

# 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.

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CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

## **Ecclesial News**

Houston, Texas - S.S. 10am (Law of Moses); Memorial 11am; Study Class 1pm (Phanerosis). Wednesday 7:30pm (Exposition of Revelation). Meeting Hall at 8008 Junius St., Houston, TX 77012. Bro. Shauywn Smith, 8299 Cambridge #1201, Houston, TX 77054. phone: (713) 791-9588 [email: sss007@aol.com](mailto:sss007@aol.com)  
Loving greetings to all,

It has been some time since we last included some ecclesial news from Houston. We haven't been purposely delinquent, but rather, events here have been ordinary, if there is such a thing as ordinary days. Every day is noteworthy in its own right and worth giving thanks for, but we've had no particular news to report. Sometimes quietness/stillness is one of the greater gifts.

However, we have been blessed with an abundance of visitors over the past several months. We wish to extend our appreciation to them all for their efforts to join us. Their company and fellowship was thoroughly enjoyed. Our visitors at different times included the following: Bro. Seth Brown, Bro. Matt Brown, and Sis. Shiloh Brown from Lampasas; Bro. Paul Garvey from Boston; Sis. Sarah Snyder from Lampasas; Sis. Juanita Reiss who is currently in isolation; Sis. Rachel Johnatty from England; Bro. Lenny Naglieri from Boston; Bro. Rusty and Sis. Susie Stephen from Lampasas; and Bro. Pat and Sis. Marie Cassidy from Lampasas.

We also thank Brothers Paul, Lenny, and Rusty for kindly offering the words of exhortation when they visited. Otherwise, all here are doing relatively well as we continue our work in the vineyard, waiting patiently for our Master's return.

With love from your Brethren and Sisters in Houston,  
Bro. Shauywn Smith

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

Dear Brethren and Sisters in the glorious Hope of Israel,

Once again we are happy to report that our Bible school of December went well with four visitors from Western (Kenya). There were Bro. Epaphrus Wekati, Bro. John Simayu, Bro. Samson Wanjala and Sis. Metrine Walunywa all at Kimukungi Ecclesia.

We had a total of 16 people. On 26<sup>th</sup> we had the privilege of assisting Agnes David through the waters of baptism. Our prayers is that our new sister will remain steadfast in the Truth until our Master returns.

We had a total number of seven topics which were dealt with: -

On 25<sup>th</sup> December

1. Christ as the vanquisher of gentiles, and restorer of Israel
2. Baptism Essential for Salvation
- 50 3. Nebuchadnezzar's image (Daniel 2)

On 26<sup>th</sup> December

1. Nature of man
2. The way of salvation
3. One Bible, Many churches, Why?
4. The resurrection, responsibility and judgment

Below is a brief summary of some of the topics discussed.

1. Christ as the vanquisher of Gentiles and restorer of Israel.
  - Salvation belongs to the Jews, (John 4:22, 8:31-32)
  - Jews rescued by Christ and the Saints, (Rev. 14)
  - The false churches, and prophets destroyed through natural means Rev. 18.
  - The Jews wonder at who has saved them, (Isaiah 63:1-10)
  - God is going to restore what was there (the Kingdom and people of Israel (Acts 1:6-7, 3:20-21, Ezekiel 37)

When the Kingdom comes, Salvation will have come and the will of God done. (Matt. 6:9-10)

Seek ye first the Kingdom and his righteousness and all things added unto us as well.

2. Nature of Man – Man from Earth or dust (Gen. 2:7, 3:19, Eccl. 3:20)

- Death a sleep.
- Dead know nothing (Eccl. 3:19-20, 9:10)
- Eternal torture a wicked, God-dishonoring theory. The final end of the wicked is eternal destruction, not eternal torment (Mal. 4:3)
- Immortal sinners are an impossibility. Sin brought mortality.
- The ignorant, at death, perish forever as the beasts (Psa. 49:19-20)
- Light brings responsibility (Light refers to knowledge)
- Dead remains in graves until resurrection. (Acts 2:29, 34, Job 14:14)
- All Bible promises center on resurrection and judgment and meaningless if reward is in heaven at death.
- Hell is the common grave where all go at death.
- Sheol, Hades, Tartarus and Gehenna – all stand for the grave.

3. Nebuchadnezzar's Image

Six reasons for the Revelation

1. To tell the king about the future
2. To save Daniel and his three friends
3. To make known the true God to the Babylonians
4. To prove that the wise of Babylon were not wise at all.
5. To show that God is in control of all the nations and sets up who He will.
- 6.

o tell what will happen at the end of all things.

## Structure of the Image

Head of fine gold – Babylon 606-536 B.C.

Breast and arms of silver – Medo Persia 536-334 B.C.

Belly and thighs of bronze – Greece 334-67 B.C.

Legs of iron – Rome 67 B.C. – 6th Century A.D.

Iron and partly of clay – divided Roman Empire 493 A.D. position right now.  
Daniel 2:44

### 4. Baptism Essential for Salvation?

- Knowledge and belief. Mark 16:15, Acts 8:12

- What does baptism mean? (Dipping / Immersion) John 3:5,

- One Baptism. Eph. 4:4-6

- Baptism as death and resurrection new life. Rom. 6:3-5

- We are baptized in Christ. Gal. 3:27

- Washing away of sins. Acts 22:16

- Noah entering into the ark is likened to our entering into Christ through baptism.

- When baptized, we are part of Abraham's seed and possessors of promises together with Him (Heb. 11:39-40)

Our special 'thank you' goes to all the Brethren and Sisters who have been frequent visitors during the year and also those letter visitors.

On behalf of the Kitui Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia,

Bro. David Njoka

## 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 GATHERING..... July 23 - 29, 2001**

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

**HOLLADAY FRATERNAL GATHERING ..... October 6-7, 2001**

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

## OFFENCE AND FORGIVENESS

The thoughts of the exhortation are based upon the 18th chapter of Matthew. A very serious and powerful chapter. It describes a way of life, the 52 very opposite of the natural way of the flesh. If we are not living in

harmony with it, we not only have no hope of life, but we have assurance of the very dreadful punishment to which it alludes.

It has to do with offences - causing them and dealing with them - and with the spirit of forgiveness to the utmost depths of the heart.

The chapter begins, v. 1, with the disciples asking Christ who will be greatest in the Kingdom. Mark and Luke add more revealing details. From them we learn that they had been disputing among themselves about this; that Jesus knew their thoughts and asked them what they had disputed about, and that they were ashamed and would not say.

They were fleshly enough to dispute about it. They had enough discernment to be ashamed of it before him. They were learning. Only just before (17:23) he had told them of his coming suffering and death and they had been very saddened. Now they are squabbling among themselves like children. These men went on to be mighty, unshakeable pillars of faith. They had deep devotion and love and complete dedication of their lives to him and they grew up, they matured unto him.

Jesus, v. 2, called a little child to him. Luke says he "*set him beside him,*" Mark says "*he put his arms around him,*" - both very significant and very revealing details. And he said to the disciples, v. 3, "*Except ye be converted*" - the word means completely reversed, turned around in the opposite direction,- "*Ye shall not even enter the Kingdom.*"

There must be a complete reversal from fleshly thinking and doing to Spiritual thinking and doing.

How often proud wives or doting parents tell us about their husbands or children being 'over' so many people at their work. Being 'over' people seems to be such a wonderful thing to be had!- it's power – it's glory – it's success.

But Jesus said, v. 4, "*Whosoever humbleth himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the Kingdom.*" Any desire to be great and important and powerful is fatal to the achieving of it. God has no place for that kind -that is the flesh.

A child is not consciously humble. It does not think about humility or deliberately try to act humble. To act humble or talk about our humility is not humility at all - no matter how sincere. That's just well-meaning hypocrisy. Humility is simply recognizing that we are nothing and having no difficulty facing the fact and living with it. We are no use to God until we have accumulated enough Spiritual wisdom to eliminate pride and desire for place and position. Humility cannot be contrived or consciously developed. It must happen to us as a result of learning and wisdom. It comes from seeing through the falseness and emptiness and groundlessness of pride.

It must have been a very little child. As soon as children become conscious of themselves they cease to be humble, the flesh takes over. They become greedy and selfish just like adults. Stupid, foolish boasting and pride begin increasing more and more as the flesh develops and matures.

Christ goes right on to the subject of offenses. This whole chapter is a consecutive, related discourse and it gives more meaning to all the individual parts if we recognize that fact.

We remember that the disciples had pushed little children away from Christ on an earlier occasion. It was part of their unbalanced outlook of their over-importance.

Jesus says, v. 5 , *"That whoso receiveth one such little child in his name, - because of him and his name - receiveth him himself. "* Mark and Luke go further and say that, *"whosoever receiveth such receiveth God,"* who had sent Christ and was in Christ.

It is clear there is now a transition from the literal little child Christ had set before them and had chosen as an example to the seemingly insignificant among the believers. These he begins to talk about now. Those who may not have a deep grasp, and may be in special need of consideration and care. To receive them is to receive Christ; and to offend them is to offend Christ. A dreadful responsibility upon those who consciously and unconsciously think themselves the strong, the capable, the more understanding, as, of course, most of us naturally do.

Verse 6, *"Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."* This is a terrible warning! Have we given it sufficient thought as it applies to ourselves and our actions and our course of life?

The word 'offend' has somewhat contracted its meaning in modern use. Throughout the chapter and throughout the New Testament it generally means to cause others to sin or to stumble, or be discouraged or weakened. This is still the first definition that Webster gives, although not the common one at the present time.

This verse 6 teaches a very dreadful responsibility that we can never fully comprehend. All our actions have a bearing upon others. We either help or hinder them; strengthen or weaken them. And for the results of all our actions or failures to act, we must give an account at the judgement seat before Christ Jesus.

He plainly tells us here that if we are the cause of just one believer, however insignificant, stumbling or being weakened, we'd be far better off if we were obliterated in the sea and did not have to face him at the last day. This is not exaggeration for affect, this is plain, cold, sober fact. We shall, of course, repeatedly fail in this. The flesh is weak. But one of our greatest concerns in life should be to recognize our failures in this and seek forgiveness and as far as possible repair the damage.

Paul said that if meat made his brother to offend, he would eat no meat while the world standeth. This is not a special example of outstanding  
54 consideration on Paul's part. It is simply a plain statement of the

necessary required working out of this solemn and dreadful warning of Christ to all his professed followers.

If we willfully seek our own pleasure and desires in anything, knowing it is upsetting and distressing sincere brethren and sisters and disturbing to the ecclesia, then we are completely cutting ourselves off from any hope of life. Love of Christ, we are told, is essential to salvation. Love of Christ means love of the Brethren. And love of the Brethren means always putting their welfare ahead of our own selfish pleasure and desires and gratification's. These are not our teachings, they are Christ's. We endeavor to extract them, so we may escape the judgement.

Jesus continues his terrible warning in verse 7. Truly there must be offenses, as he said, and divisions, and ecclesial and personal problems and difficulties. In the wisdom of God, these things are necessary for our development and training that the approved may be made manifest. That His people may be developed and His purpose fulfilled.

But woe indeed, woe indeed, to those who in any way are responsible for these things! How careful and prayerful we should be in everything we do! At best we shall repeatedly fail and need forgiveness, but any selfish willfulness or even thoughtless, self-centered carelessness, is absolutely fatal, unless thoroughly repented of and purged from our hearts.

Verses 8 & 9 still pursue this solemn warning - If thy hand, foot, or eye offend thee - cause thee to stumble, or to be a cause of stumbling to others - cut it off! Pluck it out! Cast it away. Get rid of it while there is time - for it is better to enter eternal life maimed, than to be cast whole into the latter-day awful Gehenna of Christ's coming judgment.

How can we enter eternal life maimed with some part missing? Actually a lot will have to be missing and amputated. What does hand, foot and eye mean here - that must be ruthlessly cut off and cast away? Anything - however close to us, however useful to us, however precious or desirable to us, that stands in the way of the race for life, or that hinders anyone else in that race, must be cast off and gotten rid of.

Jesus is trying to get us to realize the terrible urgency and importance of these things, for this is life and death and time is short and we are so slow to comprehend this urgency, like a drowsy sleeper in a burning building.

We tend to just comfortably assume that we'll comfortably drift through life; comfortably attend the meetings (unless some worldly matter interferes or for some reason we do not feel like it); and then at last comfortably drift into God's Kingdom, who is so anxious to preserve us in glory forever, even though He is letting the common billions pass away daily into oblivion. What a delusion. What a pitiful delusion. One thing is certain, from this chapter and many Scriptures: if we are not very sincerely aware and concerned about the effect of all our actions upon the welfare and salvation of others, we shall never see life.

Jesus comes back in verse 10 to his little ones, the weak ones, the shallow, easily-offended ones. How easy to lose patience! How easy to feel superior! How easy to just plain forget and neglect! And that - the forgetting and neglecting - is what he is speaking of here.

*"Take heed," - verse 10, - "that ye despise not," - think little of - be unconcerned about - "these little ones. . . . for their Guardian Angels stand in the presence of God"*

Perhaps they won't ultimately make it. We know many will not. Only a few. But woe to us in that day if anything we have done has contributed in the slightest way to their loss, or if we have failed to do everything humanly possible to prevent that loss.

What time or energy, therefore, do we have - or dare we waste - for anything except these urgent, eternal things? How can anyone waste their time and be comfortable, or say they do not know what to do with it. How pitiful, when there is so much that's crying out to be done and is not being done. What does life in the Truth mean - life in Christ? A dreamy drift or a 24-hour-a-day dedication? Do Christ's words leave any doubt?

Verses 11-14 are about the lost sheep. The concern and exhortation is still about the weakest of the little ones. One of the first - and worst - things that evil man has ever been recorded as saying is, *"Am I my brother's keeper?"*

We righteously and rightly profess to abhor the callous cruelty of Cain's outlook, but how easily, in our pleasure and pre-occupations, we manifest the same selfish disregard and forget we are our Brother's keeper.

Our every act is for good or evil - for ourselves and for others. Nothing is neutral. Nothing is unimportant. Any missed opportunity for help or service is a sin that must be answered for. We are not put here just to fill space or to please ourselves.

Verses 15-17 deal with serious offences within the fellowship of God. Verse 17 makes it quite clear that these verses are within the ecclesial fellowship circle - for the final step, if necessary, is withdrawal.

Christ's first rule here is, and it is vitally important: speak to no one else about it, but go directly and privately to the individual concerned. What crowds, what vast crowds, will be turned away at the judgment seat of Christ just for neglect of this one command alone! How little its urgency is realized! How quick the tongue is to run on about others. How little its spirit is manifested!

And yet ignoring it or treading it down, the spirit of this command is probably worse in Christ's sight than any offense that we may be concerned about in others.

Must this course that Christ outlines here be followed in every case of 56 offense and must it always be carried through to the final step?

There is much practical apostolic example showing that many errors and failures and shortcomings and offences fall short of requiring this serious course outlined here.

The general picture of New Testament instruction reveals that offenses fall into 3 categories -

1. Those that should be lovingly overlooked, yet prayed for.
2. Those that should be lovingly approached with an attempt at correction, but short of disfellowship.
3. Those that must be carried through to disfellowship.

Paul said: - *"Put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercy, kindness, longsuffering: forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you."* (And obviously here he is speaking of legitimate quarrels and concerns.)

John said, *"If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death what must he do? He shall ask, that is in prayer of course, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death."*

The Law of Moses said on this subject and these verses come together in Leviticus 19, they are part of a pattern:

"Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer.

"Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart.

"Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor and not suffer sin upon him."

We find these same 3 basic principles here in this Law of Christ: -

No repeating of the matter to others.

No secret bearing of grudges or offenses.

And a duty to personally and privately attempt to persuade and correct.

On this last point, everything depends on purpose, motive and previous preparation. The previous preparation must have been a consistent course of manifested concern and love. It is hypocrisy to profess that we are rebuking someone in love when we have never previously done anything else for them in love. The foundation of love must have been previously laid.

The pattern of Christ's commands is a solid, consistent, whole-life pattern. Not pieces we can pick out to suit us. We are in no position to rebuke if we have not previously and consistently loved and served. If our pattern is not full and balanced, then our rebuke is merely from the flesh. Let us not add hypocrisy to our neglect, but let us leave the rebuke to someone else, who unlike ourselves, has been faithful and obedient in love and service.

V. 17 "If he neglect to hear the ecclesia (interestingly enough this is the second place the word ecclesia occurs - the first is that very well known passage "Upon this rock will I build my ecclesia), let him be unto thee as a heathen and a publican." Let us get the whole meaning out of this, but let us not let the flesh go beyond the legitimate meaning. How are we to 57

treat heathens and publicans? Certainly we can have no fellowship or intimate communion or association with them, but equally certain we must treat them, as we must treat all, with kindness and courtesy and helpfulness and graciousness and Christ-like love - not the love of fellowship, but the love of concern, service and desire for their well-being, as God loves the world.

Vs. 18-20 are a wonderful and unearthly promise, very difficult for us to comprehend the magnitude thereof, but they bring also a tremendous weight of responsibility and accountableness in all we do.

Jesus says: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. "If 2 agree on anything they ask of God, it shall be given them.

"Where 2 or 3 are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Who is sufficient for these things? Our natural reaction is like Peter's: "Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man."

God, through Christ, is offering us, is freely offering us participation and responsibility in eternal things.

It may be argued that since God is all powerful and knows everything from the end to the beginning, that this is actually meaningless. This is a matter of our bringing ourselves into line with what God Himself, from the beginning, intends shall be and shall be done. But there is more to these 3 verses than this. God is not just mocking us with a powerless, puppet-appearance of reality.

We are told that "The fervent, effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much" - and not just in relation to himself, but to others. This certainly means that things occur because of his prayer that would not have occurred without it. He has had a real effect on the Divine Plan - an effect programmed in from the beginning by God's foreknowledge. But none the less real and effective.

These verses create a tremendous responsibility, they lift our every thought and action to a much higher level of accountability. We are partners with God in eternal things. Our whole life must be in harmonious conformity with this same high level, or it is a mockery or hypocrisy. We cannot have one foot in these things and one foot in the flesh. If we want to be a part of eternity, we must leave the flesh behind.

We would perhaps prefer a less demanding role in the pattern of eternity, but God gives us no choice. It is this or nothing. The way of life is all or nothing. It must mean everything to us, and permeate every thought and action of our life or it means nothing at all.

V. 21: "Then came Peter to him and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Till 7 times?"

Seven times is quite a lot to forgive the same brother for perhaps the same 58 repeated, serious offense. There is nothing really small about Peter's

viewpoint here, although it did not begin to be big enough to fit the glorious, spiritual way of life.

Jesus' answer must have been a terrible shock. For Peter felt very magnanimous with his seven times. On a similar occasion when he said they must forgive a brother 7 times in one day, they had cried, "Lord, increase our faith!"

But beginning with v. 23 Jesus gives a parable which, when properly thought through, shows that any reluctance in or restriction of full, eager, uncounted forgiveness by man destroys, for him, the whole way of salvation.

Divine forgiveness is the foundation of salvation, without immeasurable and innumerable divine forgiveness no man can be saved. The Body of Christ - the Redeemed - is pre-eminently the Society of the Forgiven.

If we are in the slightest degree restrictive in our forgiving, then we repudiate the whole foundation upon which our salvation is based.

Jesus makes this very prominent in the "Lord's Prayer" - Forgive us, as -to the same degree, in the same spirit, as we forgive others. We shall receive as we forgive.

We shall receive mercy, as we show it. We shall be judged, as we judge. We shall be forgiven, as we forgive.

Now, the question arises. Are we required to forgive if there is no correction or repentance, and forgiveness is not sought?

I am sure that pondering upon this question can lead to only one answer, for several reasons.

Jesus prayed for his murderers -

"Father, forgive them."

He knew there could be no divine forgiveness without repentance and confession, but he made his desire and spirit in the matter very clear and put his powerful weight of prayer on the side of mercy. In pity for misguided ignorance he cleared his own spirit of bitterness and resentment. This is our example and it is wisdom. Forgiveness does more for the forgiver than the forgiven. Harbored resentment is a gangrenous, rottenness in the bones. We owe it to our own peace of mind to flush it out of our systems.

To bar the spirit of forgiveness from our heart until forgiveness has been sought is to rob it of 99% of its value and beauty. It is the largest heart that makes the first move.

If forgiveness is not asked, and we consequently carry resentment in our heart to the judgment seat of Christ, does it add to our hope and chances for divine mercy, or detract from them? Surely the answer is obvious.

We are commanded to manifest the spirit of beneficial love toward all. Non-forgiveness toward any breaks the universal pattern of this spirit, and therefore, destroys its meaning and power.

Jesus has told us in this chapter how fatal it is to our salvation to offend, or cause to stumble, the least and weakest of his brethren. He has labored over and over on this point with terrible words and warnings.

In closing this chapter, he has another dreadful warning to any who harbor the slightest, ugly seeds of unforgiveness in their hearts.

He speaks of the very well-deserved fate of the unmerciful creditor, himself so mercifully forgiven --

"Delivered to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due."

There is an awful and awesome reality to this in the fiery judgment of the last day. "Delivered to the tormentors, till all is paid for." For some - the critical, the harsh judging, the unmerciful, the unforgiving - there will be many stripes, before final annihilation.

The chapter closes: -

"So likewise shall my Heavenly Father do likewise unto you, if ye from your heart forgive not every one his brother."

And it is at such a time as this, as we solemnly partake of the New Covenant in his blood, that we more fittingly examine ourselves in this respect, and so partake not to our condemnation.

The calling is high. The associations are divine. The responsibilities are great. The prize is infinite, endless joy. The mind must be holy and spiritual, purged of all the evil of the flesh, lifted up from the animal level to the divine level. Let us live wholly in the atmosphere of the Spirit and the mind of Christ.

*Bro. Gilbert V. Growcott*

## DANIEL - THE STONE POWER

*"The future movements of Russia are notable signs of the times, because they are predicted in the Scriptures of truth. The Russian Autocracy in its plenitude, and on the verge of dissolution, is the Image of Nebuchadnezzar standing upon the Mountains of Israel, ready to be smitten by the Stone. When Russia makes its grand move for the building up of its Image-empire then let the reader know that the end of all things, as at present constituted, is at hand. The long-expected, but stealthy, advent of the King of Israel will be on the eve of becoming a fact; and salvation will be to those who not only looked for it, but have trimmed their lamps by believing the gospel of the kingdom unto the obedience of faith, and the perfection thereof in "fruits meet for repentance." (Elpis Israel – Author's Preface)*

The information on Russia provided by the media would lead us to conclude that Russia is a "spent power"; that having declined in world 60 influence, and suffered acute financial and economic problems, she is

weak and destined to remain that way. The movements of some of her nuclear missiles recently was lightly dismissed by one British politician, even though it had given cause for concern by some military analysts. It may well be true that the concept of Russia as a domineering "super power" *may* be difficult to believe at the present moment. It doesn't really matter. The Scriptures have quite clearly marked out the path that she is to tread. As Bro. Thomas remarked in Elpis Israel:

*"Politicians speculate as though money were omnipotent; and we hear "financial reformers" predicting the inactivity of Russia and Austria for want of funds! Where did the barbarians procure funds for the overthrow of the western empire in the fifth and sixth centuries? Did they not support themselves by the spoil? Let the Russian treasury be as empty as it is said to be, and its expenditure exceed its revenue by double the alleged deficit, it will only operate as a pressure from within, causing her Autocrat to "enter into the countries and to overflow and pass over," and to enrich himself with the spoil of those he is destined to subdue." (page 367)*

Our eyes are therefore correctly focused if they are observing "the movements of Russia." These political movements are still heralding the "long expected advent of the King of Israel," and our last article concluded by describing the way in which the actions of the Russian power will cement as it were the Image together, and enable it to stand upon its feet. As Bro. Thomas pointed out, the scene in Daniel chapter 2 of the Colossus standing upon its feet has never been exhibited before the eyes of the world, because the constituents of it have never been put together so as to form the Image of the scene:

*"The head, breast and arms, belly, thighs, legs and toes, have all existed, the Feet have not yet been formed; so that it has been hitherto impossible for the Colossal Image to stand erect, as Nebuchadnezzar saw it in his dream. It is, therefore, the mission of the Autocrat to form the feet and set up the image before the world in all its excellent brightness, and terribleness of form..." (Exposition of Daniel page 87)*

It matters little therefore, what capability the Russian forces *appear* to have (or not to have!), prophecy indicates to us that she will perform the part of the latter day Assyrian, who has in his heart *"to destroy and cut off nations not a few"* (Isaiah 10:7). When she makes her "grand move", she will indeed be able to declare *"I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man"* (Isaiah 10:13). Daniel chapter 11 verses 40 —42 clearly shows how *"he shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries"*.

The result of this great mission of the King of the North however, will not be the setting up of man's fifth world empire, for the Image as we know will be smitten, to give way to the Kingdom and dominion ruled over by Christ and the Saints. It has long been on record that Yahweh *"will punish the*

*fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks"* (Isaiah 10:12). Yahweh did so to ancient Assyria, and he will do so to his modern day counterpart. The way in which he will accomplish this is of great interest to us, for we hope to be the instruments which execute the fearful judgments of Yahweh, when *"the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day"*. (Isaiah 10: 17).

Our study of Daniel chapter 2 would not be complete therefore without giving due attention to the Stone Power, and the consequence of its actions upon the Image which Nebuchadnezzar saw, standing in all its fleshly glory and pride.

There is no question as to who the Stone-Power is. Daniel says that Nebuchadnezzar saw *"a stone cut out without hands"* (chapter 2, verse 34), and verse 45 adds that it was *"cut out of the mountain without hands"*. This is an obvious reference to the Lord Jesus Christ who was "cut out" of the mountain of humanity without human intervention. His origin was divine, and although bearing the flesh of sin, was nevertheless, the *"Word made flesh"* (John 1:14); *"the son of man whom (Yahweh) made strong for (himself)"* (Psalm 80:17). He is pre-eminently *"the Stone of Israel"* (Genesis 49:24). The Lord Jesus Christ, referring to himself, quoted from the Psalms, and demonstrated the folly of the Scribes and Pharisees in rejecting him:-

*"The Stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is Yahweh's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes"* (Matt. 21:42).

However, Bro. Thomas indicates that the Stone Power also includes the Saints:-

*"The events of this (third part of the sixth vial) are an organization and preparation of the Stone-Power – the cutting of the Stone out of the mountain without hands (Daniel 2:45); for the work of smiting Nebuchadnezzar's Image on the feet, and of reducing the broken pieces to powder, light as the chaff of the summer threshing floors, that all may be carried away of the tempest and found no more. The Stone-Power is constituted of the Eternal Spirit, or Deity, manifested in Jesus and the Saints, "glorified together," and directing and leading the tribes of Israel, and the mixed multitude commingled with them. At this time, and thus officered and commanded, Israel will have arrived at "their latter end; " have been made "willing:" and have been energized for "one to chase a thousand, and for two to put ten thousand to flight" (Deuteronomy 32:29,30). "Yahweh Elohim", the Spirit incarnate in Jesus and his Brethren "is with them; and the shout of the King is among them". (Eureka volume 2 page 86)*

This is the multitudinous "son of man" that prophecies against Gog 62 (Ezekiel 39:1); the Rainbow Angel of Apocalypse chapter 10. It will

be a great privilege and honour for the Saints to accompany the Master in the great and glorious work of reducing the shattered fragments of the Image:

*"Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.*

*Let the high praises of El be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand;*

*To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people:*

*To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;*

*To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. HaleluYah" (Psalm 149:5-9).*

How often we lament the evil state of affairs in the world; the immorality and crime, the godlessness of mankind everywhere; the stupefying narcotics which emanate from the harlot of Rome, whose influence, casts like the deadly opium, its shadow over the nations. The saints have the wonderful privilege and honour of cleansing the earth from all such defilement. The sphere of operations will not be limited to the destruction of Russia upon the mountains of Israel. Daniel chapter 2 verse 35 states:

*"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors".*

These metals symbolize the nations at the time of the end. As Bro. Thomas expresses it, *"there are four beasts to be disposed of and four metals, and a grinding of the whole to powder after the fracture of their image-combination by the stone"* (Eureka volume 2 p86). In Exposition of Daniel, he traces out the territory of the Kingdom of Babylon *"as it is destined to exist in its last form under the King of the North in his Gogian manifestation":*

*"The names of countries furnished by Ezekiel will lead (the reader) to a just conception of (the) general extent. Besides "All the Russias", it will take in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Prussia, Austria, Turkey, Persia, Tartar, Greece,, the Roman Africa, and Egypt. This will be a dominion of great magnitude, extending from the north Sea to the Wall of China and Afghanistan, and from the Ice-Sea to the Deserts of Africa and Arabia."* (page 86)

This vast dominion however, will be no match for the "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (Apoc. 19:16), who, as the mighty Stone-Power will *"strike through kings in the day of his wrath"* (Psalm 110:5). As *"the name of Yahweh (that) cometh from far, burning with his anger"*, he will *"sift the nations with the sieve of vanity"*, causing *"his glorious voice to be heard"*, showing *"the lighting down of his arm... the indignation of his anger ...and the flame of a devouring fire"*, for:

*"through the voice of Yahweh shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod". (Isaiah 30:27-31)*

The nations will be astounded at this amazing defeat of fleshly power. Who could have defeated such a confederacy without the assistance of a modern army! Israel in the day of Jacob's trouble will be able to say "*our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts*" ("quite cut off" – Rotheram) (Ezekiel 37:11). Who could have possessed such power to save them when all seemed lost. Who indeed!

*"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.*

*Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?*

*I (the One Yahweh Name in multitudinous manifestation) have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment" (Isaiah 63:1)*

*"Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke? (Songs 3:6)*

*"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? Yahweh strong and mighty, Yahweh mighty in battle." (Psalm 24:7-8)*

The "*stone which the builders rejected*" is now seen by Israel to be perfect:

*"Therefore thus saith Adonai Yahweh, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation" (Isaiah 28:16)*

What a glorious vision is before us. The leveling of human pride, and the transfer of the "*kingdoms of this world*" to Christ (Apoc.11:15). As Bro. Thomas expresses it:

*"It had been revealed to Daniel, that a powerful and indestructible kingdom should be set up by the God of heaven, which should consume and destroy every thing that stood up against it; that the Son of man and the Saints should possess it, with dominion over the whole earth" (Eureka volume 1 page 34 – see Daniel 2:44)*

When we consider the invitation extended to us, to share with the Lord Jesus Christ in these magnificent events, "*what manner of persons ought (we) to be in all holy conversation and godliness.*"

The signs in the political heavens should lead us to be at the height of expectancy. The great events of history have demonstrated the accuracy of the prophecies. Are we going to be ready to meet the Lord at his coming? **THE DREAM IS CERTAIN, AND THE INTERPRETATION THEREOF SURE.**

## WHAT ARE WE PREPARING FOR?

A little over a year ago the thoughts and actions of many were directed to those ubiquitous graphic representations called Y2K. There was concern, some fear and many questions, often accelerated by newspaper or magazine materials or by book format whose goal was either to honestly warn of potential tragedy or realize a large profit from those printed media.

A great number of the population took these warnings seriously--of power outages; lack of food; breakdowns of communications, the financial institutions and transportation; even of criminal pillage caused by severe shortages of necessities. Many purchased generators, stored water, stocked a good supply of extra food and brought in cord wood for the fireplace or wood stove. Some even went to such lengths as purchasing wilderness property and arming themselves for protection of their supplies.

It would be hard to guess how much money, research, time and even anxiety were expended on these preparations. Compare it to a family taking a moderate few-days' vacation - with children: The budgeting, the borrowing, the supplying of food and clothes, bedding and miscellany, the plans for caring for personal property, including animals while the vacationers are away. Plans for Y2K were made to cover inconveniences and shortages for a time period anywhere from a month to a year or more, not a mere few days.

Often it is a worthy exercise for our minds to imagine what would happen to us in one week if only one of our normal taken-for-granted comforts was catastrophically or by simple computer malfunction eliminated. What if there was NO WATER: No bath or shower, teeth brushing, hair washing, cold or hot drink, dish washing, toilet flushing, clothes washing, garden watering? For seven days. Consider what could happen at the rural level (agriculture), suburban level (manufacturing plants), or in teeming cities with apartment buildings, skyscrapers, condos, schools. Chaos, confusion and gross unsanitary conditions would result.

Thanks be to God, nothing on any great scale happened to upset our comfort as a result of Y2K. But there is a lesson for us as children of God to learn from this 'experience'. We all have a book compiled by many writers a long time ago filled with God's warning to have: oil in our lamps; to be prepared for the great day of his coming; to put on the whole armor of God--the clothing, the weaponry, the right mind-set; to search for and hold onto wisdom; to lay up in store a good foundation against the time to come.

We need to ask ourselves that if, in 1999, all those citizens of this world could have prepared with such foresight and purpose for a catastrophe they were not even certain would occur, should not we 65

who have been invited to receive protection in God's ark do everything we can to be certain we will be in that ark by our necessary preparations? And can we doubt that what God has revealed in prophecy has taken place through history, is happening before our eyes, and all that is remaining shall surely take place?

To those who have known but choose to disregard God's revelations and precise directions and rather choose their own ways in pretending to serve God like Cain, Esau, and the children of Israel did throughout their history, God will surely judge them unworthy of His blessings and they will live the remainder of their existence in a world of chaos, confusion, total discomfort, violence and evil, beyond anything ever imagined that could be caused by computer breakdowns. God, the Creator and Operator of this marvelously-made earth, will not tolerate those who ignore Him as unimportant, inconvenient or non-existent.

It is for our future well-being and painless joy that God has offered His Word with an 'engraved invitation.' Wisdom will tell us to prepare for that future by filling our minds with God's plan and purpose, entering into a covenant--a not-to-be-broken promise - with Him to become a true son or daughter through baptism, and dedication of mind in holy attitude and behavior.

Is this not on a plane so much more elevated than any Y2K concerns for temporal well-being? God's Book of directions manifest His love toward us, not to cause us to fear what might come, but to motivate us to seek daily to please, trust and honor Him, dedicating for Him all our resources and time and finally finding acceptance in the safety and peace within the walls of His Kingdom on earth.

*D. L.B.*

## **Jesus Wept**

While doing the Readings of the New Testament twice a year, we read through the Gospel of John, the beloved disciple who leaned upon Jesus' breast at the last supper. John had, apparently, some sort of emotional connection with our Lord. Perhaps it is fitting that he penned the verse in this chapter that we will use as the basis of our exhortation this morning.

John was one of the Sons of Thunder. He was also, apparently, a forceful speaker, a worker in the Lord's vineyard; and when the Truth required, he was not afraid to preach the gospel, or to speak against those that would gainsay the Word of God.

In I John 2:4 he says, "*He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*" These are strong, 66 forceful words from an apostle who also provided food of thought for

us. If we are gathered here saying that we know the Lord and Master, but we keep not his commandments the other six days of the week, we also are liars as John has spoken.

We meet here as a source of strength, guidance, comfort, and to remind ourselves what manner of men and women we ought to be. One verse I would like to consider this morning is a paradox upon first glance. John 11:35 — the shortest verse in Scripture — "*Jesus wept.*" It is the shortest verse, yet if we dwell mentally upon its significance, there are volumes of spiritual lessons in the two words.

There are also many lessons in the chapter surrounding the verse. The chapter opens with the word being delivered to Jesus, "*He whom thou lovest is sick.*" The message is sent from Lazarus' sisters, Mary and Martha. It is this Mary, whom we see in the second verse, that anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair. Apparently, all three (Mary, Martha, and Lazarus) came from a strong and devout family, and they were all followers of the Lord. They came from a family where spiritual things played an important role in their lives.

In Luke 10:38, Christ visited their house on another occasion, and we see each woman focusing on different aspects of his visit to their home. The implied lesson is they opened their home to the Lord and his followers, and the work of the Master's vineyard. They invited the Lord and his disciples. There would have been at least fifteen people. For the host it would present a problem to attend to their needs, to see they had food, drink, refreshment, and perhaps lodging for the night.

We see in these two sisters a lesson for us. Mary, in this instance, focused upon the spiritual things. She sat near Christ and listened to his teachings. Martha, on this particular occasion, focused on the temporal things being "cumbered about with much serving". Distracted by the apparent needs of her guests, she allows the "hear and now" to take dominance over the situation. Christ's words to her are a mild rebuke, stating, "*Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.*" (verse 42)

Even in this setting of spiritual strength, surrounded by immediate family, and in the presence and companionship of the Lord Jesus, Martha allowed herself to be distracted by things of this present world. How much more difficult it is for us in the vast spiritual wasteland in which we live? The hustle of the modern world, with high speed transportation, high speed communications, and high speed gratification it is much, much easier for us to be distracted from the "one needful thing."

Returning our attention to Lazarus, keep in mind he was apparently a faithful man, from a faithful family. This sets the stage for some of our thoughts directly concerning him. The shortest verse, "*Jesus wept*", brings to mind some of the following thoughts: Why was this verse recorded for us? Why was the Lord moved to tears by the news of Lazarus? Here is proof 67

our Elder Brother was tried in all points like unto us. Christ said, "*Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.*" (v.11) Why did he choose these words? Why did he wait two days before he went? It was a time of trial for those who love Lazarus. If Lazarus had slept for only a few hours, the lesson would not have been as forceful.

When the Lord arrived, "*he found that he had lain in the grave four day already.*" (v. 17) He was asleep with the saints awaiting the Master's call. This was a trial, but we can see a parallel between that and our lives. Christ's first coming to Lazarus (in a personal sense): by Lazarus accepting his words, he accepted the Lord and worked on his behalf while alive. There was a time of trial for the family while Lazarus slept, but it was followed by the triumphant coming of the Lord, and the calling forth of his servant.

Christ would bestow that token gift that would be inherited by the multitudinous Christ in the future age. The call, "*Come forth,*" is issued by the Lord to all those who sleep in the dust of the earth. Thousands will answer the call — countless generations in hundreds of countries down throughout the ages. Some will come forth to everlasting joy, and some to everlasting contempt. Our hope is to find ourselves in the group in whom Christ has a deep sense of association and affection and for whom he will intercede, and to whom he will issue the call to come forth (after Judgment) bestow everlasting life.

This chapter is one of the strongest proofs we may use for a resurrection of the dead at Christ's appearing. In verse 23 Jesus says, "*Thy brother shall rise again.*" Martha acknowledges (v. 24), "*I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.*" Martha, again, may have been focused on the here and now. She knew Lazarus would rise in the last day, but hoped Jesus would have come to him to avoid the suffering of his sickness. This dialog confirms the belief alluded to by many of the churches, but not actually believed in any real sense.

The resurrection of Lazarus was glorious in its power demonstrated, but it pales in comparison to the resurrection that will take place in the future, when the change to Spirit nature will be permanently adorned on the worthy recipients of that day.

Lazarus received more life, but life as we know it: life of pain and sickness, and eventual death. We might say, as Paul does, we "see through a glass darkly." The true power and glory is visible to the lambs in the Kingdom Age, who will receive life — life far more effective and permanent than Lazarus received.

If we consider the verse "Jesus wept" for a moment, what ideas can be associated with it, and what thoughts can be gleaned? Jesus was pained at the death of a loved one. In verse 33 it says, "*...he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.*" The Diaglott translates this, "He was greatly agitated in his spirit 68 and affected."

When Martha and Mary sent for Jesus (in verse 3) they said, "*He whom thou lovest is sick.*" They knew Lazarus had the character and disposition Christ loved. Christ said, "*Who is my brother and sister, but those who do the will of my Father.*" Lazarus was a doer of the will of God; he had developed the spiritual side and performed works worthy of the Lord's tears.

It is written that David was a man after God's own heart. We might surmise from this chapter that Lazarus was a man after Christ's own heart. What else could have moved the Lord to tears? Another time is recorded that Jesus wept — upon his entry into Jerusalem shortly before his crucifixion. His tears were for the city, for Israel; he knew there would be great suffering for the city and her inhabitants in the near future.

They were about to kill the Prince of life, and in so doing bring upon themselves (and the nation) a retribution more terrible than they had ever known, because they knew not the time of their visitation. The record of the Lord shedding tears was a national tear based on a look into the bleak future that would last for some two thousand years.

The tears here in the 35<sup>th</sup> verse of John 11 were of a more personal sort. They said, "*Behold, how he loved him!*" We wonder what kind of man was Lazarus to incite such emotion and feelings in the Master?

It is our ambition, our earnest hope, we would invoke such grief in the Master's heart and affections if he were to hear of our falling to sleep. Martha said, "*I know my brother will rise again in the resurrection of the last day.*" We have the comfort of this great belief. We know from the signs of the times the Day of Judgment is close at hand. We gather around the emblems each week to remind ourselves, as time passes and waiting the Lords' return, we should be developing the spiritual man to a higher and higher level as judgment approaches.

In the 4<sup>th</sup> Jesus says, "*This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.*" In verse 11 we read, "*...Our friend Lazarus sleepeth;*". To be called a friend of Christ's is second only to being called a friend of God. Lazarus was remembered after his death and can, therefore, be likened to a large class of believers who (although they sleep in the ground as Lazarus did) will be remembered to be wakened by the call to "come forth". It will be the germination to the establishment of the kingdom of God. It will be a mustard seed that grows to gigantic proportions.

The glory of God was evidenced by the act of raising Lazarus. We might ask ourselves, "what made Lazarus a suitable vehicle to demonstrate God's glory in this manner?" He would have been a thankful and humble man. A proud or self-centered man placed in Lazarus' position would soon begin to think he was better than others, and somehow entitled or deserved or earned the favor bestowed.

A humble and contrite heart is well pleasing to the Heavenly Father. Whatever blessings we receive (as the high honor placed upon Lazarus) should be received that all things are for the glory of God. Whatever God has seen fit to bestow upon us must be returned to His service with all humility and with thanksgiving.

Another thought to consider is the stone rolled against the sepulcher. The stone blocked the view to those standing outside the tomb; a barrier between the living and the dead. It hid from the living the true nature of the dead. The stone was removed at the Lord's command, and the doorway was opened. Through Christ's redemptive work, the larger doorway was opened to all mankind. Those who would develop their spiritual selves have opportunity, through Christ, to pass through that doorway.

The stone has been rolled out of our path. We have but to take hold of the Truth and work diligently in the Master's vineyard, that we might make the same journey as Lazarus. We know we shall be called to judgment. Whether we be among the quick or the dead, our hope is to continue forever with the Lord after judgment has been completed.

The last twelve verses of this chapter portray, for our edification and comfort, the way of the world. Some, after having seen such a miracle, went to the Pharisee. They, in their own self-interest, chose to disbelieve and set about plotting a way to remove this threat to their very way of life and concept of what was true and right.

This part of the chapter edifies us in the way of the world. We must be on the alert not to be swept away when the world attempts to suppress the Word of God. At the same time, these last verses comfort us, knowing when we meet ridicule, opposition, or condemnation from those around us, that we can take comfort in the fact it was no different for the Prince of Life, our Lord. We have not been singled out for ridicule. Noah, too, was ridiculed for doing God's bidding.

Take heart, Brethren and Sisters. This will not last much longer. As we focus our mind on the words of Christ each day this week, we should recall and think upon these things. This shortest verse – "Jesus wept" – packs a powerful message. Are we of the caliber and quality that would bring tears to the Master's eye? Would the Master consider us an appropriate vehicle to display the glory and power of God?

As David was a man after God's own heart, the record indicates that Lazarus was a man dear in the affection of our Lord. May all of us attain to such a high place in his affections, so that when the call goes forth issued to the multitudinous Christ, we might remove the grave clothes of sin and bondage and be with our Lord forevermore.

## A REVIEW OF LIFE

I stand alone at the end of the road,  
Reviewing the years gone by;  
Some spent in pleasures of thoughtless youth,  
Not heeding the master's cry.

Oh yes, I knew he was calling me,  
But the truth was not so bright;  
And instead of following where he led,  
I wanted to guide the light.

I delighted in listening to word of Truth,  
And learned them with eager zest;  
But when decisions had to be made,  
I thought I knew what was best.

Of course I would ask God to guide me,  
A ritual? ... well! yes, that was true;  
For I had already made up my mind  
To do what I wanted to do.

The heart of man is deceitful,  
Jeremiah told us that long ago;  
Of course, he referred to other hearts,  
But never to mine...Oh no...

We never admit to feeling this way,  
But our actions prove that we do;  
Then we ask for forgiveness from GOD above,  
And we're doing it all life through.

So many heartaches and tears would be spared,  
If we'd learn to obey our GOD...  
And to walk in the humble footsteps  
Of His glorious Son, our Lord.

Life is not just a game of fun,  
It's a serious battle to fight  
And to follow Him, we must take our stand  
On the side of Truth and Right.

The world holds out its arms to us,  
And if we indulge in its fun;  
It will take us away from the things of God  
With all of our hopes undone.

"My ways are not your ways," saith the Lord,  
He begs us to come to Him  
Let the light of Truth grow brighter,  
And the call of the world be dimmed.

Make one heap of worldly joys,  
**And toss them aside on the shelf;**  
**For our ONLY acceptable gift to GOD**  
**Is the sacrifice of self.**

## What Does That Mean?

*"---I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease*

*the kingdom of the house of Israel."* (Hoseh 1:4)

How could God commission Jehu to destroy the house of Ahab, commend and reward him for doing it, and then later condemn him for the bloodshed?

There can be no question that Jehu fully carried out the command given to him:

*"And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master---For the whole house of Ahab shall perish: - And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat--"* (2Kings 9:7-9)

Jehu killed kings Jehoram and Ahaziah, Queen Jezebel, then seventy of Ahab's sons. He then proceeded to lure all the Baal-worshipping leaders of Israel into the temple of Baal on the pretext of leading them in a great celebration of worship. Once they were locked up inside the temple, he had them all massacred and destroyed the temple so it could never be used again. He then received this message:

*"And the LORD said unto Jehu, Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel."* (2 Kings 10:30)

Jehu had served as God's executioner on behalf of the many hundreds of prophets whom Jezebel and Ahab put to death, and though this was done according to the will of God, yet it was not done from a pure and hearty zeal for the Lord or with a sincere view to glorify God. His motive was to gain the kingdom, increase his power, and satiate his tyranny and lust.

*"But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin."* (2 Kings 10:31)

God condemned the bloodshed which he commanded on the basis that it was done out of a carnal zeal that was tainted with protective self-interest and pride. Can there be any danger in this occurring in our ecclesias today? YES, a very real possibility. If we take action against brethren and sisters when they sin, we must do so as instructed in Galatians 6:1 *"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself lest thou also be tempted"* **Our attitude does make a difference, both with the person we see in error and with God!** Anger and self-righteousness have no roll when dealing with an erring brother or sister. Bro. Growcott wrote, "Disfellowship is a serious, terrible, heart-breaking thing. There are times when it is sadly necessary but it is the last resort--a confession of failure. It is a tool we can never use lightly, or without infinite sorrow and reluctance. It creates a wound and a breach that is very hard--usually impossible--to heal. It is a great responsibility. Bro. Roberts says this was his greatest burden of sorrow and responsibility. In faithfulness he was compelled to this step at times, but only with infinite self-searching and distress. If the contemplation of it does not similarly distress us almost to the point of despair, we have much to learn of the realities of life and love--we are not ready to use this awesome, potentially destructive tool."

Doing the right thing with the wrong attitude in no more acceptable today than it was with Jehu.