

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 upbuilding exhortations are encouraged. This is an effort to upbuild and prepare us in heart and mind for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

ODIADO BUSIA KENYA Sunday School 9am – 10am – 10:30am Bible Study; Memorial 11:30am; Wed Bible Study home visiting 2:30pm; Fri. 2:30pm New Friends class lecture; Bro. Humphres Odaba Budedu, Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia, Odiado, PO Box 142, Bumala (Buusia), Kenya, East Africa

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

We are very grateful to bring this current news held during the Bible class on 25th August – 27th August, 2000 at Odiado Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia.

We received Brothers and Sisters from other Ecclesias, i.e. Bro. Philip Wekati, Bro. John Wafula Simiyu, Bro. Samson Wanjala and Bro. David Wakati from Kimukingi Ecclesia. Bro. Roggers Musebe and Sis. Caroline Musebe from Sipala Webuye and Bro. John Simiyu from Mayanja Ecclesia. A lot was delivered among the topics covered were as follows:

1. How to understand and interpret the Bible - Bro. Humphres Odaba
2. Promises to Abraham – Bro. Francis Muchwanju
3. The Second Coming of Christ – Bro. Francis Ogama
4. God's Kingdom and where are the dead Fellows – Bro. Roggers Musebe
5. One Bible many churches – Why? And Baptism – Bro. Phillip Wekati
6. Holy Spirit and the Lamb of God that takes away our sins – Bro. John Simiyu
7. Resurrection and Judgement – Bro. Musebe

At the end the exhortation was given by Bro. Phillip Wekati from 1 Corinthians 8, 9 warning us from idol worshipping. We thank those who participated in building us with the Word of God.

During that session we had interviews for 5 students of which 4 passed and were baptised and welcomed to the fellowship of the Bereans. These were **Edwin Odaba, Fredrick Ogutu, Antonina Nabwire and Lucia Ogutu.**

We are looking forward with hope when the son of God shall come and rule on Earth and give eternal life to those who are waiting, watching and trimming their lamps with pure oil of the Word of God.

On behalf of the Brethren and Sisters of Odiado Ecclesia,
Bro. Humphres Odaba Budedu

KITUI, KENYA, Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia, Bro. David Njoka, P.O. Box 1, Kitui, Kenya, East Africa

Dear Brethren and Sisters in Christ Jesus,

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

It has been considerable time since any news has been sent from this part of the world. It's with much joy to announce that on 2nd September 2000 we were reminded that Yahweh is still taking out of the nations a people for His name.

Stephen David Njoka put on the saving name of the Lord Jesus Christ in the waters of baptism after giving a good confession of his faith before the Brethren. We were delighted that this important first step of obedience was taken, and rejoiced together on that occasion.

Our rejoicing continued as we listened to his talk on the theme entitled "SIGNS OF THE TIMES" in the afternoon section before we ended our bible school. It is our prayers that God will bless our new young brother as he walks unto Zion. A walk, which we hope and pray, will be a short one.

The Bible school started on 1st September, 2000 as planned and progressed well. We had a number of people ranging between twenty to twenty-five (20-25) for all days.

On 1st September topics dealt with were:

1. What is the nature of man? (F. Muchwanju)
2. The promises of God (J Simiyu)
3. Baptism essential to salvation? (F. Muchwanju)
4. One bible many churches, why? (J Simiyu)

2nd September,

1. The Devil, Satan and Demon (F. Muchwanju)
2. The Kingdom of God (D. Njoka)
3. Resurrection and Judgement (J. Simiyu)
4. Signs of the Times (Stephen Njoka)
5. Fellowship (J. Simiyu)

3rd September

Memorial service:

Exhortation: Peace and judgement coming soon upon Earth. (D. Njoka).

Our special 'Thank you' goes to Bro. John Simiyu and Francis Muchwanju for their long trip all the way from Western to here Kitui.

The gathering was spiritually uplifting for us all. We pray for the soon return of Jesus on this troubled Earth and establish the everlasting Kingdom which will stand forever.

We were sorry to learn that Bro. Epaphras was busy with burial ceremony of one of his blood relatives.

Even though may our Lord come soon, on behalf of Kitui Ecclesia

Bro. David Njoka

HENGOED, Wales, UK – 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., UK CF44 6LN; phone (011) 441-685-870254

Beloved Bre. & Sis. in the Bonds of the Abrahamic Covenant.

Once again it is our great joy to record the fact, that another of our Sunday School has put on the Saving Name of the Lord Jesus Christ in the waters of baptism. On this occasion we witnessed **Ariel Hopper** being baptised on Wednesday 27th September after giving a good confession of his faith on the previous Friday evening. Ariel's young years have certainly not been easy, and we were delighted to receive his letter making an application for baptism. He was received into fellowship on Sunday 1st October, and exhorted to hold fast to the Word of the Living God, and to make it a rule of his life to "ask for the old paths, where is the good way." We pray that he may do just that as we wait

for the Return of our beloved master. Sadly, for us in Hengoed, Bro. Ariel left for Canada on Tuesday 10th October, where he plans to stay for a while. We commend him to the love and care of the Bre. and Sis. of the Richard ecclesia.

On another joyful note, we are also pleased to record the marriage on 9th October, of our Bro. Stephen Male to Sis. Elizabeth Phillips of the Canton, Ohio Ecclesia. Those in attendance at the North Eastern Gathering this October would have witnessed this time of rejoicing, as two servants of Christ Jesus, unite together "in the Lord." We pray that Yahweh will bless them both as they walk together towards the Kingdom; helping each other in the dark and evil days in which we live. We are also delighted that Sis. Elizabeth is now a member of our ecclesia. In these days of comparative isolation, it is always encouraging to receive the company of like precious faith. We hope and pray that we can all help one another, as we prepare for the Bridegroom's Return – an event which must surely (and hopefully) be at the door.

On behalf of the Bre. and Sis. of the Hengoed Ecclesia,
Bro. Phillip Hughes

RICHARD, Sask. – S.S. 10am; Memorial, 11:20am; Wed. Class 8pm. Meetings held at The Richard Ecclesial Hall, Bro. Ed Truelove, 2165 Douglas Ave, North Battleford, Sask. Canada S9A 3N8, phone (306) 445-3240

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

Activity in this corner of the ecclesial world has been brisk; time passes quickly, and we realize that it has been many months since our previous report to the brotherhood.

We have been blessed with several significant events over the past few months. In April a baby boy (Riley) was born to Bro. Kelly and Sis. Sandy Readman. Also in April a study weekend took place on the subject "Every Man Did That Which Was Right In His Own Eyes." Ecclesial numbers were swelled by visitors from the Edmonton Ecclesia, i.e., Bro. Norman and Sis. Tina Blacker, Sis. Shirley Luard, Sis. June Jones, Sis. Jennifer Luard, Bro. Steve and Sis. Gwen Armstrong. Bro. Steve gave words of exhortation on Sunday morning.

July brought two joyful occasions in the form of the baptisms of **Bro. Darwin Farkas** and **Bro. Jonathon Jackson**.

It is encouraging as we continue to witness world events supporting and fulfilling the predictions of Scripture. While no one knows the day or the hour, it is obvious that we are in the final stages of Gentile times. Our Lord's return, therefore, is imminent, and we need to take the necessary measures to assure our readiness for that event.

For the Richard Ecclesia,
Bro. Ed Truelove, Recorder
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FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held God Willing)

LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING.....June 8 - 10, 2001

Bro. Rusty Stephen, HC3 Box 16A, Lampasas, TX 76550, 512-556-6771

RICHARD FRATERNAL GATHERING June 29 – July 2, 2001

Bro. Ed Truelove, 2165 Douglas Ave, N.Battleford, Sask, Canada S9A 3N8, 306-445-3240

HYE FRATERNAL GATHERINGJuly 21 - 29, 2001

Bro. Curtis Hurst, Rt.1 Box 40, Mullin, TX 76864, 915-985-3868

HOLLADAY FRATERNAL GATHERING October 10-12, 2001

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

The Greater Marriage to Come

We begin our exhortation this morning with a question: How often do the words, "I love you," come out of our mouths? We like to hear them: yet, we have a hard time saying them, especially to someone not of our family. Studies show the male population has a particularly hard time saying these words. We have a hard time saying, "I love you." Why is it so hard to say? And why can't we say it more often?

I'd like to share a story with you. A man and woman are driving down the highway, when another car passes them. The woman notices the occupants of the other car are young and obviously in love. The girl is sitting very close to her boyfriend as they cruise down the road. This causes the woman to think back to when she and her husband were young and in love, and she began to wonder where the show of affection had disappeared to over the years. Finally, she says to her husband, "Remember when we used to be like that young couple? Where'd the love go, Honey?" Well, her question was met with a few moments of silence, and then he gently replied, "I haven't moved."

Isn't this true? Showing less affection and taking each other for granted gradually happens over the years.

We are all here, in this house, as brethren and sisters; yet, how often do you say to your fellow brother or sister, "I love you"? This saying does not mean "I want to marry you": it carries a much deeper meaning. The Lord Jesus said, "*Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*" (John 15:13) And this he did.

Let us take a few moments to examine our natural marriage to see if there are some similarities to our ecclesial family.

Marriage is as old as man himself. It was God that instituted marriage. He said, "*Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and* 221

shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." (Gen. 2:24)
"Therefore shall a man leave – or *forsake* – his father and his mother, and shall cleave – or *be joined to* – his wife: and they shall be *one flesh*."

We see the three terms of marriage: (1) To forsake father and mother, (2) to be joined to, and (3) shall be one flesh. So what are the requirements, or terms, of a marriage? Marriage begins with sacrifice: Man (or woman) forsakes his own family to establish another – to establish as a joint venture, to vow to live together as partners, and the abandoning of self-interest and individual freedom to become one flesh in all its aspects. These terms are to last until human life comes to an end, or till the return of our Lord and Saviour. "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

Let us look at the sacrifice first. There must be a complete break from being involved with your natural family's life in daily living. Too often young people are married, but are still known as "Momma's boy" because the separation just isn't made. Mothers and fathers also can fail to recognize God's command to leave, or to forsake, father and mother.

How similar this is to a life in the Lord. At baptism we are to forsake the world. We are to forsake our former life to live as one in Christ. Christ is the Bridegroom with the ecclesia being the bride. When we are baptized, we become engaged to him; to await that Marriage Day with anticipation just as a couple looks forward to the day of their marriage.

Sacrifice of self is our biggest hurdle that we must overcome in this life. Our practice comes when we sacrifice things in the joining to a partner for life. I heard someone once say, "The purpose of marriage is to integrate the new relationship into a new and divine family. Each partner must strive to make it a divine reality."

The next term we look at is "joint venture divinely directed and God guided." "A man shall cleave unto his wife." In reading many Scriptures (example – the Proverbs, or the writings of Paul) there is much advice on marriage, and individuals in marriage. We find marriage is a great challenge, for it is the unity one must form that cannot be formed with any other. One cannot form it with a brother or sister, an aunt or uncle. Just think about the life together you normally wouldn't have with any other person: buying a house together, or buying the furnishings for the house, making adjustments to each others' characteristics and working together for the good of the ecclesia. Everything, everything is done to contribute to a divine conception of unity to be found no where else.

Again, we heard, "Throughout marriage, there is every reason for self-examination to continue, so that both partners never lose sight of their divinely directed mission in the spiritual life. Because if marriage begins to lose its 'spirit of partnership' there is a danger that each will go his or her own way, to his own hurt, and that of the children, if there are any."

We examine this in regard to the ecclesia. We are to jointly work together; to be of one mind, one faith – helping each other to attain to the ultimate goal. We see our ecclesia as being God-guided, and see the joy of a people working together. An ecclesia will also (if it loses its spirit of partnership) find brothers and sisters going their own way – to the hurt of the children, the Sunday School Scholars. We must keep this in mind.

The concern of "wrongness" is not only a personal matter, but it concerns God first and foremost. We must strive, always with patience, to work together sacrificing our wants and needs and desire. As we sang in our opening hymn: *"Behold, how good a thing it is, and how becoming well, together such as brethren are in unity to dwell."*

The last term we shall look at is "they shall be one flesh". In God's eyes the marriage is the joining of the man and woman that they become one flesh. Jesus said, *"...and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh."* (Matt. 19:5,6) They are no longer two people, but one; no longer two directions, but one; no more two lives, but one. They are one in Divine unity. Each spouse should consider the welfare of the other, and both should strive to adjust their attitudes so that God's desire for spiritual unity with His children can be achieved in the family life. How much better can one describe the necessity for this in the ecclesia?

Brothers and Sisters, at our baptisms, we became engaged – engaged to be married - in the future with Christ. Our life today (in the betrothed state) should follow the terms spoken of in the verse I quoted earlier...Matt. 19:5,6. We must treat each other (as bre. and sis.) as we would treat our spouse. We must use care, consideration, sacrifice, dedication, thoughtfulness without ridicule, and set a goal for selfless thoughts and actions, and most importantly with love. Paul says of all things love is the greatest.

In I John, we find very good advice. Let's look at chapter 3 beginning at verse 11: *"For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another."* Going on to verse 14, we read, *"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."* And on to verses 17 and 18: *"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, 223*

and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." Again in chapter 4 verses 7 and 8, we further read, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." And finally, (verses 1 and 12) "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."

Christ, in love, laid down his life for us. What, then, is required of us? And what is our motivation? Marriage, properly understood and lived, is a part of Divine fellowship in which love, patience, sympathy, understanding and service can truly be learned; and happy is the couple from whom these qualities flow to the rest of the House-hold of Faith. Their reward will be the eternal blessings of God, the Father.

Brethren and Sisters, we partake of these emblems in anticipation of the greater marriage to come, in anticipation of the return of the one we love - the Bridegroom. Let us partake of these emblems with love in our hearts and minds. Remember, Brethren and Sisters, to say, "I love you," both to each other and to our Heavenly Father and His Son.

Bro. Dan Jackson

The Nairobi Bomb Blast and the Endtime

Today is on 7th August, 2000. Kenyans are remembering the terrorism at which took place on the same date two years now ago – bomb blast happened once in Kenya. The day was such fine for all of us. Apart from the normal fears which we are used to, everything was OK. Some parts of the country were cold, and some hot. In some parts people were planting, while in others they were harvesting. Others celebrating while others were mourning the loss of their beloved ones. In the other places people were busy at their places of work that they didn't care how time was passing. To the Niarobians, life looked just fine dragging on as usual in such a hurry you could think it was late for a special or important date.

Nothing seemed to matter to us all until, somewhere, somehow, life came to a halt! Some mad men, under the influence of the evil one, eager to revenge, bombed the co-operative building and the American Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Saalam. This is something we used to hear or watch 224 the make believe in movies. It was hard for us to understand why in

the first place it happened in our country. Yes, the ferry drowned at Mtongue in Mombasa, the train drowned at Mitito Andei. Some places have been affected by the tribal clashes between ethnic groups, killing hundreds of people. Road accidents, famine and diseases like AIDS have robbed the lives of millions around the world; and wars have literally wiped out thousands of people in Rwanda and Congo (both African countries). But a bomb blast? Killing more than two hundred and fifty people? This was hard to believe. Such things happened in other countries but not in Kenya. We tried to believe it was just a bad dream but the truth of the matter was that it already happened.

(Gen. 18:20-21) Two men were sent to go and destroy a city. They were not to bombard one or two or three buildings, but to destroy the whole city with its inhabitants and leave it in ashes. They were sent by someone who was very angry about the behaviors of the people of that city. These two men were not ordinary men. They were God's messengers (angels). This shows how serious God was and how worse the wickedness of the city was. The people of Sodom and Gomorrah were wicked beyond say. Despite the sinfulness of sodomites, Lot was considered righteous. One way that shows his righteousness is that his two daughters were still virgins. Gen. 19:8 The reputation of the sodomites reached its peak when they asked for Lot's two guests to have sex with them. (Gen. 19:5) Lot offered his two daughters so that they would leave his guests, but those men were too wicked even to listen to him. Their immediate pay was blindness. The men in Lot's house reached out and struck them with total blindness. Vs.11

Lot was dragged out of the city at dawn. The things started happening. God rained down sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:24) There was no way of escape – no people to rescue others and no fire extinguishers. All perished together with their wealth. And down went the wicked city. That's what God did - He bombed the whole city. In days of Noah, all flesh perished by the flood. Only 8 people survived (Gen 7:13) that is what God did to the evil generations in the past. It was worse than what we know or have seen. The city of Sodom was never rebuilt, it still lies in rubble. Today we are talking about bombing, famine, disease, earthquakes etc., etc., but what about the future?

Predictions – what is that? It is what has been said and written about the future. Much of what was said has happened. The bible, the Word of the Living God, speaks of the future as the last days. According to what has been written down, we are into the end of the age of the last days (2 Peter 2:1-2) people will leave the true faith. This is nothing new even in this country. The greatest number of people are shifting from one 225

religion to another. Others are believed to be worshipping their own gods. Truly we have over 900 religions in this country. Sects are increasing day and night. People only want to be told what they want to hear.

Paul, writing to Timothy, in (2 Timothy 3:1-5) the way the things are happening now is exactly the fulfillment of Paul's words. Now people are lovers of money, lovers of themselves, boastful, unkind, merciless, slanderers, violent, disobedient to parents, ungrateful...etc., etc. and because of their wickedness, they will be denied peace. Isaiah 48:22, 57:21. There is no peace in this world. Worse still the situation is deteriorating. The only true peace comes from God alone. He can't give it to those who have nothing to do with Him. What next then? More to come? Yes, the Bible isn't silent about the last days. (2 Thess. 2:1-5) The wicked one is to appear. He will oppose every so called god or object of worship and will put himself above them all. He will sit down in God's temple and claim to be God. This prediction is taking place today. A man calling himself God? How! We know a person by the name Holy Father. Isn't this God's own Name? My dear reader, just see one of these verses (Mt 6:9, Malachi 1:6, 2:10, John 4:23, Romans 4:11, Eph. 4:6 etc.) Christ himself refused the idea of calling any man father in spirit except God alone. (Matt. 23:8). We have seen many things that were predicted and have happened. That is sufficient proof that even the others will take place. Soon something greater than Noah's flood, greater than poured sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah will happen. This must happen for God changes not.

Perhaps you have survived a couple big and worse troubles by inches or trapped but rescued. What about that coming event? This is the only chance both I and you have to make peace with our Creator today. Our days are very short. (Psalms 89:9-12, 146:3-4). All we need is to give our whole life to serving God. For none can serve two masters at a go. Then by accepting the good news of the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ, we will be ready for more that will come, and most of all the coming of our Lord.

"Behold I am coming soon! My reward is with me to give to everyone according to what he has done! Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter through the straight gate that leads to eternal life. For without are dogs and sorcerers and whoremongers murderers and idolators and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. He whoever testifies to these things says, Yes, I'm coming soon, Amen, Even though come soon Lord Jesus. (Rev. 22:12-20).

Knowledge Increased

Among the many signs that we are currently living in the time of the end is the proliferation of knowledge via the internet. There has never been such a time when so much information is so readily available to so many. Daniel wrote of the end of God's plan this way:

Daniel 12:4, *"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."*

The proliferation of knowledge is so complete that even an insignificant group of believers such as ourselves are noted by the world's powerful religions. While before in the world's ages, truly those who believed like us were persecuted and chased to the edges of the Roman Empire as prophesied in:

Revelation 12:5-6, *"And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days."*

Today, we face no such intense persecution at the hand of the orthodox Christian Church. They have lost all power, at least for the present, to torment us. The growing power of the spirit of "liberty, equality, and fraternity" in those countries where the majority of true believers live has greatly hampered religion's ability to dominate world affairs. While the events in the Middle East of the past few weeks are evidence that the power of religion is not dead, it is now greatly restrained by political, social, and economic goals and ideals of the nations.

In traversing the internet, we came across a web site which addressed the subject of the Christadelphians. The conclusion of the authors of this site were:

"As you can see, the Christadelphians deny some essential doctrines of Christianity; namely, the deity of Jesus and salvation by grace.

"Like so many other cult groups that claim to be the restored truth, they have their own interpretations of the Bible that deviate greatly from orthodox Christianity."--Christian Apologetics and Research Ministries. (C.A.R.M.)

Their complaints are that Christadelphians deny the Trinity, especially the expression "God the Son" from the Trinity which of course is a word and expression that never occurs in the Scriptures. They struggle because we affirm the Scriptural teaching of Jesus and Paul:

John 14:28, *"Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.*

1Corinthians 15:28, *"And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."*

And when they say we deny salvation by grace, they mean that we affirm that an individual must believe and be baptized to be saved as taught again by Jesus:

John 3:5, *"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."*

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Since we affirm that Jesus taught that except a man be born of the water and of the spirit, he cannot be saved, that we therefore affirm that salvation is of a work, and not by grace. Of course the truth of the matter is that Salvation is by the Grace of God, but that God has set before us certain conditions upon which His grace will be extended. These include, but are not limited to, baptism.

Mostly though, we were struck by the similarity of the conclusions of this group to those same answers given by the Pharisees and other ruling classes in Israel to those who had listened to, and observed the teaching of Jesus. The very argument given to the people who heard Jesus is the same one now given by C.A.R.M. to those who come across Christadelphian writings.

In Jesus' life, he came challenging the "orthodox" believers of his day. Using the words of the very Scriptures the ruling classes pretended to be obedient to, Jesus continually confounded them, both in private and in public. The ruling classes condemned Jesus for breaking the Sabbath. Jesus asked them:

Luke 13:14-16, *"And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day. The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?"*

At another point the Sadducees came to him, thinking to trap him using their understanding of the Mosaic Law in contrast to Jesus. They presented him the circumstance described under the Mosaic Law where, if a man's brother die, and leave no children, that his brother should take the man's wife, and raise up children and heirs to his deceased brother. The Sadducees, in their wealth and worldly wisdom, reasoned that, if there was a Kingdom, then several men must end up having the same wife, and they, with their worldly wisdom reasoned that this proved the doctrine of a coming kingdom to be

an impossibility. Jesus answered their question out of the very law that they thought condemned Jesus' teachings. But look especially at what Jesus told this ruling and educated class:

Matthew 22:29-32, "Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

Note carefully Jesus' words. To the orthodox religionists of his day, Jesus simply explained to them, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures." What a challenge to their dignity this was. What an embarrassment to their supposed standing with the wise of the world. And imagine the further humiliation that such a positive proof against their established position was so simply proved by one, not nearly so well trained in the finest religious schools of his day, as were this rich, elite, ruling class. Indeed, the common people even marveled at Jesus saying:

John 7:15, "And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?"

Unable to confront Jesus on the basis of the Holy Scriptures, the wise and prudent of his age resorted to a less combative, more evasive tool. They relied on the significance of their place in society to attack Jesus, and ridiculed those who would follow him. They had all of the world's power. They had the "keys", so to speak, of the synagogue upon which all Jewish life hinged. They agreed among themselves that they would use the force of their standing in the world to control the people against the sound teaching of Jesus, for clearly, they could not confound his teachings.

So powerful was this tool that when Jesus opened the eyes of a man born blind, the very parents of the man were more fearful of being ostracized by the society controlled by the Sadducees and Pharisees than they were joyful over the miraculous work that Jesus did. When the religious rulers of the day were brought forth to explain how their son could now see they answered thus:

John 9:20-22, "His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself. These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue."

And so this tool worked on the parents, but not on the one healed. Unwilling to deal with plain and simple facts, just like the so called Christians of today, they turned to the healed man and told him:

John 9:29, *"We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is."*

To which the healed blind man answered, ridiculing them in their unwillingness to see:

John 9:30-33, *"The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing. "*

Again the Pharisees and Sadducees are brought face to face with sound Scriptural teaching. "We know that God heareth not sinners." This was without dispute. Yet God had heard this man, Jesus, and through him opened the eyes of one born blind! How could he possibly be a sinner?

Again, stumped and without any answer, the religious rulers of the day resorted to their only tool against this sound teaching: an attack on the person, comparing him in his poverty to themselves in their splendor.

John 9:34, *"They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out. "*

No, Jesus' teaching was from the same Law of Moses, Psalms, and Prophets that the religious leaders of his day had in their possession. But in reading the same book, they came up with markedly different conclusions. The orthodox teaching of Jesus' day condemned him, no less than the orthodox teaching of today condemns Christadelphians, branding us as cultic or worse. And they do so for the very same reasons. They must define their teachings in words the Scriptures never use, to make points the scriptures know nothing about. Their own leaders confess this. Writing about the Trinity, and its absence in the Scriptures, the now canonized Catholic Cardinal Newman once wrote:

"It may startle those who are but acquainted with the popular writing of this day, yet, I believe, the most accurate consideration of the subject will lead us to acquiesce in the statement as a general truth, that the doctrines in question, the Trinity and the Incarnation, have never been learned merely from Scripture. Surely the sacred volume was never intended, and is not adapted to teach us our creed; however certain it is that we can prove our creed from it, when it has once been taught us... From the very first, the rule has been, as a matter of fact, for the Church to teach the truth, and then appeal to Scripture in vindication of its own teaching." Arians of the Fourth Century, pp 55-56, by Cardinal Newman.

Cardinal Newman is correct. You cannot learn about the Trinity from the pages of the Scriptures. It must be first learned elsewhere, (such as in the pagan Plato's writings,) and then you can find pieces and snippets in the 230 Scriptures which can be wrested to appear to support such a notion. Cardinal Newman could say this, because as he contends, the Church must develop doctrine, knowing the Bible cannot teach you creeds like the

immortality of the soul, or the doctrine of Trinity. But to those not intimidated by the Orthodoxy of today, any more than Jesus was by the orthodoxy of his day, we are content to let the Scriptures teach us:

2 Timothy 3:16-17, *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."*

And just as they blamed the healed blind man for having been born in sin, the ruling religious class blamed anyone who would dare to challenge their authority. At one point, they sent men out to take Jesus and bring them before the seat of the orthodox for judgment. Those sent to bring him back, refused to do so. We read of this in:

John 7:45-49, *"Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? The officers answered, Never man spake like this man. Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed."*

Now, it is the people's fault that the Pharisees and chief Priests cannot stand before the sound teaching of the Jesus and the Scriptures. "This people who know not the law are cursed." But this statement is self condemning. It was the responsibility of the religious class that the people should understand the law. They were not doing their job and teaching the people how to understand. If their reasoning was sound, it should be a simple thing to show it. But they couldn't. And so they condemned the people, and themselves in what they said about their followers.

Truly, the Berean Christadelphians have departed from the teachings of orthodox Christianity, and for good reason. The corruption of the truth, the introduction of principles of paganism, with aspects of the Law of Moses rendered Christianity something the apostle Paul styled "another gospel".

Galatians 1:7, *"Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ."*

The perverters of the teachings of Christ and the apostles won the war in the world. Paul even said that this would happen:

Acts 20:29-31, *"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."*

Since Paul predicted it, should we be intimidated by it? Should we be surprised by it? Should we not rather expect that with great diligence we will be called upon to separate truth from error?

Isaiah 8:20, *"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."*

The test is not who is speaking according to the orthodox professors of their age. The test is not who is regarded as wise by the world's standards. Indeed we are specifically warned not to be carried away by such:

1 Corinthians 1:26-29, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence."

The only test is to the word of God. If they speak not according to this, it is because there is no light or understanding in them, regardless of their position and their place.

Bro. Jim Phillips

DANIEL - NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM

"Thy thoughts," says Daniel, "came into thy mind, upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter." (Daniel 2:29) Should the great empire, which he had founded, be a haven for nations throughout all generations? Or should some one rise after his death, and cause disruption and ruin? What would be the fate of the usurper? Should his power continue? Or should it share a similar fate to his own? Should the world be a constant battlefield? Should history be an eternal record of strife and bloodshed? Should mankind for ever be cursed with the rivalries of potentates, and the devastations caused by military ambition? In this frame of mind, the monarch falls asleep" (Christendom Astray)

When we last considered Daniel, it was in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar, steadfastly refusing to partake of the King's meat. We were greatly impressed with his determination to do that which was right. He "purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the King's meat, nor with the wine which he drank" (Daniel 1:8). This was an act of faith, for if Melzar believed that his head was in danger, then Daniel's life was certainly in jeopardy! It often takes faith and courage to follow the path of righteousness, and Daniel manifested both of these attributes. Bro. Thomas wrote in *Elpis Israel* "Faith without trial finds no scope for demonstration, or evidence of its existence," and referred to the words of James:

"Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, 'thou hast faith, and I have works; ' show me thy faith

without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my worksfaith without works 232 is dead" (chapter 2:17-26)

Daniel demonstrated this *living* faith in God throughout his life, and as we now consider the second chapter of the book which bears his name, we observe the calm frame of mind that he manifests once again, in the face of a more severe trial. He was still only young, about 19 or 20 years of age, yet he shows a maturity of faith that could only come from deep study and meditation upon the Truth of God. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth" was an exhortation that was not lost on Daniel, or his companions. Those words of Solomon sound down through the centuries to our own day, providing sound advice to our own young people, as they consider the two ways which lay before them (Matthew 7:13-14); the way of life, and the way of death.

Daniel chapter 2 then, provides us with another example of the existence of Daniel's faith, in circumstances well known to young and old alike. Nebuchadnezzar has a dream, but no ordinary dream. It had made a deep impression on his mind, and he realized that this dream was very different from any others that had taken place during his sleep. He must know what it meant. So he calls for his "wise" men! Between them, they had a great breadth of knowledge(!), from being able to read the entrails of animals to find out the future (Ezekiel 21:21), to the study of hieroglyphics. They practiced ventriloquism, as well as laying claim to inspiration. So here was a test for them, "Tell me what the dream is, and tell me what it all means".

Now, it may not be the case that Nebuchadnezzar had actually forgotten the dream he had (as we often forget our dreams when we get up in the morning, although we have some recollection of having had a dream). When Nebuchadnezzar said "The thing is gone from me" (verse 5), it may mean that *a decree* had gone from him. The Emphasised Bible translates verses 4 and 5 as follows:-

"Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Aramaic,

0 king < to the ages > live!

Tell the dream to thy servants and the interpretation > we will declare.

The king answered and said to the Chaldeans,

/The word from me /is unalterable: < If ye shall not make known to me the dream and the interpretation thereof > ye shall be cut in pieces..."

This is borne out by Gesenius who renders it "the decree is gone forth from me." Nebuchadnezzar was a superstitious pagan, but he was not stupid! He knew that if he told them the dream, they would have no trouble in concocting an interpretation (verse 9). That would be easy! However, it would not satisfy the king, and put his mind at rest. This dream was special. It was not the normal mental aberrations of confused and distorted thoughts 233

(such as our dreams usually are). This was so different. There was a reality about it, and an air of the "supernatural." If the wise men could tell him what the dream was to start with, he would have confidence in their interpretation of it. This was a tall order, and they understandably pleaded with the king to outline to them the dream – to no avail:

*"The king answered and said,
Of a certainty I know, that > the time > /ye /
would gain – merely because ye see that < unalterable from me >
is the word."*

(verse 8 Emphasised Bible)

Nebuchadnezzar was actually revealing the weakness and folly of the "wise men" of Babylon. The Apostle Paul wrote in Corinthians, "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God" (1 Cor.3:19), and so it is. "There is not a man on earth that can shew the king's matter", they declared (verse 10). In that statement, they spoke the truth, but as Daniel later pointed out, "there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets" (verse 28). Nebuchadnezzar was ignorant of the power of this God. He may have believed in the existence of the God of Israel in an abstract way; in a polytheistic sense. To Nebuchadnezzar, "Yahweh" was just another of the "gods whose dwelling is not with flesh" (verse 10). The deities served by Nebuchadnezzar were obviously more powerful than Yahweh, for had they not been with him in the successful campaigns against the nations, which included Judah (Yahweh's nation)?! Had he not taken captive Yahweh's people, slain many others, and destroyed the Temple?

To the natural eye, it would have seemed Babylon's gods were the most powerful! How different things really are from what they appear to be on the surface. The eye of faith however, sees below the surface, and discerns the reality of every situation, for it looks at all matters from the Creator's viewpoint. Yes, the Kingdom of Judah at that time did not testify to the glory of Yahweh, and we note Daniel's oft repeated phrase "the God of heaven". It was not then "Yahweh Elohim of Israel", for his people (for the most part) were not in the land. They were in the state described as "lo ammi" - not my people (Hosea 1:9), (and we wait in patience for the day when "it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God – Hosea 1:10).

In the meantime, Nebuchadnezzar had yet to learn, that despite appearances, Yahweh was supreme and all wise. Bro. Thomas wrote:

"By the Image-sign, Nebuchadnezzar learned for the first time that the God of Israel was above all gods and kings; and that he intended, notwithstanding the Chaldeo-Babylonish conquest of Judah, and reduction of their city and temple to ruin, to have a kingdom among the generations of men, which in turn should destroy their kingdom, originally founded by 234 Nimroud" (Exposition of Daniel).

At this point in time however, he was "angry and very furious", and "commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon" (verse 12). This sort of trial has not been felt by us. Perhaps the nearest to this persecution, was that experienced by the brethren who as conscientious objectors refused to enlist in the armies of the *diabolos*, during the Great Wars. Some Christadelphians *did* lose their lives because of this refusal. But for most of us, we have never known what it is to have such a threat hanging over us. It is difficult to imagine how it must feel. If we could only grasp the gravity of the situation, it may well put many of our personal problems and worries into perspective. How easily we take things for granted.

Daniel himself does appear to manifest a great deal of calm in the face of this danger, and again we may well have difficulty understanding this too! What is quite clear, is the faith he manifested in the God whom he served. If Nebuchadnezzar would only give time, he would be able to shew the king the interpretation. This was not a presumptuous declaration, for when he contacts his 3 companions, they desired "mercies" of the God of heaven (verse 18). Daniel did not presume upon the power and wisdom of God, but *humbly* sought the revelation of the secret in prayer with his companions. How diligent those prayers must have been!

Nor did Daniel fall into the folly of pride when the dream is made known to him, along with the interpretation. His words to Nebuchadnezzar were:

"There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days" (verse 28).

"But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living" (verse 30).

As we observe the character of Daniel, we must add the characteristic of humility, as well as faith and determination. Daniel well knew, as Nebuchadnezzar was later to learn, that "those that walk in pride, He (Yahweh) is able to abase" (Daniel 4:37).

And that is not all. In times of distress, we are not slow in bending our knees to the Creator, and pouring out the depths of our pain and sorrow, earnestly seeking His providential hand. When the trial is over, when our path becomes clear again, how quick are we to express our thanks for the "mercies of the God of heaven"? When the secret was revealed to Daniel, he declared:

"I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers". (v. 23)

In these incidents in the life of Daniel we are being taught that our lives should be filled with thanksgiving and praise. Bro. Growcott wrote:

"THANK God" That should be the most frequent expression on our lips (most silently) and in our hearts. It should come spontaneously, frequently, yea, continuously."

And Bro. Roberts wrote:

"Praise ye the Lord". A necessary lesson, indeed that had need to be dinned in our ears. We have come from a state of things in which no sentiment is more distant or unreal than ascription of honour and thanksgiving to God."

Nebuchadnezzar finally obtained the information he desperately sought, and God willing, we will consider the details in our next article. In conclusion we refer to the types which can be drawn from the position of Nebuchadnezzar after the revelation:-

1. When he fell upon his face (verse 46), he foreshadows the submission of the kingdom of men at the Return of Christ (Psa. 72:11 Psalms 2:12 Phil.2 :10).
2. His acceptance of Daniel's God in verse 47, points to the nations' acknowledgement of the supremacy of Yahweh "in that day" (Isaiah 2:17).
3. When Daniel was made "a great man" (verse 48), we are reminded of the exalted status that the Lord Jesus Christ is to occupy when he Returns (Luke 1:32).
4. The "gifts" presented to Daniel (verse 48) type the wealth of the nations that shall be brought to Christ (Psa.72:10, Isaiah 60:11 "forces" see margin "wealth").
5. Daniel was made "ruler over the whole province of Babylon" (verse 48) as Christ will rule the whole world (Apoc.11:15).
6. Daniel's three companions were set "over the affairs of the province of Babylon" (verse 49), as the Saints will rule the nations with Christ (Dan.7:22, Apoc.2:26-27, Apoc.5:9-10). How wonderful are the Scriptures as we observe the plan and purpose of God, illustrated in types and shadows. To the above list we might add the illumination of the world at the Return of Christ, when all their "wise men" will be shown up for the fools that they are. In Jeremiah we read "...the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit" (chapter 16 verse 19).
7. The reference to Daniel sitting in "the gate" (verse 49) takes us back to the Promises to Abraham, where it is written in Genesis 22:17 "and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies". An obvious reference to the conquest of the nations (Psa.2:8-9, Psal 10).

It must surely be our hope and desire then, not only to meet Daniel, his companions, and all the faithful in the Kingdom Age, but to live and reign with the "King of Kings and Lord of Lords". To assist him in the subjugation of the nations, to "execute the judgements written", and to help administer the most perfect government the earth has ever known. Let us give diligence to make our "calling and election sure"; that we will not have received the "grace of God in vain".

As Ye See The Day Approaching

As the second coming of Christ draws near, the signs heralding his apocalypse become unmistakably clearer and as it were, **louder**. As I write this, I think of the record just prior to the giving of the Ten Commandments to Israel at Mt. Sinai in Exodus 19:16-19.

"And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice."

In light of the above, in this month's article, we want to consider signs in Israel relating to the fulfillment of the following passage in Zechariah.

"The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him. Behold. I will make Jerusalem a cut, of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it." (Zech. 12:1-3)

This prophecy in Zechariah chapter twelve is deeply interesting, as is all prophecy. We must keep in memory that we are looking into and dealing with Yahweh's wholly inspired and infallible word which He has magnified above all His holy name. He has stated in His word, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me. declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done. saying. My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure..." (Isaiah 46:9-10)

Also, it is written in Isaiah 55:10-11, "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void. but it shall accomplish that which I please. and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Unquestionably, we are living in the days when it is being fulfilled. In that this is true, we know that the prophecies in the remainder of chapter twelve through to the end of his book cannot be much further off in time until they also are realized. But their total fulfillment will take time, as there are many 237

things which must happen. We watch with keen interest and joy as we see Israel more and more on center stage in world affairs! The events of the past seven days (9/28-10/4) should make us all observe attentively the situation developing in the Middle East. In those seven days there has been the most serious and volatile outbreak of rioting since Israel's founding as a state 52 years ago. It surpasses in intensity and brutality the Palestinian uprising known as the **intifada**, lasting from 1987-1993. Sixty-four people have died and 1,800 injured so far, the vast majority being Palestinians. From the Gaza Strip to the West Bank and even from Palestinian areas within Israel, rioting and violence has spread throughout the land. This latest wave of terrible violence came after right-wing Likud (opposition party) leader, Arid Sharon on Thursday, September 28th, made a visit to the Temple Mount platform. The site at present is the location of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The Arabic people call the Temple Mount Haram Es-Sharif (The Noble Sanctuary). They (the Palestinians and entire Muslim world) consider Sharon's visit a provocation and a desecration of what they consider the third holiest place in Islam.

Siege and warfare is nothing new for Israel and Jerusalem. We each know, at least to some extent, Israel's past history. Palestine is the natural land bridge between Europe, Asia and Africa. It has been the bone of contention between warring empires and armies down through the centuries much like Poland has been between Eastern and Western European armies.

The 52 years since Israel has been re-established as a state has been no exception. Many of us have lived through most of Israel's wars (some through all of them) which have been a fiery ordeal and bitter struggle for national survival. In several of the wars, Israel's neighbors (Arabic peoples) have deliberately provoked Israel by attacking it from the north, northeast, east and southwest. Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, adjacent to Israel, have been thorns in her sides through these years. The Palestinian peoples in the Gaza Strip, West Bank and within Israel proper are even more of a constant irritation and threat. These people still basically believe that they exclusively have the right to the land. They regard Israel as an intruder - an invader. This is because they do not yet know the power of Israel's God. Yahweh shall very soon have His way! They have no knowledge that He who sits in the heavens shall shortly laugh and have them in derision -they and all of the nations who come up against Jerusalem and Israel. *"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. (Ps 2:1-9)*

238 Anti-Semitism is on the increase among many of the nations of the world.

The United Nations has repeatedly taken votes on resolutions negative to Israel over the past few years. Since the rioting began many ambassadors in the United Nations' General Assembly have been seeking legislation that would condemn Israel for using excessive force against the Palestinians.

The Palestinian Autonomous Authority in early September issued fifteen new textbooks, comprising the full curricula of grades 1 - 6 for Palestinian school children throughout Gaza, West Bank and Palestinian controlled areas within Israel's borders. Instead of fostering a spirit of peace and coexistence, the books are virulently anti-Semitic!

Syria recently successfully tested its first Scud-D (North Korean) ground-to-ground missile which has a range of 600 kilometers (327 miles.) It can hit anywhere in Israeli territory. They can be launched from deep within Syrian territory, making the launchers hard to find. The Israeli Defense Force has an anti-missile system called the Arrow that can intercept the Scud-D.

Israel's population is growing and now stands at 6.3 million, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics. There are 4.95 million people registered as Jews, 1.15 million Arabs, 180,000 not listed by religious conviction and 20,000 listed as Christians. Israel's population grew by 165,000 over the past year, with 90% of the immigrants coming from the former USSR.

As the nations of the world become more and more anti-Israel and side with her enemies, we realize that the time of Jacob's trouble draws ever nearer, as well. We must remember that Yahweh has a controversy with the nations. His determination is to gather the nations that he may pour out his wrath upon them. It is very interesting that in Judah's restoration after the Babylonian captivity, it took **52 days** to build the walls of Jerusalem. It was a troubled time like as now in Israel. They worked at building the wall with one hand and had a weapon in the other. It is quite profitable to read Nehemiah chapters four and six to see the type and antitype. It took 52 days in Nehemiah's day to build the walls of Jerusalem and today, Israel is strong after **52 years** of building and strengthening themselves against their enemies. Also, it will be found, after Messiah's return, that the tents of Judah will have been saved first. (Zechariah 12:7)

"Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished." (Proverbs 16:5) Jerusalem has indeed been under siege these past 52 years since Israel became a state. Israel is now strong from a military standpoint (though she still has to learn that she can't rely upon her own strength, but upon the Lord). She is becoming very prosperous. The nations are angry. The surrounding nations (Arabs and Palestinians) are furious with Israel. Jerusalem's fate is the question on the minds of those burdening themselves with it. They haven't a clue what Yahweh has in store. How thankful we should be that Yahweh has shown us the solution, Brethren and Sisters! May we each hold fast and be found abounding in the work of the Lord at his appearing.

What does that mean?

"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made." (Gen. 2:1)

Why did God need to rest on the seventh day? Was He exhausted and needed a day off? We do not think of "rest and relaxation" as words that have any application to God. In fact, we know that God was never physically weary, for Isaiah says in Isaiah 40:8, *"Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?"* So, what could this mean?

The word "rest" means "to cease, or desist". So, if applied to our question, God worked on the Creation for six days and then rested, or "ceased" work. The work was not strung out over many years, as some teach. He ceased the work of creation at six days to establish an allegory of His 7000-year plan, not because He was tired!

This thought can be extended to an understanding of the Sabbath "rest", as discussed in the Old Testament, and how it will apply in the Kingdom Age. In Bible times, the Jews failed to understand the true meaning of this rest. It did not mean that they should be inactive, but should **cease from the works of the flesh** and from the toil brought on by the curse. Isaiah explains it to them: *"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing th^y pleasure on m^y hol^y da^y: and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways. nor finding thine own pleasure nor speaking thine own words." (Isaiah 58:13)*

Again, sitting around doing nothing was not God's intent. Nor was it a time to be sad and abstain from mirth: *"Is it such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" (Isaiah 58:5-7)*

These things that God requested of the Jews we think of as "work", yet it was a rest from the everyday concerns. This is why the Priest could double their work on the Sabbath and be blameless. It was a day typifying the Millennium when the works of the flesh will be restrained and God's Will will be done on earth.

Let us cease and rest from fulfilling the lust of the flesh and call each day a delight, the holy of the LORD; and honour him, not doing our own ways, nor finding our own pleasure, nor speaking our own words so we can enter His rest. For we are assured in Hebrews 4:9, *"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."*

