

# 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 <sup>T</sup>ruth since 1923.*

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*Please send Ecclesial communications to:*

Bro. Fred J. Higham, 20116 McKishnie, Clinton Twp, Mich. 48035 U.S.A.

Fax: (586) 790-8519 [e-mail: fredhigham@ameritech.net](mailto:fredhigham@ameritech.net)

[www.bereanecclesialnews.com](http://www.bereanecclesialnews.com)

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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**

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

Beloved Brethren and Sisters in the Bonds of the Abraham covenant,

It has been considerable time since news had been sent from this part of the world. Activity in this corner of the ecclesial world had been active.

In August we were able to hold Bible school as from 31<sup>st</sup> up to 2<sup>nd</sup> September. During the occasion we were able to discuss 6 topics.

1. Daniel's Outline of World history (Daniel 2)
2. The promises to the fathers (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) to be fulfilled when? Where?
3. Baptism into Christ
4. Human nature, essentially mortal - as proved by nature and revelation
5. The Bible - How it came to us, what it is. How to interpret it.
6. The coming trouble and the second advent

In September we have been blessed to have Bro. Epa Wekati and others, all from Kimikungi Ecclesia.

In November 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> we were very pleased to see Bro. Ed Truelove, Bro. Sid Jones, of Richard Ecclesia, Sis. Kaye Yuen of Vancouver Ecclesia, Mary Agnes Kariuki of Nairobi Ecclesia and Bro. Epa again of Kimikungi Ecclesia.

It was a joy for us to spend the two days with them discussing the Word of God. Really it was interesting for me to preside for first time. After memorial service we had one lecture from Bro. Epa and we were sad to say goodbye to our visitors as they left for Nairobi in evening. It is our prayers that may Christ make his return so that we may participate together in his kingdom. This is a true sign that things of this world are temporary.

It is encouraging as we continue to witness world events supporting and fulfilling the predictions of Scriptures. Sure we are in the final stages of Gentile times; the times of trouble. Therefore we need to take the necessary measures to assure our readiness for that promised return of the Son of Man. Let us be found with our lamps filled well with oil and well trimmed.

On behalf of the Kitui Ecclesia,

Bro. Stephen M. David

BOSTON, Mass. – S.S. 9:30 am; Memorial, 10:45 am; Mid-week Study Class, Wed. 7:30 pm. Meetings held at 310 Washington St. Dedham, MA 02026. Bro. Paul Garvey, 11 Maureen Way, Plymouth, MA 02340 508-224-6840

Love and greetings from this corner of the Master's vineyard,

Since our last correspondence we have had the great pleasure of receiving as a new member to our Ecclesia Bro. David Sommerville, from Canton Ohio. 34 Though we joy, we feel for the Canton Ecclesia, the loss of such a valued

member, with years of wisdom, and experience to glean from, in this day and age is truly a tragedy and I'm sure his presence in that Ecclesia will be sorely missed.

We held our quiet (so as not to detract any possible attendees from the spectacular efforts which are being extended by the Richard Ecclesia) annual winter study weekend December 22nd & 23rd. The weekend was organized by Bro. David Sommerville ( the younger ) a truly enlightening, and fun weekend was had by all those who attended. And what was so important was that we were able to allow our three newly baptized Brethren, to gain some experience in speaking appointments, Brethren Malachi Morrell, Jeremy Osborne & Jonathan Garvey all put forth valuable ideas for all, on the subjects they were given to speak on, this brought to all those who reside on the exhorting and lecturing schedule in our ecclesia a great big smile, I wonder why! But in this dark and spiritually dead era, it is truly a joy to see that the Almighty is still calling out a people for His name. Let us pray that each and every one of us and those who have traveled that lonely path before us, are enriched with that pearl of great price at the Master's triumphant return.

With love in the One Hope,  
Bro. Paul Garvey

LAMPASAS, Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia S.S. & Study Class, 9:50 A.M.; Memorial 11:00 A.M.; Seasons of Comfort Class 1:15 P.M., Lecture- 4th Sunday 1:30 p.m.; Bible Class Wednesday, 7:30 P.M.; Fraternal Gathering, 2nd Weekend in June. – Bro. Rusty Stephen, 1301 N. Hwy. 281, Lampasas, TX 76550; phone (512) 556-6771, e-mail [sstephen@n-link.com](mailto:sstephen@n-link.com)

Beloved brothers and sisters, in Jesus Christ our Lord,

It has been sometime that we have sent news and since news travels faster than we can get it to you these days, many of you may already know.

I must bare sad tidings to the vineyard that our Sister Mildred Banta fell asleep on September 25, 2001 and is now awaiting the call of our Lord and Master to resurrection and judgment. It was this writers privilege to have known and associated with Sis. Mildred for about 35 years.

She was an ardent worker in the vineyard, involved with the Ecclesial magazines and spreading the Gospel; wherever she could. We have been fortunate to have had continuous association with her. She is no longer in pain and rests temporarily until her call, she will be sorely missed.

However, on a brighter note, after an excellent confession of faith, Bro. Bob Widding was received into the Berean Fellowship from isolation in Little Rock, Arkansas. We would also like to thank Bro. Mike Morrell for his initial work in this.

Anyone wishing to contact our new brother, feel free to do so by e-mail or write: Bro. Bob Widding, P.O. Box 7272 Little Rock, AR 72217-7272, Phone 501-680-6499 e-mail - [bobwiddingpiano@aol.com](mailto:bobwiddingpiano@aol.com)

Once again we are so privileged, too, of receiving so many visiting Brothers and Sisters including, Bro. Bob Bent, Bro. Jack Carroll, Bro. Harry and Sis. Cindy Cassidy, Bro. Bob and Sis. Sharon Wolfe, Bro. Jim and Sis. Kay Phillips.

Bro. Jack Carroll and Bro. Bob Bent assisted us with the word of Exhortation and Bro. Jim Phillips with a Lecture, we truly thank them for their efforts.

Your Brother in Christ,  
Rusty Stephen  
Recording Brother  
Lampasas Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia

ODIADO, Kenya, Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia, Bro. Humphreys O. Budedu,  
PO Box 142, Bumala, Kenya, East Africa

Dear Brethren and Sisters,  
Loving greetings in the Hope of Israel,

Since our last communication we have again had reason to rejoice when the 14<sup>th</sup> November, we received, Bro. Ed Truelove, Bro. Sid Jones and Sis. Kaye Yuen, who traveled all the way across the seas to join and strengthen us in our spiritual needs. Together with them were also Sis. Mary Agnes Kariuki of Nairobi, Bro. Philip Wekati of the Kimikungi Ecclesia and Bro. Njoka Jr. from the Kitui Ecclesia and many others. We appreciated the efforts of these Brethren and Sisters in traveling to our ecclesia and sharing together.

A lot of spiritual value was delivered through Brethren who ministered for the two days.

May you all, Brethren and Sisters of the True Faith remain strong in faith at this moment of turmoil in the troubled world.

With love from the Odiado Ecclesia,  
Bro. Humphreys Odaba

LITTLE ROCK, Arkansas. Brethren and sisters are invited to contact Bro. Bob Widding for time and place of meeting. POB 7272, Little Rock, Arkansas 72217-7272; 501-680-6499; [E-mail: bobwiddingpiano@aol.com](mailto:bobwiddingpiano@aol.com)

Greetings in the Hope of Israel,

On Friday, December 28, 2001, I traveled to Lampasas, Texas to meet with the Brethren of the Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia for the purpose of establishing fellowship. The visit was spiritually uplifting in every way and exceeded all expectations. Becoming a member of the Berean Fellowship is the fulfillment of a long held desire. I am above all grateful to our Heavenly Father for His mercy through Jesus Christ.

I wish to thank the Brethren and Sisters of the ecclesia for their gracious hospitality and fellowship in the bond of the precious Truth that we share. 36 Moreover, may I offer a special word of appreciation for Brother and

Sister Stephen of Lampasas and Brother Michael Morrell of the Boston Ecclesia for their assistance in facilitating this endeavor. Such was of inestimable value.

It is our earnest prayer for this new lightstand to shine forth and bear fruit for the Kingdom of the Deity.

Yours Faithfully,  
Bro. Bob Widding

## Books For Kenya

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

## FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held God Willing)

### **HENGOED FRATERNAL GATHERING ..... March 22 - 25, 2002**

Bro. Phillip Hughes, 25 Hoel Y Gelli, FForchneol Parc, Godreaman, Aberdare, Mid Glam., UK CF44 6LN; phone (011) 441-685-870254

### **HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING ..... July 22 - 28, 2002**

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

### **BOSTON FRATERNAL GATHERING..... Oct 19 - 21, 2002**

Bro. Jim Sommerville, 34 Birch Hill Rd., Northboro MA 01532 508-393-2874

## Identification and Participation Part 2

*"Go take the opened scroll that is in the hand of the messenger who is standing upon the sea and upon the land ... Take it and eat it up; and it shall embitter thy belly, but in thy mouth shall be sweet as honey."*

John's participation in the apocalyptic drama, his identification with the spirit's disposition in consuming the thunder judgements of the little open scroll and the nature of his experience in so doing, is based on what Ezekiel had to undergo, when he prophesied to the household of faith at a terminal epoch. Significantly, Ezekiel was a priest, a son of Zadok (sons of righteousness), a representative of those whose lips *"should keep knowledge,"* from whose mouth men could seek *"deliverance."* *"For he is the messenger of Yahweh of hosts."* Malachi 2:7

The Levites had been separated from the nation of Israel, (which itself had been designated by Yahweh through Moses as a kingdom of priests) to draw nigh unto Yahweh on behalf of the nation. The nation and the priesthood however had grievously departed from Yahweh's Holiness and we find Ezekiel receiving God's revelations at an epoch where God's judgements 37

constituted the priestly nation without the holy land and a priesthood without a temple.

It is clearly evident that though Ezekiel was a man of sign to the house of Israel (Ezek. 12:6), God's prophesy through him is encompassed by visions of the manifestation of Divine Glory. The purpose of this glory, as dramatically revealed in the opening vision of the cherubim, is the declaration of God's righteousness in judicial manifestation against the power of sin, forcefully revealed to us via tempest, fire and earthquake. God's prophecy through Ezekiel is therefore a revelation of this glory to the household of Christ and through our entering the prophet's experience, the development of that glory in a remnant. This remnant whom Yahweh will strengthen (meaning of Ezekiel), will be separated from their contemporaries of all ages (Matt. 25:31-46) to constitute the redeemed who like Ezekiel in his probation, manifested the Christ mind in their collective capacity as "watchmen" to the household of faith. They will constitute the wonder of the multiplicity of Divine unity centered in the throne of judgement as dramatically revealed to Ezekiel in chapter 1 which will oversee the vindication of Yahweh's righteousness in all the earth.

The declaration of God's righteousness, the vindication of His Holiness over the power of sin is what we bring to remembrance Sunday by Sunday when we remember in the memorials the death of our Lord. The revelation Ezekiel saw portrays that terminal epoch, not for Israel only, after the flesh which is the historical basis of the vision but prophetically for the household of faith of all ages. At that time when He Who we seek will suddenly come to His temple, the books of remembrance will be opened and we shall be brought into remembrance, in that awful, solemn time of our arraignment before the Lord of Glory. Then as Bro. Roberts writes, *"men and angels will be made to see us as we actually are under the searching light of Divine exposure."* (Nazareth Revisited p.439)

On that day we shall see "the Son of Man come in His glory (a throne of judgement) at Sinai. And there will be gathered before Him all the nations, And He will separate them one from another just as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats ... Then will the King say to those on his right hand: Come ye the blessed of My Father! Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world ... (note the transition from "the Son of Man" (John 5:27) to "the King" and the theme of reward, when the Lord of Glory possesses the throne of David and invites the blessed of the Father to occupy the Kingdom in Matt. 25:34. In occupying this throne, Yahweh will have *"come from Sinai (the place of judgement) into the sanctuary (Jerusalem the throne of the Great King)"* Psa. 68:17 Roth Translation) *"Then will He say unto those also on His left hand: Depart ye from Me accursed ones! Into the age-abiding fire which hath been prepared for the adversary and his messengers ..."* (Matt. 25)

*"Lo! A tempestuous wind coining out of the north, a great cloud and fire  
38 catching hold of itself (like a chain) and it had a brightness round about,*

*and out of the midst thereof as burnished copper (as electrum) to look upon out of the midst of the fire; and out of the midst thereof a likeness of four living ones ... and each one straight before him did they go, whithersoever the spirit was minded to go they went, they turned not when they went ... And the living ones kept running and returning like a flash of lightning ... And I heard the sound of their wings as the sound of many waters as the sound of the Almighty when they went, the sound of a storm, as the sound of a host, and when they stood they let down their wings ... And above the expanse that was over their heads, as the appearance of a sapphire-stone was the likeness of a throne, and upon the likeness of a throne was a likeness as the appearance of a man upon it above ... as the appearance of the bow which is in a cloud on a day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about, that was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Yahweh."*

Ezekiel, a son of Zadok, a priest separated from the sons of Zadok, separated from others who were "priests" in name only struggled to find appropriate adjectives to try to describe the dramatic vision of Divine Glory in judicial manifestation, corresponding as it does with John's vision of the Rainbow Angel and Moses' inspired revelation of the coming of Yahweh from Sinai. (Deut. 33)

It is in direct conjunction with this revelation that Ezekiel was informed he was to warn the sons of Israel, sons of shameless face and emboldened of heart.

*"Thou shalt speak my words to them, whether they hear or refuse to hear; for they are a rebellious house. But thou son of man, hear what I am speaking unto thee, become not perverse, like the perverse house, - open thy mouth, and eat that which I am giving unto thee.*

*"So I looked and lo! A hand put forth unto me, - and to therein a scroll; and he spread it out before me, and it was written on the front and the back, - and there were written thereon, lamentations and sighing and wailing.*

*"Then said he unto me, Son of man, what thou findest eat - eat this roll and go speak unto the house of Israel." (Ezek. 2)*

As John was to take the little opened scroll of thunder judgements and eat it up, so Ezekiel long before was similarly commanded. Moses' vision of Yahweh coming from Sinai out of whose right hand proceeded a fire-law and associated with the hand of Yahweh is all His saints as the instrument by which His fiery mandate is executed (Deut. 33:2-3) equates with Ezekiel's vision of the cherubim and their chariots as the vehicle of Divine manifestation bearing the enthroned rainbowed man of fire.

Ezekiel's scroll written of the front and the back set forth the judgements of Yahweh not just on the enemies of Israel, upon God and Babylon the great, but also upon the rebellious house of God's people where Ezekiel was shown in dreadful form as God's judgements were to first begin. Ezekiel was 39

shown that the scroll he was commanded to eat up full of lamentations, sighing and wailing, which is equivalent to John's digestion of the little opened scroll of 7 thunder judgements, was directed priesthood to which he belonged!

*"Then the Spirit lifted me up, and as the glory of Yahweh arose from His place, I heard behind me the sound of a great earthquake; it was the sound of the wings of the living ones as they gently touched one another, and the sound of the wheels beside them that sounded like a great earthquake. The Spirit lifted me up and took me away, and I went in bitterness in the heat of my spirit, the hand of Yahweh being strong upon me: and I came to the exiles at Tel-ablbe, who dwelt by the river Chebar. And I sat there overwhelmed among them seven days."*

Ezekiel's bitterness deeply felt, came upon him after he had seen himself lifted up, as it were, in the glorious participation of the triumph over the power of sin in the day of Yahweh's victory; but via that same power; he now was forced to contemplate in the heat of his spirit; what this process of judgement would entail by way of personal sacrifice in his duty as a watchman among his own brethren and sisters. So straining was that experience of the emotions of Ezekiel that when he came to tell his brethren and sisters of the captivity at Tel-ablbe that he there sat "stunned" in their midst 7 days. He was brought to a place which means "a mound or heat," (Tel) "of green growth" spoken of in the beginning of harvest time in Israel and is the name of Israel's first month (changed to Nissan from Egyptian bondage.) It therefore spoke to them of Passover and Yahweh's destruction of Egypt's first born that Yahweh's first born nation might be delivered.

That deliverance was only to be on the basis of their identification and participation in the events of that memorable night in which the Passover lamb was killed at sunset; it's blood sprinkled on the door posts (Jew and Gentile) and the lintel (the Lord Jesus Christ Himself) and the nation gathered in families digested what God had both provided and commanded with bitter herbs!

"By the rivers of Babylon (confusion) there we sat down, yea we wept (these words being choked with a sob)----- When we remembered Zion. Upon the willows (symbol of lamentations, sighing and wailing) in the midst thereof hanged we our lyres: (symbol of the saints as instruments designated to praise Yahweh and preach the Gospel of salvation, but here, at this epoch - silent) ...

How shall we sing the song of Yahweh,

On a foreign soil?

If I forget thee O Jerusalem let my right hand fail or deceive:

Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember thee?

If I do not lift up Jerusalem above the head of mine own gladness."

As a sign to the perverse house of Judah, Ezekiel's tongue was to "cleave" unto the roof of his mouth and be dumb unable to reprove their deeds, only 40 when Yahweh spoke to the prophet to give a message to the captivity was

his mouth opened. Such a peculiar sign evidenced in their midst the sorry state of the mind of the majority of the captivity who mouthed these words of Psalm 137 but were anything but men of faith. As the transforming motive to their lives "Jerusalem" was forgotten, spiritual yearning which craves repentance. "Jerusalem" was not lifted up above the head of their own selfish little lives, that which Yahweh had for so long provided them was not digested, it had not caused them to crucify the flesh and the affections thereof.

"By the rivers of Babylon there we sat down." - Ezekiel was brought to the captivity at Tel-abbe who were dwelling towards the river "Chebar," Chebar means, "the extent of time." Koheleth in his analysis of time and judgement uses the same Hebrew word when he writes, "That which was already had been, and that which shall be already shall have been, - but God seeketh that which hath been driven away. (Eccl. 3:15 Rotherham Translation) Rivers in scripture are often symbolic of specific peoples, they can also depict the passage of time, life unto death. The current of time which Ezekiel, symbolically stood related as "son of man," to those of the heralded by that mighty Rainbow Messenger which stood upon the sea and upon the earth and lift up his right hand unto heaven and sware that there should be time no longer. But within the days of the voice of the seventh messenger ... the mystery of God should be finished as He hath declared to His servants the prophets."

Thus Ezekiel sat stunned amongst them 7 days. The vision which Ezekiel saw and had affected him so, bore testimony to the truth Koheleth speaks of, that Yahweh transcends the limits of time and He has ordered it in relation to those He has specifically called. For them time will have reached a climax. Just as when the ark carried by the priests came to the Jordan at the beginning of harvest time and when the priests' feet touched the flooding waters they were suddenly arrested and heaped up in a mound a great way off by the city Adam and they (the waters) which were going down to the sea of the waste plain even the salt sea failed, they were cut off. At this time Yahweh through "the Son of Man," Whom "Yahweh has strengthened," (meaning of Ezekiel) will seek from this class, "that which hath been driven away." (Eccl. 3:15 Rotherham Translation) He will require from His servants those things they have attempted to "drive away," from their consciences believing that the passing of time will conceal their iniquity, but to their utter stunned dismay they shall see the Glory of Yahweh come to them in tempest, earthquake and fire. So Koheleth said in his heart, "God shall judge the righteous and the lawless .. that God might manifest them, that they might see that they themselves are beasts."

"For we must appear (Greek: phaneroo - to make manifest) before the judgement seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things through his body, according to that which he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror (Greek: phobos) of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences." (2 Cor. 5)

God's servants will be manifested at the judgement seat of Christ by the outcome of the judgement process. We will be made into what we really are today in the spirit. That is if our lives, mind and heart are motivated by flesh, then flesh will be the result, but if our lives are motivated by spirit then that spirit will be that which is eternally manifested. As it is written, *"He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is love with us made perfect, (mature agape or sacrificial love) that we may have boldness in the day of judgement, because as He is, so are we in this world,"*

It was by the river Chebar that Ezekiel in stunned astonishment contemplated the vision of the cherubim. As a priest he was of course familiar with the form of the cherubim located as they were in the laver, the embroidery of the curtain dividing the Holy and Most Holy, the figures within the Most Holy made out of olive trees and had been depicted on the Ark of the Covenant itself. He was familiar with them in his regular ministering, seeing them time and time again as inanimate symbols, lifeless representation, tokens of something to come in the purpose of Yahweh and yet emblems of a present reality, had the nation manifested the eternal spirit as "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for a peculiar treasure - fitted to articulate the excellencies of Him Who out of darkness had called them into His marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:9) Ezekiel's familiarity with them, as our familiarity with the bread and wine had not however prepared him nor has it prepared us for that time when that which is set forth by way of token, representation and emblem will become an overwhelming experience, alive and dynamic. That is not to say that in our individual experiences, as we come weekly to take of the emblems of God's love, we do not see something by the way of faith, which is not dynamic but that rather it is that contrast of "now seeing through a dim glass obscurely but then face to face: of knowing in part now but then to fully know by inspection." That dynamic, living difference of which John so eloquently wrote, which had in so many figures, seen it's reality (the eternal spirit in manifestation) "which we ourselves gazed upon and our hands did handle, concerning the Word of Life - the life was made manifest and we have seen and bear witness and announce unto you the Age-abiding Live, which indeed was with the Father and was made manifest unto us."

Ezekiel witnessed this dynamic vision of the cherubim at an epoch of judgement which visited God's people Israel. It was an epoch specifically designed to be typical of that period, where time for the household of faith will come to an end and that which had been considered by them for so long by way of token will be dramatically and forcefully brought before their vision. The ecclesia will no longer come together for the purpose of calling to remembrance via the emblems which speak to us of God's righteousness and love. For we ourselves will be called to remembrance by the embodiment of those things, in the reality of, in the very presence of, terrible in majesty of - the Lord of Glory. The declaration of God's righteousness manifested for the 42 purpose of judgement will then be seen as the eternal spirit enthroned in

the Lord Jesus Christ accompanied by the Elohim of olden time borne aloft by the vehicle of Divine judgement manifested in the perfected immortal Saints.

David in Psalm 68 speaks of the occasion when the Ark which had left Sinai so long ago was at last brought into Jerusalem. He saw in this dramatic and highly typical event that time when the Lord Jesus Christ - the Ark of Israel and it's cherubim - the Glorified Saints, will again come from Sinai into Jerusalem. David in this Psalm takes hold of Numbers 10:35 but substitutes "Yahweh" with "Elohim," when he quotes this passage saying, "Let Elohim arise, let his enemies be scattered, let them also that hate him flee from his face." David does so because he sees that epoch which Ezekiel was similarly given vision of, when the Ark not by itself, i.e. the Lord Jesus alone but the ecclesia with Him, as part of the Ark, no longer prefigured in the cherubim joined to the mercy seat over which the shekinah glory dwelt but there in reality!

"Let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice. Sing unto Elohim, make music of His Name: cast up a highway to Him that rideth through the waste plains (i.e. the Arabah - the area of Sinai going north, compared Deut. 33:2) - Yahweh is His Name rejoice before Him ... The chariots of Elohim are twenty thousand, even thousands of Angels (Hebrew "Shinan" - to change therefore "changed ones") Yahweh hath come from Sinai into the sanctuary." (Psalm 68:3, 4 & 17 Rotherham Translation)

Thus David in substituting "Elohim" for "Yahweh" in the first verse of this Psalm, indicates that that which had in the time Moses (Numbers 10:35) had been set forth as a type, will at that dramatic epoch become a reality, when "Yahweh" - He Who will be, will have become manifested in a multitude of "Mighty Ones" who will bear His Name. They will declare His righteousness in warlike manifestation against the power of sin in His controversy against the nations among whom will have been placed the rejected of the judgement seat.

As we have previously noted, associated with this dramatic vision of the cherubim Ezekiel was commanded to eat up the scroll written on the front and back wherein were written lamentation, sighing and wailing. This scroll speaks to us of God's judgement on the nations and on the household of faith. In Ezekiel's time that judgement on Israel was manifested in the utter destruction, yea the burning of the temple. Ezekiel's experience as we have seen was the basis of John's in Apoc. 10, when Christ comes suddenly to His temple of the latter day - that temple also as presently constituted will be destroyed. Before the temple of Ezekiel's day was obliterated the prophet was shown the departing of the Shekinah glory from that edifice. The Lord Jesus asked that poignant question in association with the parable of the unrighteous judge and in relation to His second coming. "Will He after all find the faith on the earth?" (Luke 18) Will the Spirit of God have departed from His temple before the coming of the Lord to judge it? That is, do we today constitute the temple of the living Deity (2 Cor. 6:16) in which God dwells through

His spirit word evidenced by sacrificial love and a witnessing as faithful watchman to the household and to those without?

The apostle Peter quoting the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter of Ezekiel warned, "For it is the ripe time for the judgement to begin from (i.e. at and proceeding from) the house of God; But if first with us what shall be the end of them who yield not unto the glad message of God?" Ezekiel records the Lord's command, "at My sanctuary shall ye begin." To this sobering chapter in Ezekiel we must make further investigation that we may be found at last as one with the Divine impress in the forehead of the spirit's mentally, which by God's grace will spare us in the day of God's wrath.

## Love Of The Brethren

For acceptable walk in the Truth, and for ecclesial health and harmony and a state of true mutual spiritual joyfulness to which we as the sons and daughters of God are freely invited, it is necessary that the Spirit's teachings on the subject of love be continually and repeatedly presented before the mind.

The love which the Scriptures present to us as the fundamental characteristic of godliness is not a natural thing. It is contrary to all that is natural. It is purely a spiritual thing. It is a divine, transforming, unearthly principle of life.

It is a power and force that overcomes and subdues all that is natural. It is the "bond of perfectness" – the bond – the binding together – the uniting, the unifying power of perfection – unity of perfection – perfect oneness – based upon the only possible basis for perfect oneness – an enthusiastic mutual striving toward perfection.

Any aim short of perfection is not unifying, but dividing and breaking up. **No group can have true unity unless it is wholly and wholeheartedly dedicated to the pursuit of divine perfection.**

\* \* \*

And Love is the "bond of perfectness." Unless we as a group mutually possess this bond together, we might as well go our separate ways – because we shall never have any true ecclesial unity or spiritual life without it.

Let us face this basic fact of ecclesial life. If we are not prepared as a whole body to love each other with a pure heart fervently, then our assembling together is utterly meaningless; we are just another poor little lost group among millions of others. It is worse than meaningless – it is a sad, pitiful delusion – destined only to failure.

The Body of Christ is not a lot of little isolated individual compartments. It is not a limited association merely for form and convenience – it is one intimate, closely-knit intensely interdependent unity

44 *"By one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body."*

*"The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of thee."*

*"God hath tempered the body together ... that the members should have the same care one for another."*

These are Paul's remarks toward the end of 1st Corinthians 12, where he is leading up to the revelation of the "more excellent way" of love so beautifully delineated in chapter 13.

The Scriptures are very specific about what this love is of which he speaks -- what are the evidences of its presence or absence among us.

**It is a terribly sad fact that many accept the Truth and spend their whole life in it — often very actively — without ever perceiving this basic first principle of godliness.**

\* \* \*

*"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"*

It is fitting that he should begin there for, as he tells us, the love of God for man is the root and well-spring of all our love for God and for each other. It is the motive and force behind all love.

God's love for man, as supremely manifested in His only begotten Son, is the transforming power and incentive of all holiness and righteousness --

*"We are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:37).*

*"The life I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loves me and gave himself for **me**" (Galatians 2:20).*

*"The love of Christ constraineth us" (2 Cor. 5:14).*

*"We love, because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19).*

Beginning chapter 3, and arising from the thought of this marvelous manifestation of God's love in calling us, as weak, erring mortals, to be His children in glory, the apostle stresses how this hope and promise must lead us to holiness, how out of place and out of harmony any worldliness or ungodliness is with this divine relationship.

Then he says (v. 10) --

*"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil."*

*"Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."*

Any ill feeling to any of our brethren cuts us off from relationship to God.

*"For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another."*

We notice that he divides all mankind into two relationships -- the children of God and the children of the Devil.

This is a very sobering thought -- if we are not one, we are the other. There are no neutrals -- we are either of the Seed of the Woman -- that is, of Christ in harmony with the mind of Christ, or we are of the Seed of the Serpent. 45

And he gives two identifications of the children of God --

1. Doing righteousness.
2. Loving his brother.

Let us try to fully realize the prominent and vital place this matter of loving our brethren is given in the commands of God. We find that John returns to it again and again.

Let us closely follow his thought here as he continues (v. 14) --

*"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."*

Here is a simple, but deeply searching test that we can each apply to ourselves, to see if we really have passed from death to life -- to see if we really are "in the faith," or just living a lie.

Do we find ourselves powerfully moved and motivated by love, kindness, concern, gentleness, sympathy, patience, and desire to render comfort and service to all our brethren? Not just a limited few who happen to please us and appeal to us, but to all -- especially to those who seem least lovable -- these are the ones most in need of patience and guidance and brotherly kindness.

If this is not honestly true of us, then we must face the implication of John's searching words --- we have not passed from death to life -- we are not "in Christ" -- we are not "in the faith" -- we have not properly learned the Gospel -- we have not entered the divine family -- we are still "children of the devil," for John continues in this 14th verse --

*"He that loveth not his brother **ABIDETH IN DEATH.**"*

He says in verse 16 --

*"Hereby perceive we love, because He laid down his life for us."*

As other versions put it --

*"By this we know love," or "From this we learn what love is" -- "that he laid down his life for us."*

When the Scriptures speak of love, they do not mean some puny little part-time hobby. Love, in the scriptural sense is a tremendous, all-consuming passion for goodness and service to others -- and if we haven't got it we are not the children of God. John goes on --

*"And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."*

Not just be willing to face death for them in some very unlikely far-off emergency -- but give our whole PRESENT lives for them.

The next verse should be imperishably engraved on our hearts. It carries the seeds of a deeper, broader, more world-shaking revolution than this planet has ever yet seen --

*"Whose hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"*

It is for each alone to search his heart and, as standing in the presence of 46 God, to decide just what, and how much, that statement means to him,

remembering that it is impossible to obey it too much, but fatally easy to obey it too little.

**"WHOSO HATH THIS WORLD'S GOODS, AND SEETH HIS BROTHER HAVE NEED — HOW DWELLETH THE LOVE OF GOD IN HIM?"**

And let us remember that the Scriptures are not speaking of little, conscience-salving, token handouts, but on the large scale of the love of Jesus-

*"Love one another, as I have loved you."*

Are we BIG enough to be children of God, or are these teachings too vast and noble for our petty, selfish, earthy natures to rise to?

John presses the point further --

*"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (v. 18).*

There is much -- SO much -- talk about love, but where shall we find that life-giving, self-sacrificing love of which John speaks as essential to salvation? Is it the rule among us? Are we the children of God, or is our "love" that of word and tongue, such kind words of sympathy --

*"Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled -- we are so sorry to hear of your trouble, we hope everything will be all right. We'll come and see you again."*

What a noble feeling it gives us to be so kind and sympathetic *"in tongue and word!"*

*"Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth."*

**There is a terrible reckoning in store on the matter of selfishness and unfaithful stewardship.**

*Bro. G. V. Growcott*

## **DANIEL - THE FALL OF BABYLON**

*"The Kings" are the sanctified ones, "the called and chosen and faithful," of whom Christ Jesus is the Imperial Chief and therefore styled, "KING of kings" — Apoc.17: 14; 19:16; 1 Tim 6:15. They are the same, who, at the outset of their arduous, glorious, and ultimately victorious, career, sing the new song in which, addressing the Great Captain of their redemption who leads them to glory (Heb 2:10), they say, "thou hast made us for our Deity kings and priests; and we shall reign as kings upon the earth" Apoc.5:10. They begin their career under (the) sixth vial, and "turn not" from "the way" (Ezekiel 1:9,12,17) opened to them by the drying up of the Euphratean Power, until they have taken the Great City Babylon; and possessed themselves of all its thrones ..... "They accompany the Lamb whithersoever he goeth; " and his purpose is not crooked. 47*

*His way is into the midst of the Great City, where, after the example of Cyrus, his prototype in the capture of Babylon, and the deliverance of the Jews, he hurls the Papal Belshazzar from his throne, and siezes upon his dominion for himself "* (Eureka vol. 3 page 539 et seq.)

Our last article concluded on the eve of Babylon's fall. Babylon was in the middle of feasting and pleasure, completely unaware that the last minutes of her existence were ticking away. Very soon, Babylon, "the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency", would be "as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah." The "writing was on the wall"!

Mene – ("Numbered") *"God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it"* (Daniel 5:26)

Tekel – ("Weighed") *"Thou are weighed in the balances, and art found wanting"* (v27)

Upharsin – ("Divided") *"Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians* (v28)

The Kingdom of Babylon was "numbered" (rendered "Reckoned up" in the Emphasised Bible), and as far as the family of Belshazzar was concerned "finished." Mene is repeated to emphasise the point! The God of Heaven had assessed the condition of Babylon, and found it "wanting." Moffatt translates the verse "you are weighed in the scales and found wanting. "Men and women are not able to please themselves. When they go beyond the limits, which He lays down, judgement will follow. And judgement had been foretold:

*"And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith Yahweh, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations."* (Jeremiah 25:12)

However, the Kingdom of Babylon was not to be absolutely destroyed as learned from the "tree sign" of chapter 4. It was to be "divided" and given to the Medes and Persians. (Daniel uses the word "Peres" in verse 28. It is rendered in Strong's as "divided", coming from a root word meaning "to break in pieces." Upharsin has been defined as a participle of the same verb from which Peres is derived.)

The judgement on Babylon would come to pass speedily. "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain" (verse 30). The judgement would also be severe, and irreversible. Babylon would in future *"never be inhabited"*; but would become *"a desolation among the nations"*; a place where *"the wild beasts of the desert"* would dwell; *"a dwelling place for dragons"*! (Isaiah 13:19-22; Jer. 50:39; 51:37) These and other descriptions in the references quoted, prove the veracity of the Scriptures, and also remind us that the Word of God stands sure. *"Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her"* (Jer. 51:64). The blasphemy, 48 arrogance and pride of Belshazzar was not to go unpunished!

Zephaniah in his prophecy also describes the fall of another Great City of antiquity – Nineveh, the capital of Assyria. This city too boasted itself in its fleshly achievements, and was brought to desolation. The words spoken about Nineveh's fall contained in the second chapter of Zephaniah's prophecy seem equally as applicable to Babylon, as it was to Nineveh:-

*"This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me: how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in! every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his head"* (verse 15).

In reference to this passage Bro. Roberts remarked "Are there not rejoicing cities today?" We know there are. The world rejoices in its wickedness, totally oblivious to the fact that the "writing is on the wall!" The hand of God that fell upon Nineveh and Babylon, will fall with equally destructive force upon the cities of the world today. A reminder that we should:-

*"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."* (1 John 2:15-17)

The sudden fall of Babylon is an object lesson for us. Our last article concluded with a quotation from Herodotus (who incidentally lived some time after the fall of Babylon, rather than at the time of its fall as previously stated). He recorded the words which Cyrus addressed to his army prior to the attack on Babylon. The words are worth repeating:

"Now let us go up against them. Many of them are asleep; many of them are intoxicated: all of them are unfit for battle."

These words are appropriate for us to consider as a means of exhorting ourselves! Cyrus realised that Babylon would be unprepared for the attack. The city had become complacent, and being night-time when the attack would take place, many would be asleep, or off guard. Others had been engaged in the drunken revelry that Belshazzar had arranged, and hence would be totally incompetent to engage in hand to hand combat.

Furthermore, he recognised that Babylon, as a whole had become "flabby". Affluence, materialism and the pride of achievement had made them undisciplined, and mentally unprepared. They were unfit, lacked enthusiasm, and had no fortitude to fight for their survival. The disciplined troops of the Medes and Persians would be able to seize and destroy the sluggish Babylonian city, coupled with the element of surprise.

Now, it is true that the world in which we live are unaware of the "stealthy advent of the King of Israel", but are we really aware, and prepared?

It is true that as the Truth taught by Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar had lost its influence in the days of Belshazzar, so the influence of the Truth on the minds of the public today grows less and less. But has the Truth lost its influence in our hearts and minds, and in our daily lives?

Are we asleep like the Babylonians who slept while the enemy steadily advanced on the city? Paul wrote: *"Let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober."* (1 Thess. 5:6)

Are we spiritually intoxicated – filled with the mind-numbing influences of the Babylonian world of darkness, impregnated as it is with the wine from the Papal Belshazzar's cup? Paul wrote: *"Let us cast off the works of darkness."* (Romans 13:12)

Are we unfit for the battle? Have we lost the desire and discipline to *"contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints"* (Jude verse 3)? Paul wrote in 2 Timothy chapter 2: -

*"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."* (verse 3-4)

Daniel lived in Babylon, but was not present at Belshazzar's feast. He refused the gifts and honours of a blasphemous regime on the eve of its destruction. No doubt he was studying the prophetic scriptures to discern the signs of his time (see Daniel 9:2). The Jerusalem Bible translates the above verse, "In the army, no soldier gets himself mixed up in civilian life." Daniel, we can be sure, exemplified this and was a "good soldier," a man "greatly beloved." We also need to exercise the rigours and discipline of Christ's warriors. The battle of faith is a real battle against our deadly enemy, sin. We cannot relax for a moment.

This aspect of our spiritual warfare also introduces our final thoughts on this chapter. The forces of the Medes and Persians defeated Babylon by diverting the course of the river Euphrates into a channel. The river actually ran through Babylon and divided the city in two. Herodotus says there were brazen gates along the banks of the river, which could give entrance into the city. At the time of the attack he says that some of the gates were left open, probably by some that had collaborated with the Persians. Isaiah records: -

*"Thus saith Yahweh to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut"* (chapter 45:1) and, *"I am Yahweh ....that saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers."* (Chapter 44:24,27)

The Euphrates being "dried up" the joint army of the Medes and Persians silently made their way along the river bed, amidst the croaking of the frogs, 50 and entered the unsuspecting city.

Spiritual Babylon will fall by the forces of the anti-typical Cyrus. As indicated in the quote from Eureka at the start of the article, Cyrus and his army were typical of Christ and the saints who will go forth to vanquish the world and take possession of the kingdom of men (Revelation 11:15). Bro. Thomas wrote:

"Cyrus, and the "sanctified ones," his Medes and Persians, were typical of Christ and his Kings in "the way prepared" through the drying up of "the Great River Euphrates" by the sixth vial. Cyrus was named by Deity, and mentioned by name, about one hundred and sixty years before the capture of Babylon. His name and office are both representative as well as his mission. The name given was *Coresb*. It is a proper name compounded of *like* and *yoraish*, the participle of *yarash*, which signifies *to seize, to take possession of to occupy*, mostly by force. Hence, *Yoraish* comes to signify *one who takes possession of his inheritance by conquest*. This definition of Cyrus' Hebrew name accords with the facts of his history. The Deity had predetermined that he should inherit the Babylonish Empire, which included the Holy Land; and that he should take possession of it by conquest. He therefore made *Yoraish* a part of his name; and, as he intended his career to be typical of His own Son's, whom he hath constituted "*the Heir of all things*" *terrestrial* (see Hebrews 1:2 and Matthew 21:38); and who is also to acquire possession of his inheritance by conquest; he added the letter *caph*, and condensing the three syllables into two, named him *Coresb*, or *Koraish*, signifying *Like the Heir*." (Eureka vol.3 page 540)

The types are quite striking, and provide a rewarding subject of study as the following will illustrate.

Cyrus was referred to as the "anointed" in Isaiah 45 verse 1, whose "right hand" Yahweh "strengthened" (see margin). The Master, as we know is the Anointed, or Christ (Luke 2:11), of whom it is written in Psalm 80:17 "*Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself*". (See also Acts 2:25,33,34)

In Isaiah 44:28 he is referred to as Yahweh's "shepherd" who would "*perform all my pleasure*". The Lord Jesus Christ is the "good shepherd" (John 10:11); who fulfilled the words of Psalm 40 verses 7 and 8 that read "*Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart*".

"*I will go before thee*" we read in Isaiah 45:2. In Mark chapter 1 the words of Malachi and Isaiah are quoted "*Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of Yahweh, make his paths straight*" (verses 2 and 3).

The mission of Cyrus was to "*subdue nations*" (Isa. 45:1), and he was promised "*the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places*" (Verse 3). Of Christ it is written "*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."* (Psalm 2:8)

The Revised Standard Version renders verse 2 "*I will go before you and level the mountains*", reminding us of Zechariah's words regarding the antitypical Zerubbabel "*Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain.*" (Zech.4:7).

In addition to the above, we know that ancient Babylon types "Babylon the Great" referred to in the Apocalypse *chapter 17* verse 5.

Belshazzar finds his counterpart in the Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition; the Papal Belshazzar whose blasphemies have exceeded that of the king of Babylon. However, the days of Papal influence are also "numbered." As Cyrus was to "*break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron*" (Isa.45:2), so Christ and the "*sanctified ones*" (Isa:13:3) will uproot the Babylonian tree bound with iron and brass, and "*break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms.*" (Daniel 2:44).

The political Euphrates (the Turkish Empire) has been drying up, to prepare "*the way of the kings of the east*", or as Bro. Thomas beautifully translates it "kings who are out of a sun's rising", i.e. "*the Sun of Righteousness (who) shall arise with healing in his wings*" (Malachi 4:2). The frogs have been croaking, and exerting their unclean influence in the world since the French Revolution of 1789, which will have the effect of gathering the kings of the earth and of the whole habitable to "*that great day of God Almighty*" in readiness for Armageddon (Apoc. 16:12-16).

*"Behold, I come as a thief Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."* (Apoc.16:15)

Christ comes as a thief to the world, as Cyrus came as a thief to Babylon. He does not – or should not – come as a thief to the household of faith. Like Daniel, they are studying the scriptures; keeping separate from the world and its pleasures; and preparing for the day when their faith shall be turned into sight.

To Cyrus it was said "*He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Th' foundation shall be laid" (Isa. 44:28). Ezra chapter 1 verse 2 records the decree of Cyrus fulfilling this prophecy, "*Yahweh Elohim of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem.*" So the Lord Jesus Christ will build the Temple for all nations (Zech6:12) as detailed in the concluding chapters of Ezekiel's prophecy.*

We are living on the verge of these great events which have been foreshadowed in the Word. Let us be sure we are watching, and keeping our garments.

## The Decree of Cyrus

Of all the dates in this Chronology, we have no doubt but that the Persian dates in general are, at first glance, the most controversial. Archeologists and historians are pretty set on the dates they have chosen for the Persian rule. We have read much of their work with a very critical eye, looking hard for the mistakes, but our conclusions are that they have good reason to be satisfied. The archeological and historical evidence for the modern dates is overwhelming.

Unlike the earlier periods where most honest archeologists would not strenuously object to a fluctuation of significant numbers of years, this period is well documented in several independent world histories, including Greek, Egyptian, Babylonian and Persian. There is also significant astronomical evidence for these periods.

The accuracy of history has frustrated Bible expositors on this matter. Jeremiah's prophesy that Israel would be subject to Babylon for 70 years is strained beyond measure by them, abandoning the old true interpretation for what can only be called modern junk. When the dates for Jeremiah's prophesy were BC 612 for the captivity of Israel to BC 542 for the reign of Cyrus, the period of 70 years lined up nicely. But the change in dates set up a conflict that religionists have struggled with, quite unnecessarily.

Jeremiah's prophesy is right. Of that there can be no question. Babylon would reign over Israel for 70 years. As the fall was in BC 603, the reign must have continued to BC 533. I will here explain why our date for the decree of Cyrus (BC 533 as opposed to modern archeology's BC 539) is not out of harmony with modern archeological finds.

The commonly written thought by modern archeologists is that Babylon invaded Israel in the first of Nebuchadnezzar in BC 604. There is a minority thought that that date is actually BC 603, which we know from Scriptures is actually the correct date. (I will put the opinions of the minority thought in parenthesis.) As the date for the invasion of Babylon has decreased, the date for the reign of Cyrus has decreased as well, but not proportionally. For instance, while the date for the conquering of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar has come down 8 years, (BC 612 - 604) the date for the conquering of Babylon by Persia has only been decreased by 3 (from BC 542 to BC 539 (538).) This sets up a conflict with the prophesy of Jerenliah, being only 65 years, instead of the Scripturally required 70 years.

In modern writings, archeologists have generally set the date for the freeing of the Jews at BC 539, but this date is not consistent with their own findings. Archeologists believe (through corresponding Greek documents) that Cyrus was fighting in Asia Minor in BC 539 (538) when a weak 53

and tumultuous Babylon became an opportunity for Cyrus, and he left Asia Minor to go to Babylon to conquer the city. All modern writers are agreed that he did not immediately conquer Babylon, as the BC 539 (538) date would suggest. Rather, he undertook a massive engineering project, diverting the Euphrates River out from under the wall of Babylon, so his troops could march into the city under the river gates, on the river bed. It is generally agreed that his troops did not enter the city until March of the following year, BC 538 (537).

Further, after the fall of Babylon, it is agreed by archeologists that Cyrus himself, does not enter into the city. They believe (as the Scriptures teach) that Darius the Mede was first set in charge of the city. Modern historians believe that Darius was a governor, appointed by Cyrus and that Darius the Mede rules the city for one year. Historians believe this Darius to be a close relative to Cyrus, generally assumed to be an uncle, and that the sharing of power with the Medes was part of the overall agreement for cooperation between Media and Persia. The Bible account does not list him as a governor, but rather as a King. His actual rank is not relevant here, except as it bears on the question of when did Cyrus become King of Babylon. But what is relevant is that it is Darius the Mede who rules Babylon in that first year, BC 538 - 537 (537 - 536).

The Scriptures indicate that Darius' reign is for two years. This is clear from the two datings for Cyrus' reign in the book of Daniel. Dan. 1:21 says that Daniel continued to the first year of Cyrus, while Daniel 10:1 records a prophecy made by Daniel in the third year of Cyrus. The third year, and the first year are therefore the same year. It is not uncommon for joint reigns to be recorded thus. The previous two years then, were the two years reigned over by Darius the Mede.

This too, appears consistent with the archeology. The archeology record indicates that Cyrus enters Babylon the year following his victory, entering the city BC 537 (BC 536), and that the following year, BC 536 (BC 535) Cyrus is crowned king of Babylon in a large display. This brings the two year reign of the Bible, and the one year reign for Darius the Mede of Archeology into consistency. The Bible has Darius ruling two years, and Cyrus becoming King in the third year. Archeology has him ruling one year, yielding to Cyrus in the following year, and Cyrus crowned in the third year.

Archeology records this crowning, but historians ignore its significance, and herein lies their problem. They date the decree to return the Jews to Israel, from the first year that Cyrus was king of Persia, BC 539 (538) while it is apparent that Cyrus himself numbered his reign from 54 his crowning in Babylon BC 536 (535).

Archeology records that Cyrus declared the Jews free in his second year. The Bible says he freed the Jews in his first year. One year, in

archeological terms, is not a significant time period, as it can be explained simply by the use of different calendars. The Persians used the sun calendar, starting their new year in January, as we do, while the Jews started their years in Spring, late March or early April, depending on the year. All archeological dates are based on the Sun calendar, not the Jewish calendar. If Cyrus made his decree after January, and before Spring, this would account for the difference in the two records. In any case, if Cyrus declared the Jews free in his second year of actual reign in Babylon, the date would be BC 534 (533) as we know it must have been.

Our conflict then, is not with the archeological evidence, but rather with the historian's interpretation of that evidence. Cyrus says that in his second year he freed the Jews. We all agree with that. The question is, the second year from when? Historians go back to BC 539 for this declaration, arguing that this is when Cyrus actually became king of Persia, and argue that the Jews were freed upon Darius entering the city, BC 538 (537). They argue the freeing of the Jews in the second year, is from the second year of his beginning to eye Babylon. But this is not the only possible reading of Cyrus' writings.

It is just as reasonable to suggest that the freeing of the Jews occurred after Cyrus himself became King in Babylon. There can be no question that Cyrus himself weighed his coronation in Babylon as a very significant thing. He clearly thought of himself as a "liberator" of Babylon, rather than as a "conqueror." In fact, modern historians fall all over themselves in their praise for Cyrus as the first author of civil rights for the people, based upon Cyrus' actions as "king of Babylon" where he not only reestablished the Jews in their homelands, but many other peoples and religions as well. As we have seen, both by Scripture and by archeology, Cyrus is crowned king of Babylon in BC 536 (535) and if he freed the Jews in the second year, the date for the decree would be BC 534 (533).

This puts the BC 533 date we have used to be only one year off the majority opinion of mainstream Chronologists, and identical to the minority opinion.

Thus the reign of Babylon over the Jews would be 70 years (BC 603 - BC 533) as required by the prophesy of Jeremiah. There would be another 70 years for the work of the four carpenters to get all four decrees necessary for the construction of Jerusalem (BC 533 - BC 463) and then 490 years (the prophesy of 70 weeks) from this decree to the crucifixion of Christ, (AD 27).

*Bro. Jim Phillips*

Correction: The January, 2002 issue's page numbers should be 1 through 32.

## What Does That Mean?

*"And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man." (Acts 9:7)*

There is an apparent contradiction between the first account of Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus in Acts 9, and the second account in Acts 22, where Paul recounts what happened: *"And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they HEARD NOT THE VOICE of him that spake to me."* Did the men traveling with Paul hear the voice from heaven, or not?

There is no real contradiction between these two statements in the original Greek; the problem occurs when translating Greek into English. The Greek language makes a distinction between hearing a sound as a noise and hearing a voice as a thought-conveying message. In the former, the verb "to hear" would take the genitive case, but when a message is being conveyed to someone, the verb would be in the accusative case.

When Paul says he heard the voice, it is in the accusative case (i.e. a message was conveyed to him) but neither account ever says that his companions heard that voice in the accusative case. When speaking of them, the verb "to hear" is in the genitive case.

I see this very much like the incident recorded of Christ in John 12 where we read in v.28-30 *"Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glory it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes."*

The record said, "they heard it" but the people never heard the message that the voice articulated; they thought that it was thunder. So it is at Paul's conversion; his companions "heard" the voice (sound) that spake to them, but it was Paul alone that "heard" the message; in that he was able to understand what that voice said.

There is an instructive parallel here between simply hearing, and hearing to understand the message. *"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand."* (Rev. 1:3) In Eureka, bro. Thomas states that the word in the Greek implies not merely hearing, but giving heed to what is heard. We must exercise the greatest care to ascertain the true meaning of what we hear. Some read the Bible and hear beautiful poetry; others hear history and others hear only stories containing moral lessons. They hear the noise, but fail to understand the blessed promise of life that is contained therein.

So the exhortation comes to us from the book of Revelations where we read: *"If any man have an ear, let him hear."* (13:9)

