 24 thru 27, 2000
"The Last Days Of Judah's Commonwealth"

Bro. Robert Bennett, 41 Kingcraft Street, Darrenlas, MOUNTAIN ASH,
Mid Glamorgan, South Wales, U.K., 011-441-685-870254 (Bro. Philip Hughes phone)

BOSTON STUDY WEEKENDApril 15 and 16, 2000
"Minor Prophets — Major Prophecies" (Joel, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai & Malachi)

Bro. David Sommerville, 16 Stephen Rd, Westboro, MA 01581, 508-366-7434

CANTON SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAMApril 15 and 16, 2000
Bro. Don Miller, 6695 Carriage Lane, N.Canton, OH 44721, 330-494-7717

LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING..... June 9 thru 11, 2000
Bro. Rusty Stephen, HC3 Box 16A, Lampasas, TX 76550, 512-556-6771

HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING July 24 thru 30, 2000
Bro. Curtis Hurst, Rt. 1 Box 40, Mullin, TX 76864, 915-985-3868

CANTON BAYLOR BEACH PICNICAugust 26 & 27, 2000
Bro. Don Miller, 6695 Carriage Lane, N.Canton, OH 44721, 330-494-7717

CANTON FRATERNAL GATHERING October 7 & 8, 2000
Bro. Beryl Snyder, 4095 Prosway SW, Massillon, OH 44646, 330-837-1956

Books Fot Kenya

There is an ongoing need for books and study material on the Truth for our Brethren and Sisters in the various Kenya Ecclesias. If you have books and material that you can send and would like to help in this effort, please contact Sis. Kaye Yuen for instructions on where to send to each ecclesia and she can let you know where the current need to send is and the best route to send them. She can be contacted at Syuen33550@aol.com or fax (604) 925-0649.

Living In The Kingdom Age

We have to use the well-used phrase: "Had a feast of good things" during the course of this gathering weekend. Our minds have been drawn to the wondrous things which this earth is going to witness at the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. We've considered many aspects of the great millennial age. Our speakers have done a sterling job in stirring up our minds to these great things. They are in themselves basic Sunday school lessons. We've been refreshed by the things that we teach in our Sunday schools, and our young people are here listening to these addresses with us. It is appropriate therefore; that we have a time set aside for these young people here.

When we stop and think about it, children are going to be an integral part of the kingdom age. Brother Len in his address said that the various things that were done in the kingdom in the past will happen in the future. Children will be a part of the future as well. Yahweh is always concerned about our children. In the book of Deuteronomy we have an example of how he was extremely concerned that the children should be taught from the law and commandments. It should be inscribed upon their little minds as they grow up. We consider later on in Israel's history the tragic events that happened when the people sacrificed their children to idols. This is almost unbelievable. And yet in Ezekiel chapter 16 Yahweh says, "*You've slain my children.*" Of course, they were the children of the Israelites, but our Heavenly Father looked at the young ones as His own. A great responsibility then we have with our Sunday school scholars. The Psalmist says, "*Lo, children are a heritage (or an inheritance) of the Lord.*" Yahweh highly regards you Sunday school scholars. He cares for you, just like your parents care for you, so does our Heavenly Father. He is a Father and He cares for you.

We need then to consider our children when we're thinking about the kingdom age. We've been trying to bring our own minds, Brethren and Sisters, to the realization of the coming of the Lord. So often we are caught up with the mundane things of life: our job, the daily chores, the children in school with their homework, that we can academically believe that Christ is coming. None of us would doubt it, yet what we have this weekend is a practical realization of the great events to take place upon this earth. We need to get into their minds that, yes, Jesus is actually going to come back to the earth and establish the most glorious things that our speakers have talked about during this weekend.

A vision: living in the kingdom. There is a verse in the book of Proverbs with which we are all very familiar and it says, "*Where there is no vision, the people perish.*" That's what we've been trying to do for ourselves, isn't it? We've been trying to create that vision in our minds. Brother Thomas in *Anastasis* said, "*The more we understand of what we profess to believe the stronger will our faith be therein.*" We've been strengthened in our faith in these things by increasing our understanding of the glorious things of the kingdom age. So, what is the vision that our young people have? I was actually going to read to the young people an excerpt from the brother's vision in the kingdom. Brother Dan read the first part, Brother Len read the last part; which didn't leave me a terrific amount left, and that's not quite true. But it

Fraternal Gathering Tapes

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only goes to show that we're all thinking along the same lines. I'm talking, of course,
44 about *The Final Consolation* by Brother Roberts. That's a wonderful little

exhortation which I think even the young ones would enjoy reading if they get an opportunity to do so. In it Brother Roberts is trying to do exactly the same as we've been doing this weekend: place ourselves in the kingdom. Hebrews 11:1 says "*Faith is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things not seen.*" It was defined once as the ability to clothe the future with substance. So you Sunday school scholars are endeavoring, like we are, to clothe the future with substance, to see it with the eye of faith, to try and get your minds into those things.

What do you think the kingdom is going to be like? We've heard a lot of things about what it's going to be like in the kingdom. Brother Jerry took us through twelve different points that are really exciting if we can sit down and think about them. One King. We can't imagine it. Brother Jerry tried to get us to struggle to imagine an earth ruled by one monarch, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will have a new set of laws that will govern the whole earth: peace, no wars, safety. There are some worrying things that can happen in this age and our brow becomes beaded with perspiration. But that will not be so in the kingdom age. Peace and safety, it's a glorious time to come, something we've got to get our minds into.

When I sat down and thought of the address given me: Living in the Kingdom Age with the direction to the young people, I thought, "Right, what am I going to say on this?" There are some lovely verses in the scriptures: "*The streets shall be full of the boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.*" I've done a little bit of thinking along those lines before. I go over the children here and I see two or three boys in the front row and I can see some more children at the back, and I think, "Yeah living in the kingdom age, they're going to be playing in the streets of Jerusalem." Brother Jerry certainly put a thought before everyone when he said we've all got different ideas and different visions. Providing we've got the basic structure, the return of Christ and the details that are there for us in the scripture, each of us will have a different vision. Because, as brother Jerry said, we're not all the same. So as long as we've got the first principles well grounded in our minds, then all the little details we can discuss. Like brother Len suggested, quite a number of different things which I never thought of before. So I was thinking, what do I think about the boys and girls here playing in the streets of Jerusalem? I thought, no I don't think you would be boys and girls playing in the streets of Jerusalem. There are a few little confused faces in the row here. That's not to say I don't believe you'll be in the kingdom. Yes, I believe you'll be in the kingdom, we would pray that would be the hope of us all. But I don't believe you'll be boys and girls in the kingdom.

Now I expect all you Sunday school scholars have read Eureka... and several haven't. Well it doesn't matter because I expect you were all listening to Brother Jim when he spoke last night. What brother Jim was telling us about last night was the sequence of events, and Brother Dan brought it out as well. We know that the return of Christ is the great opening. That's going to be the great changing point for us. The angels are going to come tell us that the Lord is come. It's going to be a little bit longer before the world knows that he's come, but when they find out, it's going to hit them. The return of the Lord Jesus Christ is first on the agenda that we're looking for. Then there's going to be the resurrection, and you children know all about those details from the Sunday school lessons you've had on the resurrection, the judgement, and the separation of the faithful and the unfaithful. Russia will have come 45

down upon the land of Israel, and the saints will go forth led by the Lord Jesus Christ, and vanquish the oppressor and liberate Jerusalem. There is also going to be an opportunity then for the nations to submit to the rule of Christ. Brother Jim brought this out in his remarks last night. A ten-year proclamation Brother Thomas says in Eureka. The ten years' opportunity where the mid-heaven proclamation goes out to the nation: The Lord Jesus Christ has returned; submit to him or suffer the judgements of Almighty God. By and large the nations, particularly the nations of Catholic Europe, will not accept this. They will lead their armies against Christ, and Christ will spend the one hour of judgement, (or 40 years as brother Jim brought out to us last night) beating down the nations and establishing his authority. Brother Jim also brought out the extra 10 years before they start the building of the temple—that is 50 years. If that's the case, young Joanne (Osborne) could be 49 by the time the kingdom starts.

Now we know there's going to be a thousand years of peace, so as I see it, the millennium starts when the nations have been beaten down; that would make some of these young people adults when the great inaugural feast of our temple begins. That's my vision, and I'm sharing it with you. These little ones then, are being grounded now for the position that we are occupying at this point in time. They're going to be parents too. We don't know all the details. We'd like to know what will happen during that time. One thing we do know is that the love and the mercy of Yahweh will bless our families when the various tasks have been undertaken. It's going to be a terrifically exciting time for us all, and our children will no doubt be excited at the things that are coming upon the earth.

So, what are some of the things that we hope to be doing? And what are some of the things that the children will be doing in the kingdom? Is there any Sunday school scholar who wants to let me know some of the things you think you might be doing in the kingdom? Making offerings? Yes, there will probably be an opportunity at some time to make offerings. Something I haven't even thought about Jeremy, but yes, there will be opportunities to make offerings. A chance to become priests or vine dressers or shepherds. Michael has said he knows that one of the addresses said there's going to be sacrifices in the kingdom. Some people in other religious denominations can't see a place for sacrifice in the kingdom. We can because we understand the scriptures.

I'd like to read a verse in Ezekiel 47 verse 22, which says: *"It shall come to pass that ye shall divide it by lot (that's the land of Israel) for an inheritance unto you and to the strangers that sojourn among you which shall beget children among you. And they shall be unto you as born in the country among the children of Israel. They shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel."* So there is a people referred to here who are regarded as strangers that sojourn among you, (that's Israel-strangers that sojourn among Israel) who would beget children in that land. And they will have an inheritance. Now the suggestion has been made, and I must admit that I quite favor that suggestion, that the strangers who are in that land are none other but the families of the saints. When the Lord Jesus Christ comes we will be taken to the judgement seat and then we'll have a glorious blessing of being able to have an inheritance with Israel. Now I think it was Brother Johnny who brought out to us that the people of 46 Israel are going to occupy the foremost position in the kingdoms of the world.

They are going to be the nation. They are going to be the head of the nations and no longer the tail. Their land is going to be the metropolis of the world. That's going to be the hub, the very center of world government. And you children are going to have an inheritance in that land.

My vision, and I think it's a glorious vision, is that you children are going to occupy a highly privileged position in the kingdom. Yeah, you might be adults by the time that reign of peace begins, but you have a terrifically important part to play in that kingdom age. Only a special class will be given an inheritance in the land of Israel. What a glorious prospect to which you young children can look forward. We often use the phrase: "Looking forward to the kingdom age, the inheritance, and immortality," but you children are being taught that you're going to have an inheritance there. Providing you remain faithful throughout that age, you'll be granted the gift of immortality at the end of that millennial epoch as well.

Another verse that came to my mind as I was looking at some of the Scriptures is a verse in Isaiah that talks about feeding flocks. We make a suggestion on it; it's in Isaiah 61 verse 5, "*And even strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vine dressers.*" And I suggest that the strangers there might be the children, our children, who will occupy that privileged position in the land of Israel. What a glorious time is coming then when we have that in mind.

Our speakers also brought out the lessons that you will have over and above even our mortal probation in the longevity of life. Life will be extended, even though your mortality will still be in existence, you will be able to experience a greater quality of life then, I suppose. I think Brother Jerry put it, "*Without the maladies and the illnesses and the sickness which we are heir to today.*" The Bible proof is Isaiah 65 verse 20 which says, "*There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.*" Another translation, and I read: "*He who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth.*" So someone who lives to a hundred and happens to die in the kingdom will be regarded as a mere youth. Someone who dies at a hundred now we'd say, well they've had a good long life. So you'll be able to experience the blessings of longer life, free from perhaps a lot of the ailments and the sorrow and suffering that we have.

There will still be trials for you in the kingdom, no doubt. "*Probation,*" Brother Thomas says, "*is the indispensability to which every man is subjected to in the providence of God*" So there's going to be trials, as we Brothers and Sisters have our trials today. But you will have your families to bring up, as your moms & dads are bringing you up now. That's a tremendous responsibility, to bring up families, and it's going to be a responsibility for you in the kingdom like it is for your moms & dads now. It's going to be an essential part of your life in the kingdom to instruct your children in the ways of righteousness.

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Michael mentioned sacrifice. We might not be involved in actual sacrifices, because that's a very important part in the kingdom for the mortal Levites as well as the immortal Levites. It's still an important lesson, and with your family Michael, God willing in the kingdom, you'll have to instruct them of the purpose of sacrifice.

You'll have to explain the purpose of the temple and the various things that are happening in the kingdom. You'll have to teach them about the Lord Jesus Christ the King, and you'll be able to say, "When I grew up in Sunday School I was being taught that Jesus was going to come and he's here now. He has set up this universal kingdom, but we must still give him the homage and the reverence that is due to him." And that's how I see you in the kingdom. I might be wrong. I doubt it, but I don't see you playing in the streets of Jerusalem by the time the great peace and quietness is settling down upon the earth. Brother Thomas said that you'll subside into universal tranquility. By the time that comes, I believe that you'll be ready to be instructors of your own families in that kingdom age, building up the fabric in the land of Israel.

Now bearing that in mind, that you're going to have a responsibility, I mean it's difficult for perhaps young Joanne to think "I'm going to be a mom, trying to tell my children what they should & shouldn't do." But I guess there's some of the older young people in the room, maybe, who might not be too far off that position. It might help you to think about this, focus your mind and heart and think, "Now I can understand perhaps why my mom & dad said I can't do this & I can't do that and we must do this and we must do that." I know when I was growing up, I'll be quite honest with you, I never wanted really to go to gatherings. I used to think you have to spend a lot of time sitting in the same seat for a long time and after it broke up it was a short interval and I'd be sitting there again. But I can see the purpose of it now, and I can see why my mom and dad said, no you can't do this I'm sorry, and you can't do that. They were teaching me, and that's your position when you'll be in the kingdom teaching your families as well. So perhaps you can understand your moms and dads who are now a little bit prohibitive, in your opinion, perhaps there's a reason for it. They have a great deal of responsibility for you and they are doing it because they love you. We know that our Heavenly Father approves of such things, because He loves us as well.

The last little point that I wanted to talk about just briefly, was one of the points about glorifying God. The whole fabric of society will be geared to glorifying God. Zechariah tells us that even the bells of the horses will be inscribed with "Holiness to Yahweh." The very bells on the horses inscribed with "Holiness to Yahweh." The whole age is going to resound to the honor and glory of God. And you, my dear Sunday school scholars, will be playing a part in that. We, Brethren and Sisters, hope to have the physical as well as moral glory of that kingdom age in our immortality. We will comprise the glory that Ezekiel saw coming from the way of the east, the Elohim of Israel, the mighty ones bringing the glory back to Jerusalem after its long departure of two and a half - three thousand years. But you Sunday school scholars, if this vision is right, then you'll be bringing up your families.

48 The family unit is such an important unit that was created by God. The world we're living in sees the complete breakdown of the family unit, and look at the society we're living in. The family unit divinely created by God, gives glory to Him. When you sit down with your moms and dads and you do the readings, and you ask the questions, and you discuss things, I, in my heart believe that the Deity, the Lord God of Israel, is well pleased with this. Here is a function in family, vibrant with the life of the truth. My dear Sunday school scholars, this I believe will continue into the kingdom age. In our days of mortality this will be a part of Yahweh's drawing out of

his people. The work of the family unit cannot be underestimated. It will contribute largely to the glory of Yahweh Elohim.

I'd like to leave the young people with a thought. I'd like to read something to them first from the Scriptures. *"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."* Which of you young people can tell me what book of the Bible that's written in? Ok, it's Ecclesiastes chapter 12:1. What's the most important word in the first ten words of that verse? *"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth."* Some say "remember," and "Creator," and "youth", those are all very good, but are not the right answer. The most important word is "Now." Remember NOW, that's really important, NOW. It's no good remembering our Heavenly Father after we finish an apprenticeship, or perhaps next year. We need to remember him now. *"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth."* Brother Dan brought out a very important point for us: Time is flying. We are really, really near the return of our Lord. We don't know the day or the hour, but we know it's near, we haven't got time to postpone things. We need to remember him now in the days of youth. You've got such a wonderful opportunity. You put their best computer in the world to shame. The computer in your head is a brilliant machine. It's already programmed to receive the things of the Scripture. It's been created that way. We've been created in the image and likeness of the Elohim, the angels - those glorious beings. Our minds, our whole being is like that. We need to fill it now with God's Word. Don't put it off, remember Him now. And, of course, Brothers and Sisters, that's equally as important to us, to you and to me. Brother Dan definitely brought that out. I think we all need to remember our Heavenly Father in our own days, particularly in youth, because that's the best opportunity. This is the seedbed; you have the glorious opportunity now of establishing a lifetime before you, based soundly on the Scriptures. Brothers and Sisters, we also need to bear these things in mind. When that great call comes which shall make our ears tingle, *"The master is come and calleth for thee,"* what will the summons be to us? What will our heart reply? What will be our response at that time? Let's all remember him then, young ones and older ones, let's remember him NOW.

Bro. Philip Hughes

TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS

Paul did not allow his work to cease with bringing people into the Truth. Having enlightened them, he still toiled on their account, to root and establish them in all things pertaining to their new position. Our 'conversion' of people, also, doesn't just mean that we teach them true doctrine and see them baptized; the priests were to turn ('convert') believers away from the life of sin and behind the way of God (Mal. 2:6, applied to all of us in James 5:19).

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The family unit was designed by God to be self-supporting, so that all members of the unit could provide assistance and cooperation through life's journey. In the same way the divine design of the ecclesia is to provide ministrations and relief for one another. But why is it that many of us are reticent to provide that extra support that is often so needful to other struggling individuals? How is it that we can attend an

ecclesia and draw strength from it, but when we are asked to have some input into various functions, we may refuse to become involved? We can manufacture many convenient excuses about how busy we are, or perhaps pretend we don't have the talent or experience to fulfill the request.

It has been wisely stated that, "the difference between a hero and a coward is only one step sideways." Unfortunately, many of us take that step sideways when we should take a step forward. Brethren and Sisters are busy excusing themselves and moving sideways, bumping into one another in their haste to extricate themselves from a needful task, and "sometimes getting in the way of those who are trying to walk forward!"

The Lord wisely selected Galilean fishermen as apostles to support his work and lay a strong foundation for the community of faith. He could have chosen carpenters, farmers, rabbis, shop-keepers or a number of different types. Yet his disciples were almost exclusively fishermen. Why?

They were humble, unpretentious and simple men. Men in harmony with nature and God. The storms on the Sea of Galilee had taught them about pressures and how to react as a team in times of difficulty. They had honed their practical skills in discerning right weather conditions and how to use the correct 'bait' and netting methods. They understood the benefits of being a close-knit crew and the essential need to cooperate together, whether at sea or on shore and in the consistent maintenance of the repairing of boat or nets. These are the attributes the Lord requires in us.

In preaching the Gospel we need to communicate with people in a simple way, trying to understand their needs and the issues that would draw them towards the Truth. This can only be accomplished by using the right 'bait' and conditions to draw them into the gospel net. There is the benefit of cooperating together within the ecclesial boat, a quality the Lord saw in his disciples, and, although we may not be professional fishermen, we need to observe such attributes and apply them to our work in the Truth.

Not forgetting we should be 'tent making fishermen' i.e. supporting ourselves in the preaching of the gospel, as this seems to be the norm for the preaching of the gospel in the first century. Paul also supported himself (see 1 Cor.9:12; 2 Cor.11:12; 1 Thess.2:5, and 2 Thess. 3:8). Many times throughout his preaching, therefore, Paul was what is often referred to as a "vocational preacher." *"Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me."* (Acts 20:34). These words to the Ephesians indicate that Paul "directed a tent making work while in Ephesus in order to provide support both for himself and for the fishermen who were with him at the time." We must have more men who arise to preach the royal gospel while they support themselves and others.

Let us step forward and support ourselves and others, and work as a team (with individual efforts fully put in), and convert some more and nurture them to maturity.

"Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude offishes." -Luke 5:4-7.

Southern Powers In Prophecy

At the time of the end, God has ordained a role for the various nations which they cannot escape, regardless of how they try. Those who study prophecy look to this role in an effort to determine where the world is, in relation to the events which will ultimate in the return of Jesus to the earth.

Those who follow the Path of the class of men that Peter ran into, use the current events as proof that this is the way things are, and will always be. In so saying, they themselves become fulfillment of Bible prophecy for as Peter wrote:

2 Pet. 3:3-4, *"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."*

What seems like an eternity to our short lives, are mere blips in the over all scheme of God. So what may seem true for us, in the particular time in which we live, is really nothing but a unique exception, briefly occurring, for God to accomplish His ultimate goals.

Such is the position that we find the United States in today. The role of the power which opposes Russia has been ordained from well before the birth of Christ. The prophesy of Ezekiel tells us:

Eze. 38:13, *"Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? halt thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?"*

The Western Powers are in position to oppose the Northern Invader when he comes. The prophet says, "art thou come to take a spoil?", indicating that the northern hosts are coming directly at them. But will be powerless to do anything to stop them. For the prophet continues:

Eze. 38:8-9, *"After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them. Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee."*

The powers which make up the Tarshish alliance do not believe that these things are possible. Particularly is this true of one of the southern partners, the United States. The arrogance of this power, is at an all time height. She is the most dominant nation in the world, militarily and politically, and she is throwing her weight around like a careless schoolyard bully. It appears that she believes it is her destiny, rather than the destiny of our Lord Jesus, to set the world right, and in so believing, has done much to alienate her from other powerful nations.

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During what has been called the Cold War, the United States and the then Soviet Union, built up an arsenal of Nuclear Weapons, which had the ability to destroy the world many times over. With the breakup of the Soviet Union, the Cold War came to

an end, (brief though it may be.) Those responsible for the use of the Nuclear weapons, the Generals from Russia and the United States who are in charge of their respective Nuclear Missile programs, met many times to look at each other's installations, and to discuss ways to reduce the Nuclear threat to the world. Several years of discussions had led to a treaty between the United States and Russia to reduce the Nuclear threat, called Start Two.

Start Two appeared to be a foregone conclusions for both sides. It was, after all, drawn up by the Missiliers, those responsible for delivering the nuclear attack or counter attack from both sides. It would have greatly reduced the nuclear threat to the world. But as the time neared when Russia would vote upon its acceptance, the United States had actively supported the bringing into NATO several of Russia's former client states and direct neighbors, Poland and Hungary.

Russia asked the question, if the purpose of NATO was to stop the spread of Communism in Europe, and if Communism is now gone from Russia, why is NATO even still in existence, let alone expanding to the very borders of Russia? Ignoring Russian fears of threats to her own borders, NATO pushed on, even beginning of talking about more expansion, threatening the members states of the Russian Federation itself.

Russia cooled to Start Two treaty after this, but only for a short time. Soon the treaty was moving through the Russian Knesset again, and appeared to be on course for acceptance. But on the very day that the vote was scheduled to take place, American arrogance again came to a head. The United States had become involved in the civil war taking place in Kosovo, in Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia was another loyal Russian ally. In an effort to defend herself, Yugoslavia applied to be included in the Russian Federation, so strong were her ties to Russia.

So it was that on the very day upon which the Russian Knesset was scheduled to vote on the final acceptance of the Start Two treaty, the United States began the bombing of Yugoslavia. The treaty vote was canceled, and has not been considered again.

Again this past week, American dominance was forced onto the minds of the Russian people. Following the war with another former Russian Ally, Iraq, terms of Iraq's surrender limited the way in which oil could be sold. Iraq was only allowed to sell oil for humanitarian aid. This past week, a Russian tanker had loaded with oil, perceived to have been oil from Iraq, and began to make it's way out of the Persian Gulf. The vessel was stopped, boarded by Americans in the gulf who inspected the cargo, and then forced it into a port in Oman, where the oil was off loaded. The Russian vessel was then allowed to leave.

Such an event can only serve to further humiliate the Russians, who already long for the old days of Russian influence and power. But the United States, smug in her new found role of the world's peace keeper, ignores the growing concern of this mighty power—mighty in her ability to destroy with her still active and viable nuclear arsenal.

52 Our attention had recently been directed to a group of headlines. "Russia complains of "arrogant hegemony." (Hegemony is a favorite word among communists and socialists meaning that a nation forces another to do its will through

economic threats.) In China, repeated complaints of "imperialism." were the continual watch word. The French, only slightly calmer had headlines speaking of an "Anglo-Saxon conspiracy."

And in the capital of the great economic power behind all this griping, their politicians held up their nation as an example to the world, with a smug nod to the new century which they fully expect to dominate. Have you guessed the name of this beacon to humanity?

If you guessed that these headlines are talking about the United States of America, you would be wrong. All of these headlines were written in 1899 about Britain, as she prepared to enter the 20th Century, a century she had every reason to expect to completely dominate.

In the last few years of Queen Victoria's life, Britain controlled 20% of the earth's land mass, and 23% of the earth's people. Her Navy, as Britannia, ruled the waves. Phrases were in vogue, such as "the sun never set's on the British empire."

But by 1916, barely 17 years later, Britain had fallen from her position of the preeminent power, economically and militarily. And 100 years later, in 1997, debate took place in the British parliament when Tony Blair, Britain's Prime Minister, found himself having to argue that Britain had become a second tier nation. And whether or not she is second tier, certainly, Queen Victoria would not be pleased with how the 20th century turned out for the once mighty empire.

The United States is in a similar position today. She is unrivaled as a military and political power, but how soon God can cause all this to come tumbling down. The nations around us do not believe this is possible. They fancy themselves too rich, too powerful, too smart to follow the decline which has beset every successful civilization to date on the face of the earth..

Meanwhile, the very acts she has prided herself on lately, have become the motivation for Russia seeking to strengthen old ties. Western experts and Asian diplomats alike have been saying that over the past year, and particularly since the Kosovo war last spring, Moscow's security ties to Beijing have surpassed the simple cash-for-weapons transactions that characterized their relationship for years and has changed into something more complex and potentially far-reaching.

Last October, the Chinese and Russian defense ministries signed an agreement to conduct joint training and to share information on the formulation of military policy. At the same time, elements of the Russian and Chinese navies took part in their first joint operation at sea. The two governments also removed a major obstacle to bilateral military sales, currently valued at about \$1 billion a year, by compromising on China's desire to pay for weaponry and technical assistance with goods as opposed to Russia's demand for hard currency, which she desperately needs. 53

Asian officials say that as many as 2,000 Russian technicians are employed by Chinese research institutes working on laser technology: the miniaturization of nuclear weapons; cruise missiles; space-based weaponry; and nuclear submarines. On Jan. 19, Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Ilya Klebanov, told reporters that Beijing and Moscow "are close enough" to agreement on joint use of Russia's GLONASS satellite-based global positioning system, an accord that would aid the Chinese

military in targeting its rockets and air-to-air missiles. Russia and China also have announced a willingness to collaborate on a ballistic missile defense system to counter U.S. efforts to create its own missile defense system.

And it is not just China. Russia has recently sought to strengthen military ties with another former client, North Korea. On February 8, 2000, Russia entered into a new peace/mutual aid treaty with North Korea. These relations had been badly damaged when Russia entered into various agreements with South Korea, but now appeared to be well on their way to new, unilateral agreements. In fact, the current peace treaty forbids either party from unilateral agreements with South Korea.

So just as the policy of colonialization seemed the answer to Britain's world wide dominance in 1899, but brought forward problems which made her continued dominance impossible; the United States is experiencing similar problems with its modified, yet similar policy of globalization. The very policy thought to bring peace, is rallying the old enemies to war. And this may be just the very tip of the giant iceberg.

A New York bank is expected to announce this month a scandal concerning the aid given to Russia. Nearly 7 billion dollars is thought to have been illegally removed from Russia to the US. This has been a far reaching concern for some time. Money is loaned from the rich nations to Russia. That money is illegally smuggled out of Russia, and re-invested in the various markets. The end result is two fold. First, the nation receiving the loan (Russia) cannot pay it back, for they never really had it. Second, the nations receiving the illegal money (mostly the United States) are in effect loaning money to themselves boosting their own economy. There is no question that loaning money to yourself will boost the economy for a short period of time. There is also no question that it is the principle factor in creating a recession, or a depression. When the loans come due and fail, the markets suffer in a greater way than they benefited. This is what brought on the great depression, when the stock market was generated by borrowed money. Controls had been put in place to limit how much of this could be done, but such illegal activities as some Russian people and American Banks have been engaged in, run rough shod over the installed controls.

But there are already serious signs that, in fact, this is happening. This past month, the loan rates for long term notes was lower than that of short term notes. This is generally regarded as one of the more reliable indicators of the future economic strength. There has never been a serious recession where this condition did not exist. To calm the fears of investors, those responsible for the American economy have given many reasons why this situation exists, and concluding that a serious recession will not occur.

54 We don't know if this will occur or not. But what is clear is that the various policies that Britain put in place to maintain her preeminent position in the world led to her quick undoing. And the policies that the United States has embarked on are nearly the identical policies, modified slightly for the times. And these policies are having nearly the identical effects of Britain, 100 years ago. The exact policies intended to secure the world in an Anglo Saxon led peace, instead, led to instability in the world and the rise of the German power who engaged the world in two wars.

What we have seen in the past decade since the fall of the Soviet Union is having nearly the identical effect. God is not through with His creation, and all the good intentions (which are simply greed masked in good intentions, anyway) will not stop God in realizing His plan. What appears to be nations out of their divinely appointed order, are simple blips on the radar screen, soon to be done away with, as the nations line up for the wars the Bible describe as Armageddon.

Joel 3:9-17, *"Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up:*

Verse 10, "Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the LORD your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more."

Living in these wealthy nations, we some times get so caught up in the security they feel, and lose track of just how frail these things really are. The nations treat them as realities. They believe that they are somehow different than societies which have failed in the past. Through this, we have our sensibilities dulled to the reality of God's plan. It is a constant danger. Only constant recourse to the Word of God keeps this from happening to us.

God's word is sure. We don't know exactly what events will lead to the alignment of the nations, nor how long it will take. But Noah was 120 years in building the Ark, yet the world was destroyed in only 40 days. And along the way, many mocked him—no doubt saying "Where is the promise of his coming?"

The promise is there. It is clear enough for those who watch. Our nature makes us impatient. But as Peter warned:

2 Peter 3:8-9, *"But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."*

This is the time that we have been granted to come to repentance. It is a wonderful opportunity that we have been given, too wonderful to be obscured by the transient wealth of this lifetime. We have a hymn that clearly states that God will realize His plan. What though all the nations of the earth resist Him, (and they will,) nothing can be done to change it. When the nations think they are taking steps to secure their own future, the truth is that these changes are necessary to bring them down, to make them conform to the plan and purpose of God.

As Ye See The Day Approaching

The scriptures tell us: *"Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied"* (Pro. 27:20) *"...the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing."* (Ecc. 1:8) Why is this? We haven't far to look, for the answer is right in the Scriptures of truth. We know that Yahweh created man upon the earth. Genesis chapters 1 and 2 give the record. We also know that after the scriptural principle of first the natural and then the spiritual found in 1 Cor. 15:46; that *"...God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him."* (1 Cor. 12:18) God has spoken concerning these members in man. He says in Exo. 4:11: *"And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?"*

Genesis 1:31 tells us of the divine assessment of the work of the six days of creation founding this order of things upon the earth. That verse states: *"And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."* In that all that God made was *very good*; so, the members in the man (Adam) and his wife (Eve) were *very good*, also. The eyes and ears in the man and his wife were doubtless quite active and busy seeing and hearing all of the sights and sounds in the garden of Eden. There was no wrong or evil in these actions. This first human pair were for the honor and glory of their Creator. They used all of their divinely given members to behold His marvelous creations and to praise and worship Him. Think of all that they must have seen and heard, experienced and learned from the Elohist visits and conversations.

We all know of the terrible consequences of eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. *"...The eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons."* (Gen. 3:7) This was a vain attempt to make things right, but the transgression could only be covered in the way The Eternal Power would prescribe. Sentence was passed upon them that same day and they were sent forth of the garden to suffer the consequences of eating the forbidden fruit. The law of sin and death now worked in their members. Dying, they would die and return to the dust of the ground from whence they were taken.

56 That same law of sin and death has worked in all of their descendants ever since. How thankful we should be that God has provided the son of His love to be a propitiation for the sins of His people. The provision in His mercy and love was foretold even from the garden in what was spoken to the woman concerning her seed. Adam and Eve doubtless learned the vital principle that without the shedding of blood, there could be no remission of sins. The skins with which they were covered by the Elohim were doubtless from a lamb slain and offered in sacrifice showing this. These things pointed forward to that specially provided son. That son, the Lord Jesus Christ, was of our exact nature, tempted in all points like we are, but committed no sin. He hearkened

not unto the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye or the pride of life; but cut off all occasion of the flesh by wholly doing the will of his Father. It is written of Christ: "*Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him...*" (Heb. 5:7-9)

The vast majority of mankind (almost all of it) has chosen the broad way leading inexorably to death and to hell. Only a very few have the foresight to choose the straight, narrow pathway to life in and through Christ Jesus. This has been the sad story down through the long, dark ages of the race of Adam. Cain obviously didn't care for the ways of God. He tried another way of his own invention, which resulted in his rejection and casting out to wander in the land of Nod to the east of Eden until the inevitable came upon him. His seed followed in his footsteps, choosing darkness rather than light and the pleasures of sin for a season. Though these antediluvians lived eight and nine hundred years or more, death still claimed them. While they lived they walked after the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and mind. Vast numbers of them were cut off in the waters of the flood, having scoffed at the sound wisdom and advice of righteous men like Enoch (the seventh from Adam) and Noah. They will come forth at the second coming of Christ in a resurrection to condemnation, shame and age-lasting contempt. We see the same apostasy develop after the flood leading to divine retribution in the overthrow of the tower of Babel. The kingdom of men spreads and the habitable is veiled in gross spiritual darkness. Shem, Abram and his household and Lot are the few who stand out in an otherwise putrefying society. We all know the terrible overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them in the plain. The horrible wickedness that led to this catastrophe is documented in Genesis for all to read. The destruction of these cities serves as a warning to all who live wicked lives. The history of the earth is chronicled from that time and onward up through the first century in the Scriptures. The apostles prophesied of conditions and apostasy in these latter days which would herald the second coming of Christ.

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The point of making this quick review of the downward spiral of man into wickedness and depravity is that *these things are the primary signs of the nearness of the day of Christ's coming. "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived"* (2 Tim. 3:13) Reading from the beginning of that well known third chapter in 2nd Timothy, down through verse five, gives us the picture of the increasing ungodliness that would result from apostasy from the Truth. "*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent,*

fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof from such turn away."

We see that the law of sin in man's members leads him astray. His heart is evil from his youth onward. In Jer.17:9 it is written: *"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.."* Yahweh created man upright. But man fell through imbibing the serpent's reasoning and lie and became unclean through sin. However, Yahweh would not leave mankind in that condition, but restore him to uprightness; cleansing him of the sin nature by His implemented plan through the one drawn out. Moses was given two signs by the Eloah (angel) in the burning bush at Sinai. The first was the sign of the rod becoming a serpent and the second, the sign of the leprous hand. These two signs point forward to the work of God in and through Christ to restore man to uprightness.

The terrible apostasy in the earth is one of the greatest signs that the second coming of Jesus is very near. As of 3:00pm Sunday afternoon February 6th, the earth's population stands at 6,028,309,000. That is 28,309,000 more than were upon earth less then four months ago on October 12, 1999! This many people living upon earth and walking (almost every one) after the imagination of his own evil heart, spells potential disaster if there is not divine intervention before much more time goes by. Jeremiah tells us in Jer. 10:23, *"O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."*

Man yields the members of his body as servants of sin unto death. He is enslaved to sin (spoken of as a master in Romans 6) and receives its wages, which is death. Yahweh will not allow His glorious creation (MAN) to be forever in this fallen condition. The members he has placed in man shall not always be prostituted to corruption by earth's teeming multitudes. The one man whom God has made strong for himself has opened the new and living way to life everlasting! He is the first - and there will be a great multitude who will be made like him at his second coming (after resurrection and judgment). He and they (with the blessing and almighty power of the Highest) will set up that glorious kingdom which shall never be destroyed or left to others!

Yes, in this age, hell and destruction are never full and the eyes of man are not satisfied, because of sin and man's depraved condition. In the glorious ages to come, however, man and his members shall be exclusively for the glory of the Eternal First Cause! Let us keep the words ever in mind recorded in 1 Cor. 2:9-10, *"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God"*

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Please advise us of changes or corrections to the
above information.

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WHAT DOES THAT MEAN

"Be ye angry, and sin not" Ephesians 4:26

"Dear Bro. Jim,

Does this verse imply that it is not sinful to be angry? If so, how do we reconcile this with Colossians 3:8, *'But now ye also put off all these; **anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.** '?"*

Two types of anger are cited in this illustration. There is righteous anger, which is not sinful, as anger is found in God's people, in Jesus Christ, and in God himself when something conflicts with God's Word. There is anger, however, that *is* sinful: unrighteous anger aroused out of pride, and our inability or unwillingness to suffer wrong and to humbly turn the other cheek.

Ephesians 4:26 is talking about anger that is righteous in origin, but warns us that when we allow emotions to drive what we say and do, it is then that we are most vulnerable to the flesh. Strong emotions (anger, love, jealousy, fear etc.) can overtake rational thought. This verse is a prohibition against sinning in anger.

Moses can serve as an example to us. We are told in Numbers 12:3, *"The man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth."* He felt overburdened with the responsibility God laid upon him, yet he was accused of "taking too much upon himself" as if he was seeking power. Most of us would be furious if falsely accused like this, but Moses, when his honor was in question, was as a deaf man, and heard not--no anger was displayed! Yet when God's honor was concerned, as in the case of the golden calf, we see a different response: *"And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and **Moses' anger waxed hot**, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount."* (Exodus 32:19)

Although not all anger is sinful, the problem arises in that even righteous anger can cause us to sin. Moses again serves as an example. At the end of the wilderness journey, just as they were about to enter the land, the people murmured because there was no water. Once again they turn against Moses and God. Forty years in the wilderness had taught them nothing! *"Wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink."* (Num.20: 5) Moses would experience that same Godly anger, only this time he made a fatal mistake, as referenced in Psalms 106:32, *"They **angered him** also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes: Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips."*

It is easy, brethren and sisters, to make the same kind of error that Moses made. When angry at someone, (even if it is righteous anger), we tend to look at ourselves as "the good guy" and the other person as "the bad guy." When angry we must stop and count 10 – 10 of our own shortcomings! Brothers and sisters, we must identify our anger triggers. What do they reveal about us? Let us work on the steps necessary for self-control and forgiveness, so we may "...sin not"

