

# 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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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.

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CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

## Ecclesial News

**HENGOED, Wales, U.K. – Breaking of Bread, 11am; Sunday School, 12:45pm; Lecture, 2:30pm; Wed. Bible Class, 7:30pm in various homes; Elpis Israel Class, 1st Tues. in month in various homes – Bro. Phillip Hughes, 25 Hoel Y Gelli, Fforchneol Parc, Godreaman, Aberdare, Mid Glam, U.K. CF44 6LN; phone (011) 441-685-870254**

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

Loving Greetings in the Hope of Israel,

It is with deep regret that we inform the Brotherhood of the withdrawal of Sis. Alison Hopper from the Hengoed ecclesia, and indeed the Fellowship. Sis. Alison had not been happy for some time with the divorce which was obtained using the "no fault" law, and concluded that it violated our Basis of Fellowship based on 1Cor. 6.

None of us were happy with the sad and unusual events which led to the tragic division, but we did not reach the conclusion which Sis. Alison has come to. Various discussions with Sis. Alison have taken place, probably covering all the ground on this issue, including the Boston proposal, but to no avail. We will miss Sis. Alison very much as she has been a member of the Hengoed Ecclesia for 10 years, and has been a source of encouragement.

Our way can certainly be dreary and dark, but we look forward with hope to the Day of Apocalypse, when the Son of Righteousness shall arise to dispel the prevailing darkness, and give eternal life to those who are watching and waiting, and trimming their lamps with the pure oil of the Word.

The troubled sea of nations casting up its filth, the movements of the nations, Israel, Russia, Europe etc. herald the long expected advent of the Man whose name is The Branch. May we hold fast until that glorious day.

On behalf of the Brethren & Sisters of the Hengoed Ecclesia,  
Bro. Phillip Hughes

## Books For 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](mailto:Syuen33550@aol.com) or fax (604) 925-0649.

## Ecclesial Notes

It is with sadness to the Brotherhood that we report the illness of two of our Sisters. Our Sister Susan Garvey and Sister Dottye Banta are both in need of the prayers of all. They are currently or to start undergoing treatment that will be a rough trial. Your cards and letters and prayers will be gratefully appreciated to give them strength to endure the coming weeks ahead.

Susan Garvey  
11 Maureen Way  
Plymouth, MA 02360

Dottye Banta  
Route 3, Box 100  
Burnet, TX 78611

## 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

## FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held God Willing)

**BOSTON STUDY WEEKEND.....April 15 and 16, 2000**  
**"Minor Prophets – Major Prophecies"**

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

**CANTON SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM .....**  
**..... May 21, 2000**  
**(Note The Corrected Date)**

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 PICNIC..... August 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

## **The Greatest Gift—Eternal Life during the Millennium**

Once again we have an opportunity of opening another gathering, in fact the last gathering of this millennium—aside from any study weekends that are being held. How many thought that they would ever see this time arrive? How many have thought about the millennium ending and a new one beginning? How many have thought that the year 2000 could bring the return of our long awaited Master and Saviour? What does this new millennium mean to you as Brethren and Sisters? What does it mean to you young people who are in the Sunday schools? I've been given the great honor of speaking first at this gathering, which I know puts a lot of other Brethren at a little unease, I might step on your feet a bit. However, repetition is a good way of learning, so if I happen to step on your feet, I'm sorry, but I'm sure by the time they get to your talk, they'll have forgotten a portion of this one.

My topic today that I've been given holds great encouragement and hope in just the title alone. I thank the Brethren responsible for giving me this opportunity to speak on this subject: "The Greatest Gift." Whatever more could we want or ask for? We pray daily for this, or at least we should. Eternal life, to serve our Father in the heavens above for an eternity. What a hope and a day to which we look forward. My talk this morning is not long, and I've not filled it with a multitude of Bible quotes on this topic. I hope I've made it up of simple language, and I had some thoughts surrounding this exciting time that we're living in and moving into following the close of this millennium as we see the clock outside at the front desk counting down 80 some days left.

What does the dictionary say about this word? Millennium: means thousand, and 'annus' means year. So the word "millennium" is a thousand years, which we all knew. Let's take a moment and have a quick history lesson that brings us up to today. Right up to this morning. In the first thousand years we had creation and the development of the earth, and during that time we had Noah being born. In the second thousand years we saw a decline of the population, a new beginning after the flood, a re-population of the earth, and Abraham was born. In the third millennium their nation was born, Israel moves into Egypt, Moses was born, and they were delivered. In the fourth millennium we had the judges, the kings, again the decline, and Jesus was born. In the fifth millennium we had Jesus' life, the apostles, Gentiles' salvation being offered, Israel was scattered, we saw the rise and the fall of the Roman power, discovery of land into the Americas, and the Viking age. In the sixth one thousand years we had Napoleon, world war one, world war two, and the Jews were persecuted. We also had Brethren Thomas and Roberts, Christadelphians, 64 men sent to the moon, the age of the computers, decline of morals again,

and now we have in front of us the signs of the times. That was quick. We have been speedily brought up to date where we are today.

Let's look at the next aspect of this talk that we have before us. I have in this bag what the new millennium means to me. This is what it means to me; it's an alarm clock ready to go off. Not one person in this audience knows when I've set this alarm clock to go off. Just as we don't know the time when God has set His alarm to go off. We have to keep in mind it will go off if it's been set, and God had set it this many years ago as we just went through the history. For this weekend, let's all use this symbol for what the new millennium means to us. It means an alarm clock.

Brother Jim is passing out a little Bible marker that I'd like you to keep for now. We're going to place it in a certain portion of the Bible, and hopefully it will stay there until our Lord's return. This clock in front of you tells us a lot of things and everybody has an alarm clock. It tells you when to wake up, as most people this morning had a wake up call, or you set your alarm clock. It tells you when to go to sleep as we look at it and say, "It's getting late, I better get to bed." It tells us when to eat, and of course as Christadelphians, we love to do that. It also tells us when to go to work and when to come home. It tells us lots of things, but it all comes down to one thing that it does tell us and that is, it tells us the time. I gave this exhortation in Richard in preparing for this talk here and found that it became more fitting for the talk here in discussing the time surrounding the millennium. As you'll see on the bookmark that Brother Jim is handing out to you, it has an alarm clock on it, but it is flying. That's exactly what time does. As we will close our talk this morning with hymn 182, it says, "*The days are quickly flying and Christ will come again.*" That is the slogan that we have written on this bookmark.

Time begins for us at birth and our probation clock begins to tick. Even though we are ignorant about all things, as anyone who has had a child knows, the learning process begins. Let's examine this aspect as mothers and fathers, as Brethren and Sisters, as relatives I might add who have accepted the Truth and been baptized into the saving name of Jesus Christ. We have a glorious opportunity given to us in the teaching of our young people, from the time they are born until the time they are baptized. Jesus said, "*Suffer little children and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.*" Again, the wisest man in the Bible said, "*Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.*" The Bible, as we know, contains all the moral lessons in life that we need to teach to the young. As we know, the Bible also contains the key to everlasting life. We must take time to teach our children and our friends who attend our Sunday schools the importance of God's Word. It's our duty and God gave us the time to do it. It was the duty throughout the ages, for God's command was to be passed on to the children and they 65

had to take time to learn it. Leviticus says, *"And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses."* Yes, the children of Israel spoke of more than just small children, but it shows how important it was that God's statutes were passed on from generation to generation.

The next thing that we must take some of the time allotted for us is to increase our knowledge and faith as Brethren and Sisters. Personal study is vital to one's growth in the Truth. Unfortunately, we seem to run out of time in the day for meditation and study. God told us each to take our own times and spaces to build ourselves up in faith and increase our knowledge by studying His laws. We're all familiar with the famous quote: *"Study to chew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."* Paul's letter to Timothy here puts it all into perspective. We must take time to study; it is a priority in our life in the Truth. Again, we go to the words of the wise man, Solomon, where he wrote in the Proverbs in chapter one, beginning at verse two. *"To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; to receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; to give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion. A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction."* Too often we find ourselves increasing in the knowledge of the world. We feel a need or desire to keep up with a fast-paced world, then at the end of the day wonder where the time went. Every one of us has these days or moments, because I've heard so often since we've arrived here: 'Man, how time flies.' The minutes, the hours, the days, the years, what have we accomplished up until this day, this morning? We all know our own measuring stick.

Knowledge is not everything, but when we would rather feed our minds with non-important things, well, you put it into perspective pretty quickly. Too many have spent their lives without doing what they ought to have done for God, and realize as they lay on their deathbed, that all of the things they knew and all the money they had, was of very little use. Use the time now to study and meditate upon God's word, to increase our faith and knowledge of His statutes and commands so that eternal life is our goal. Read a short article just before bedtime and that'll be the last thing on your mind before sleep. Begin a small or a big book and go at your own pace. Listen to tapes of talks from other Brethren, etc., etc.

66 The next thing we need to take time to do is to move. The Truth requires works as well as faith, so we must move in that direction to balance out our

lives. Visiting the sick, visiting the elderly, a visit with Brethren and Sisters to do the readings or a meal is a nice change from the daily attractions of the world. But our work does not stop there, we must also remember that we must be examples to those around us at work, in the world and with friends at school. It is a constant battle with the inner self to do what is right and the word 'No' is so hard to say under pressure. We must take time to reflect on our position in relation to the world and the Truth. We must move closer to God if we hope to ever have an opportunity to hear those words: "Well done."

In first John chapter 2, verse 15, *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."* The Greatest Gift-Eternal Life. In second Peter chapter 1, beginning at verse 4, *"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly unto the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."* What encouragement, this is to us, Brethren and Sisters and Sunday school scholars.

This brings us to the final thing surrounding this time that I would like to mention. We need to take time to encourage one another on the road to life eternal as we are noticing by all the titles throughout the talks, all surrounding the millennium. We need to encourage each other. What a rough road if we have to do it alone. An ecclesia is a great place to receive encouragement and to give encouragement because we are all of like precious faith. God's command to Moses was this, *"But charge Joshua and encourage and strengthen him for he shall go over this people and cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see."* What a huge task before Joshua, and yet the times when we need encouragement are the times when things seem too huge to us. We all need encouragement, and we all need to take the time to encourage one another. Never belittle another person's troubles, for them it is a trial, and it is our duty if called upon to help them through it.

So now, we have heard about four things that we need to take time for. Four things that speak the Gospel message to us. The first thing we heard about is that we have to teach the young. That is an important task for all of us. The second thing we have to do is increase our faith and our knowledge ourselves. The third thing, we have to move with works in doing those things that are important in our ecclesia and the surrounding ecclesias. And the last thing we have to do is to encourage one another in the faith and the hope that we have. We see it often enough of time. We've been given time from God for all of these things. So this makes our time very, very important.

This brings us also to the seven thousandth year, the millennium. The final millennium, which will bring world war three, which will bring the return of Christ and which will bring judgement. Which will also bring the saints who will fight against evil. The world will be filled with peace and there will be happiness. I'd like to read a piece written by a brother on his idea of the future. It is very good. I'd like to take you forward to this time, and in doing this if you'd all just take a moment and close your eyes and imagine yourself in the seven thousandth year accepted into the kingdom of God as you listen to these words. "We travel into a city, there is an immense number of people in this city, but the city is so vast they do not appear numerous, except at certain points as we pass along. Their aspect is such that we've never seen in a city crowd before, so quiet, yet so cheerful. So brightly interested in everything, yet so orderly and respectful. So apparently cultured and well-to-do, yet having none of the fussiness and arrogance usually associated with prosperity. All are well clad, clean, intelligent, good, righteous, and happy. There is no boisterous merry making, no foolish banter, and no unseemingly utterance. They are a few of the happy subjects of the kingdom of God.

"As we walk along the highway, it is very broad and of noble aspect. A line of tall trees in a broad band of turf divides it in the center and again in the middle, each side giving four spacious roadways running side by side, lined with trees and bordered with turf and flowers. The country on each side is laid out in fields and estates which are in the occupation of the Levites of the second order who serve the temple, whose lands, however, are accessible to visitors at all times. The country becomes more magnificent at every step. At certain points, side roads strike off and return in many turnings and windings to the main road again. These side roads lead through woody solitude of paradisiacal beauty.

68 "Let us go down one of these roads, and behold the fulfillment of a promise that Yahweh would make the place of His feet glorious. All is quiet, comforting, and beautiful. There is no darkness, but only a sense of bracing relief in the shade they give. There is no wetness on the ground, but only a

pleasant, soft, hardness. There are no walls or fences at the side of the road.

You may walk straight off the road onto velvet turf under the trees and among the shrubs. Here you will find all kinds of fruit growing, all kinds of flower in bloom. You are at liberty to put forth your hand and to do as you will. How delicious is the odor everywhere.

We stroll and stroll. We come upon a break in the wood where the ground descends into a gorge. We see clear out to the side of the opposite hill. A brook murmurs past where we stand. The sun streams over all. What a delicious hush! What a sense of joy there is in every fiber of being. We enjoy the scene for a few moments when, hark! There is a burst of music. It comes rolling towards us from the top of the opposite hill. What is it? It is a mixture of voices and instruments, stringed instruments. How beautiful are the voices, so musical, so full and correct. The instruments are so adapted to the voices. There must be at least one hundred people. It is so beautiful. It is ravishing. We stand and listen. We do not know the piece yet. It seems familiar. It is a Psalm of praise to God led by an elderly-looking man we know as we approach. It is David. We hear it out and then all falls quiet."

Do we believe the Lord's coming is near?  
How will we meet him, with joy or with fear?  
Will he likely be to then recognize  
in us the foolish or the virgins wise?

We make the answer as daily we live  
and what we are thinking and what we give.  
What we may say in acts we have performed  
the pattern of life to which we have conformed?

Two ways are open: the narrow and broad.  
Two masters to serve: the flesh or the Lord.  
The world in its joys can claim our real love,  
our affections be set on what is above.

The time is now short. The Lord is at hand,  
and when he appears, just where shall we stand?  
Some on the left will depart in to the night.  
Who can imagine their terror and plight?

But oh for the joys for those on the right  
exalting in praises in glory and might.  
And let us be ready, able to pray  
with trembling, yet gladly, come Lord today.

Time is going by quickly and we know that at any time our time will be up, whether by death, or by Christ's return. We know not the time the alarm will go off. Take courage and strength from David, our elder Brother, who in Psalms wrote these words. In Psalm 103, beginning at verse 11, *"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. Like as the father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."* I'd like you to place your bookmark in Psalm 103.

Anytime you're feeling down, as we're running towards this goal that we have set before us, anytime you feel that you are at a low or need help, always remember Psalm 103. The whole chapter is nothing but encouragement to build a person up in this race that we run. Now is the time to prepare for the new millennium. Now is the time to prepare for Christ's returning. Time is very precious. Time has been graciously given to us by our Heavenly Father. What are you doing with yours? For the greatest gift is eternal life during and beyond the millennium.

*Bro. Dan Jackson*

## **The Perfect Law of Liberty**

*"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."*

*"But if any man have not the spirit of Christ,  
he is none of his" 2 Cor. 3:17 Rom 8:9*

BY this rule we judge ourselves and others, for-

*"By their fruits ye shall know them" (Mt. 7:20).*

Having been called by the Truth we become the Ecclesia of God, "called-out ones" from the bondage of sin and death to the "glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:21). This liberty is not complete as yet, for Paul says-

*"Ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan with-in ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (verse 23).*

If those that had the Holy Spirit groaned because of this bondage of corruption, we certainly have not attained to complete liberty. In a certain sense, though we do have liberty, because we can be freed from the bondage of 70 sin and death.

Since we die because of sin, we must avail ourselves of the only way of redemption through Christ Jesus.

If we are honest with ourselves, we can see sin in ourselves easier than in others. The battle against sin still rages, but its bondage has been broken:

*"The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2).*

And Jesus said (John 8:31-32)

"If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free."

*Only if we continue in the Word are we Christ's disciples. If we fail, then we are not his disciples. It is only by continuing in the Truth that it shall make us free and we shall be fully freed when the race is over.*

This is spoken of as an *"high and holy calling,"* so we must value it as such. Not by our own power but with God's help we minister this New Covenant not by the letter, but by the Spirit. In 2 Cor. 3:5-6, we read-

*"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves. to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God, Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Covenant; not of the letter but of 'the 'spirit: For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."*

This does not mean that there should be no law in our walk in the Truth; but rather that being governed by the spirit of the Truth, we will obey the laws of Christ (2 Cor. 3:17)-

"Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

And Gal. 5:1-13- *"Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. For, brethren, ye have been 'called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion fo the flesh, but by love serve one another."*

In 1 Cor. 10, we have a great example and lesson in Israel's history. Israel, says Paul, was "under the cloud," or protection of God, and baptized typically "in the cloud and the sea"; they were partakers of that typical spiritual meat and drink (Christ's body and blood) they were freed from and received liberty (a position on a par with our own) - but they tempted the Spirit of God and lusted after unlawfu I things, and murmured about the restrictions.

They became disobedient, and as a result their liberty became a bondage greater than that from which they had been delivered. Their sin is summed up as IDOLATRY. Their lusting for and murmuring for forbidden things constituted worship, communion and fellowship.

The apostle continues with very serious words about the holiness of fellowship, upon which we should deeply ponder. (1Cor. 10:15-23)-

*"I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.*

*"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?*

*"The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?*

*"For we being many are one bread and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.*

*"Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?*

*"What say I then?-that the idol is anything, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is anything?"*

*"But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should fellowship with devils.*

*"Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils.*

*"Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?*

*"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful but all things edify not."*

There must be no mixing of fellowship. The children of God, the light of the world, called to such a high calling, must be circumspect in every detail. Some things are lawful but are unwise and are prohibited by the spirit of the Truth. In everything we must ask-*"Will our actions and ways be a benefit to ourselves, to our ecclesia, to the Berean cause, and - most of all - to Christ's Name?"*

To "edify" means to "build up," but some of the things we may be doing will pull down the standard to a degraded level. We glorify God and serve His holy purpose by always walking in Truth.

Many things that some Brethren and Sisters do, the way they speak and act, the way they dress or fail to dress, the company they keep and the forms of entertainment they indulge in would cause them great shame and regret, if Christ were to appear in their presence while so occupied.

We have an obligation, laid upon us as part of that New Covenant, to govern ourselves by the spirit of Christ, by the Truth, which should so affect our conscience, as to make us walk in the Spirit, regardless of who sees or knows, simply because of our love for the Truth and for our Brethren and  
72 Sisters. This is the bounds of our liberty. (1 Cor. 9:19)-

"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more."

Paul says in Rom. 14:7-

*"None of us liveth to himself"*

And here, too, (verse 24) he emphasized the same vital principle of the mind of Christ- *"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth (RV-good)."*

We must realize that everything we do not only affects our own lives but the lives of those around us. If we cause one of the Brethren or Sisters, or even just those connected with the Truth, to stumble, we are in a dangerous position.

And again in Romans 15:1-2, he further stresses this point, this test of Christlikeness-

*"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."*

*"Let everyone of us please his neighbor for his good to edification."*

Or from the Diaglott- *"...so far as is good for edification."*

In 1 Cor. 8:9 he warns (and we do well to hearken)-

*"But take heed lest by any means your liberty become a stumbling block to them that are weak."*

We may feel--yes, we may truly be perfectly justified in what we do, but when our liberty becomes a cause of sin to others, then we are sinning against Christ. We are manifesting the deadly, selfish spirit of the flesh and not loving, life-giving spirit of Christ-

*"But when ye sin so against the brethren and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ" (1 Cor. 8:12).*

In Romans 8:10-17 he points out the great advantage and superiority of the way of Christ, and the joy to which it leads those who submit to it in faith and love-

*"If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin: but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."*

*"If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you."*

And he points with crystal clearness to the great contrast between the two alternatives that lie before each one of us, as we pass through this life.

*"Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh."*

*"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live!"* (verses 10-13).

And he tells where the power of the victory is drawn from:

*"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God"* (verse 14).

The call to the service of Christ is not a call to bondage, but to the liberty of the devotion of sons in the freewill labor of love (verses 15-16)-

*"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."*

*"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God"*

But we must "suffer with him," we must agonize to overcome, even as he overcame-

*"And if children, then heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."*

Even though we are partially freed, we are still debtors. When we have been adopted into the whole family of God, we owe our allegiance to our Father in heaven. Let us therefore follow the example of our Elder Brother Christ, in all things (1 Cor. 6:19-20)-

"Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price;

"Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

*Bro. Arthur Jones*

## **As Ye See The Day Approaching**

As the day of Christ's return rapidly approaches, we see that mankind becomes more deeply enmeshed in a tangled web of difficulties and problems for which there are no apparent solutions. Mankind has yet to learn the truth Jeremiah spoke so long ago. *"O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."* (Jer. 10-23) Although his intentions are often good, he falls into evil because of his sinful nature and because he cannot predict the future with certainty or accuracy. Only Yahweh (and whom He empowers) can do so. The Scriptures tell us that the heart of man is evil from his youth; deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. In Ecc. 8:11 we are told: *"Because sentence against an*

*evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."*

In the beginning of this order of things upon the earth, God blessed and gave commandment to the first human pair to "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and *subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*" (Gen. 1:28) We know of the terrible catastrophe which brought the end of the antediluvian age because of the violence and wickedness which had filled the earth. Similarly, after the flood God blessed Noah and his three sons, saying: "...Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered." (Gen. 9:1-2)

*Man* was to be a dresser, tiller and caretaker upon the earth. He sought to be free of the toil and "sweat" of husbandry. Very few indeed were the faithful who adhered to the Truth and the narrow way to life. Both before and after the flood, mankind sought great things for themselves. We read of the "mighty men which were of old, men of renown" We also read of those who lived on the plain in the land of Shinar who said, "Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."

As we write this, we think of the second and third paragraphs of *Part I* in Elpis Israel, written by Dr. John Thomas and reproduce them here.

*"This celestial orb, which is a world or system of itself, is styled the earth. It is the habitation of races of animals which graze its fields, lurk in its forests, soar through its atmosphere, and pass through the paths of its seas. At the head of all these is a creature like themselves, animal, sensual and mortal. He is called Man. He has replenished the earth and subdued it, and filled it with his renown. His crimes, however, rather than his virtues, have illustrated and distinguished him with an unhappy pre-eminence above all other created things. His heart is evil; and, left to its uncontrolled impulses, he becomes licentious, merciless, and more cruel than the fiercest beast of prey."*

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*"Such is the being that claims the independent sovereignty of the globe. He has founded dominions, principalities, and powers; he has built great cities, and vaunted himself in the works of his hands, saying, "Are not these by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" He repudiates all lordship over him, and claims the inalienable and inherent right of self-government, and of establishing whatever civil and ecclesiastical institutions are best suited to his sensuality and caprice. Hence, at successive periods, the earth has become the*

*arena of fierce and pandemoniac conflicts; its tragedies have baptized its soil in blood, and the mingled cries of the oppressor and the victim have ascended to the throne of the Most High."*

In the 152 years since this was written, we haven't seen any improvement. Man has only increased in his rebelliousness against God. Because of the tremendous increase in knowledge, he has invented and built terrible weapons of mass destruction. His wars from the American Civil War up through the present have been ever more expensive and costly in the way of lives lost and property destroyed. The Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945 from a B-29 bomber, named *Anola Gay*, ushered in the Atomic Age. One hundred and forty thousand people died in that one bomb blast! Then came another on Nagasaki. Something like 52 million people died in World War II, alone! Tyrants such as Joseph Stalin and Adolph Hitler, plus many others beside during that long period of time, have kept the world in almost a constant state of flux. Mishandling of oil, gas and nuclear materials has cost billions of dollars in damage through time and much loss of life. Chornobyl and the Valdes oil spill, not to mention the Persian Gulf oil well fires were terribly costly both in lives and in money and in damage to the environment. Industrial pollution has cost incalculable sums worldwide during this time. Seemingly limitless sums have been spent on alcohol, tobacco and drugs. Chemical dependency and substance abuse rehabilitation cost many billions annually; not to mention the social, psychological and physical health costs when factored in. Outlandish sums are spent annually on entertainment such as sports events and equipment, video tapes and CD's. The list goes on and on.

Man has an insatiable appetite for so many things. He hasn't progressed much from the tower-building of Babylon. He is looking in the wrong direction for happiness and security and fulfillment. He has gone mad upon his many inventions and idols. He doesn't seek unto God, though He is not far from any who would truly seek Him. Myriads know Him not and choose not to know Him, even if given the opportunity. Yet, they are seeking health, pleasure and long life, but on their own terms and without understanding that these things can only come in the fullest sense from God. Apart from knowing the only true God, (and abiding in Him and His son) all leads to death.

Man doesn't want to answer to (or be responsible to) God. He wants to believe in a baseless theory of evolution. He would rather believe that blind chance brought all of the beautiful order and symmetry out of chaos. The Scriptures tell us: "*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God*"

76 The theory of evolution is a problem that creates a multitude of worse problems for man. He cuts himself off from the only source of life and light and true good. He thinks he can solve his own problems and control his own destiny. *The very law of sin and death written in his members is that which*

prevents him from being able to do it.

Geneticists are in the process of mapping the human genome. The human genome may be thought of as the human instruction book or blueprint. It is the complete set of genes which are in each one of us. Scientists believe there are between 50,000 and 100,000 (perhaps 70,000) genes in every cell in our bodies. They are a year ahead of schedule and expect to finish the project in a couple of years. Their efforts are helping them to understand genetically originated diseases, such as some cancers, diabetes, etc. They hope to be able to eventually know which genes (flawed or switched "off" or "on" or missing altogether) are involved and how to treat or cure the disease. We know that there is no power but of God. We don't know how far the Almighty will allow man to go in his genetic studies, but at some point, it would appear (and very soon) that the curtain must descend. Man is treading on very thin ice. He is playing with the very vitals of life. He is in real trouble in the area of gene manipulation and genetic engineering. Bio-technical companies are moving too quickly in the development of genetically altered or modified seeds and animals. They are creating a multitude of problems. Ethical, moral and legal problems and issues are arising and are being hotly debated. Greed, pride and arrogance are the driving forces in many of the genetic research companies. The profits for successfully genetically engineered products are enormous. However, litigation is taking down many corporations which are in too big a rush and have made false claims and have lied or covered up information that should have been revealed. Of course, some good will come (and some already has) from the research being done. But the potential for great evil is very much a reality.

How much further will Yahweh allow man to go in his rebellion and pride? It simply can't be much longer. The population of earth yesterday afternoon stood at 6,033,651,046! That's 33.5 million more of us on this planet than there were less than five months ago. The time bomb is ticking away. It is not only weapons of mass destruction, genetics research and population that indicate the end of this age is near, but the complex tangle of problems and evils for which man simply doesn't have the answers. As Yahweh did to the tower-builders of Babylon, so he will shortly do again as he interrupts the attempts and plans of man.

The computer has given man (as it were) one language. With it, he has sought out many inventions. He has made exact plans and seeks great things for himself. *"And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city." (Gen. 11:6-8)*

# THOUGHTS GLEANED BY THE WAY

By a Wayfarer

*"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth, I came not to send peace, but a sword" (Matt. 10<sup>34</sup>).*

Peace is spoken of in the scriptures in three principal ways:

1. *"Peace with God"* (Romans 5:1);
2. *"The peace of God"* (Phil 4:7);
3. Peace *"on earth"* (Luke 2:14).

In Romans 5:1, we read: *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* Through faith the sinner gains access to God's grace or favor; meets the terms which God has prescribed for healing the breach between God and man, accomplished through God's purpose in Christ Jesus. Through the operation of belief of the word of God on the mind, the believer is reconciled to God; enmity is turned to love and trust.

*"And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself. and you who were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight, if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel."* Christ, through obedience, even unto death on the cross, opened up the way for sinners to become reconciled to God, thus effecting *"peace with God "*

In Phil 4:6-7 the Apostle Paul speaks of "the peace of God" in these words: *"Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*

78 *"Be careful for nothing"* means "be not anxious;" that is, be not filled with anxiety for the things of this life. The *"peace of God"* describes that inward state of mind of the believer who has found "peace with God" through faith and obedience, having committed to God through *"prayer and supplication with thanksgiving"* all his anxieties, placing his trust in God, that, so long as he serves Him faithfully, all things will work together for his good;

a peace that passeth the understanding of the natural mind; peace, even in the midst of affliction, sorrow, or distress.

The Lord Jesus Christ had no reference to "*peace with God*" or the "*peace of God*" when he said, "*I came not to send peace, but a sword.*" For, it was through Him that peace with God and the peace of God was made available to believers. But Christ's teaching was not to bring peace to the world, but the reverse. He knew that his teaching would never quell the hate, envy, malice, greed, and the desire for power in a godless world; that strife and war, caused by these human passions would continue, because only the few would be turned away from the lusts of the flesh by his teaching, and that so long as sinful man ruled the world, the effects of human desires and emotions would cause war & strife.

Moreover, He knew that His teaching, which is contrary to the thinking and desires of the flesh, would bring more opposition and conflict than peace. That His teaching would bring the peace of God only to the few; that the great majority would resent and resist the principles of His teaching, and so it has proved to be the case.

The world has scorned any religion which denied them the privilege of following the desires of the flesh and the ways of the world. In fact, as the kingdom of man is constituted, its affairs could not be conducted in accordance with the principles of Christ, and were never intended, in the purpose of God to become a basis for the laws by which sinful men were to be ruled.

The peace of God can only be obtained by THOSE WHO SEPARATE FROM THE WORLD AND ITS WAYS. No peace of God can be had by those who try to serve God and the world at the same time, for, "*If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him*" (1 John 2:15), and whosoever loves the world is the enemy of God.

Christ did not promise his followers peace in the world in the ordinary sense, but rather opposition and persecution; that faithful service to Christ would turn friends to foes, even they of his own household would in many instances turn against the faithful disciple.

It will only be when the Prince of Peace returns to earth and suppresses wickedness and strife that "on earth peace" will be realized. Meanwhile the peace of God will continue to reign in the hearts of Christ's faithful disciples in the midst of the strife and confusion rampant in the world.

## What Does That Mean?

*"And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the LORD our God; lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword." (Exodus 5:3)*

Why did God have Moses request three days' journey when His intention was to "bring them up out of Egypt?" Was God not being fully honest with Pharaoh?

Some interpret the word "three" to mean "a considerable distance," but I feel that that interpretation plays with what is recorded. The word is-- and means—"THREE", and was used intentionally.

It does, at first, appear to be a rather disingenuous request, designed for Israel to get away completely under the pretense of leaving for only three days. This, however, is taking a very narrow view of the plan God had for Israel; much more was at stake than the time away. Before God would take the people out of Pharaoh's land, He was to establish—for all to see-- His authority to do so. Pharaoh was considered a god of Egypt; here is a request for the Hebrews to go out of the land and worship a different God. This action would answer the question, "who do the Hebrews belong to, Pharaoh or Yahweh?" Pharaoh's response was as expected:

*"And Pharaoh said, who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go." (Exodus 5:2)*

The question is now framed exactly as God wished. If it is established that Yahweh is the god of the Hebrews, then He does not require Pharaoh's permission for anything. This goal is seen in Exodus 9:14, *"For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth."*

God established his authority with Pharaoh, even though He knew Pharaoh would be faithless: *"But as for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear the LORD God"* (Exodus 9:30) God had a far more important reason for establishing his authority than just to be fair to Pharaoh. He told the Israelites, *"And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that ye may know how that I am the LORD."* (Exodus 10:2)

Not only did Israel learn that God was in control, but so did the surrounding nations. When Moses arrived in the wilderness and met his father-in law, we read: *And Jethro said, Blessed be the LORD, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh, who hath delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them."* (Exodus 18:11)

God has established His authority! Do we acknowledge that in word and in deed each and every day?

