

THE BEREAN CHRISTADELPHIAN 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. Defending the original, foundation principles upon which the Truth was uncovered from darkness, and upon which the Christadelphian movement was developed.
Upholding the Truth as Bereans since 1923.*

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ECCLESIAL NEWS	Gainesville, London, Kilifi
FRATERNAL GATHERINGS	Canton
EXHORTATION.....	Samuel; A Special Child..... 223
Principles Of Righteousness: Is He Still My Brother?.....	230
EXHORTATION.....	The Truth Shall Make You Free..... 235
THOUGHTS: Bro. Thomas.....	240
	All Things Are Lawful, But-... .. 240
	Take Time To Smell The Roses..... 240
	In Brotherly Love..... 241
STUDY.....	Daniel – The King And The Strange God..... 242
SIGNS AND EVENTS.....	246
The Deep Things of God: The Two Debtors.....	250
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN.....	252
B.E.N.'S PAGE	(Insert)

God Willing, The Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial News will be published monthly as an avenue of providing information of Ecclesial interest to the Brotherhood. Ecclesial news and correspondence, Fraternal Gathering notices, special activities and upbuilding exhortations are encouraged. This is an effort to upbuild and prepare us in heart and mind for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

Gainesville, Florida. Sunday study class - 11 am, Nazareth Revisited; Memorial meeting - 12 noon, Afternoon study class - 2:00 pm, Temple of Ezekiel's Prophecy, Wednesday night study class - 8:30 pm, Minor Prophets (conference call with Houston). Sis. Sharon Johnatty, 2730 SW 98th Dr., Gainesville, Florida 32608

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,
Greetings in the One Hope,

It has been approximately 5 months since moving to Gainesville Florida. During this time I have continued to meet with the Houston ecclesia via conference phone for Memorial meetings, as well as Sunday afternoon and Wednesday night study classes. I have been very encouraged by how well this has worked and the continued love and support of the Houston ecclesia in accommodating this transition. God has been gracious in this provision and I am thankful to be able to meet with those of like precious faith despite the distance.

During the past five months I have had the pleasure of several visitors from different parts of the vineyard. In March I enjoyed the company of Bro. Bob and Sis. Beth Lorquet, of the Houston Ecclesia, as well as Sunday school scholars Jon Lorquet and his friend Lena Lackey. Bro. Bob gave words of exhortation on "A piece of bread and a cup of wine." I also enjoyed visits from Sis. Shiloh Brown, of the Austin Ecclesia in April, and Bro. Paul Garvey of the Boston Ecclesia in May. Bro. Paul gave words of exhortation on "The cherubim and the Son of Man." I would like to extend a warm welcome to visitors to the Sunshine State, or anyone traveling in this direction. Stop by anytime. Also I would like to thank those who have taken the time to call, or sent words of encouragement in e-mails and "thinking of you" cards. Your kind thoughts were very comforting and greatly appreciated.

There is much to learn from new challenges that we face from time to time during our probation. With faith, steadfastness in the study of His word, and constant prayer, our lives will continue to be molded and shaped to fit our Creator's purpose, whatever our circumstances. Perhaps we each encounter moments of spiritual isolation as we go about our daily lives. It is times like these that we should remember that "our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." The "attractions" of this world have never been less appealing than they are today. Daily news of horrendous war crimes and the degenerate state of mankind and the wickedness that pervades every corner of this earth serve only to ask, How long, Oh Lord, wilt thou remain away? We can only hope that the time that is left to endure is short and that the Lord does not delay his coming much longer. May we continue to pray for the peace of Jerusalem and the glorious things spoken of that are yet to come.

With love in the bonds of the Truth,
Sis Sharon Johnatty

London (Ashtead), UK. Sister Rachel Johnatty-Theaker, 26 Woodfield Lane, Ashtead, Surrey, KT21 2BE, England, UK. Tel: +44-1372-272716. E-mail: rjohnatty@yahoo.com. Memorial meeting at 12 noon, mid-week study class (Weds).

Dear brothers and sisters

Greetings in our Lord's name from the London/Ashtead area,

As I write this, Darren and I are preparing to travel to the U.S. God willing, we hope to visit with Sis. Sharon in Gainesville before heading to Houston and Hye. The prospect of visiting my sister in her new home for the first time, meeting with the Houston ecclesia and attending Hye – is like a refreshing shower after an interminably long hot day. I am reminded of what gatherings are about – a chance for spiritual refreshment, upliftment, and companionship with those of like precious faith.

We were also fortunate to be able to attend the fraternal gathering in Wales earlier this year, and would like to thank the Hengoed ecclesia for their efforts in organizing this, and the brethren who provided us with comments and words of exhortation. It also facilitated the welcomed visit to our neck of the woods, of Bro. Paul Garvey, Sis. Pam and Bro. Wayne Johnson, Sara Garvey, and Keri Johnson, from the Boston Ecclesia in March. They spent a few days with us and we all drove to the Wales Gathering together. We immensely enjoyed their company and would like to extend a warm welcome to all who might be passing this way. Ashtead is a small village near to the town of Epsom on the southern fringes of London. The journey into Central London, my daily commute, is about 40 minutes on the train, and our visitors were able to make the most of a few days of sightseeing.

I would also like to mention that Bro. Henry Peare, who recently moved to West Sussex near London, U.K, from the Vancouver Ecclesia, sadly is no longer in fellowship with the Bereans. I understand from Sis. Kaye Yuen that he has joined a small Central meeting that he is close to.

On the surface, London is without doubt a vibrant and interesting capital city. Although it is no stranger to the threat of terrorism, the rising tide of events in recent months brings with it an ever greater sense of disquiet to those who live and work in it. Daily, the news discusses the latest suspect questioned / security measures / security breaches; daily, there are train station closures and false alarms. However, as brethren of Christ we carry with us the best anti-terrorist measure available; the love and protection of our Heavenly Father, and the knowledge that the events taking place around us are but a changing backdrop that affects us only transiently as we await the coming of our Lord and our part in the Kingdom that will reign forever. I am reminded that regardless of whatever the situation, of the words: “Yeah though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil” How comforting are these words for us all in these latter days.

I remain your Sister in Christ,
Rachel Johnatty-Theaker

Kilifi, Kenya

I am writing to clarify the position of Kilifi ecclesia following the news item appearing in the Berean Ecclesial news of May 2004. There are two Ecclesias in Kilifi. One is based at Mtondia School known as Mtondia Ecclesia. They hold their meetings at a school hall. On May 30th 2004, I had a chance of giving the word of exhortation while Brother John Wanjala presided.

The other Ecclesia is at Maweni where we have our own Ecclesial hall. When I was there on June 6th 2004, brother Julius Garama presided while I gave the word of exhortation.

The other two places mentioned - Kaereni and Takaungu have friends without a brother or sister. These good friends are visited each Sunday by brothers to teach and encourage them. We hope some will give a good confession of their faith and embrace the truth in the near future. Then and only then shall we identify ecclesias there.

Sister Irene and Brother Fred Omoto showed us a lot of hospitality while there. They belonged to the Mtondia ecclesia. We are saddened to hear of the loss to Brother Fred Omoto of his father, Mr. Mathias Juma Omoto.

The fraternal Gathering on July 30th to August 1st will take place, God willing, at the Maweni Ecclesial hall.

Bro. Epa Wekati

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held God Willing)

CANTON BAYLOR BEACH PICNIC Aug 28 - 29, 2004

Bro. Don Miller, 6695 Carriage Lane, North Canton, OH 44721 330-494-7717

CANTON FRATERNAL GATHERING Oct 9 - 10, 2004

Bro. Don Miller, 6695 Carriage Lane, North Canton, OH 44721 330-494-7717

Samuel; A Special Child

In Samuel, we have a very special child. Today we begin the books of Samuel and the life of Samuel. It is a time of crisis and transition for Israel—from the judges to the monarchy.

Samuel was, in a sense, a second Moses. He sets the nation on a new track. And he was, too in a sense, a type of John the Baptist to point out under God's direction David, as their king, and to anoint him and to announce him to the nation and to focus the voice of prophecy upon him.

Samuel was the last of the judges and the first of the long line of prophets that God sent to Israel from this time forward. Peter, in Acts 3, speaks of all these prophets from Samuel.

The first eight chapters are about Samuel. Saul is introduced in chapter 9 and continues through chapter 15. David enters at chapter 16 and from there to the end of 2nd Samuel, the narrative centers on him.

The story starts with Elkanah (verse 1, chapter 1), a Levite who lives at Ramathaimzophim in Ephraim. This is the same place as Ramah, where Samuel later lived. It was about 10 miles from Shiloh, where the Tabernacle was.

Elkanah was descended from Kohath, but he was not of the Aaronic priesthood. He was from a different son. Zuph appears to be the ancestor who came into the land under Joshua and gave the area its name; therefore, Ramathaimzophim, or of the sons of Zuph. He, Zuph, was the seventh from Levi, who corresponds with the entering in of the land.

It is interesting that Elkanah, and therefore also Samuel was descended from Korah, who rebelled against Moses and died in the wilderness, but his sons did not rebel and did not die with him. It is interesting, too, that Samuel's grandson was Heman, the principle of David's three leaders of song for the worship. Heman of the Kohathites and Asaph of the Gershonites on his right hand and Ethan, or Jeduthun, of the Merarites on his left hand for the service of song (I Chronicles 6).

Elkanah had two wives (verse 2). It is possible that this was a case like Abraham—a second wife taken, because the first one, the preferred one, was barren. And, as in Abraham's case, the less preferred wife, who was not barren, constantly provoked and humiliated the one that was. We are told (verse 7) that she did this year by year, and especially at the time when it was most distressing and harmful, when they were assembled at the Tabernacle to worship God—a time when peace and joy and harmony were the most important and most needed.

Should Hannah have been peacefully content to accept whatever condition God determined? Doubtless she would have been, except for the constant tormenting and agitation by Peninnah, who would give her no peace. Notice the therefore of verse 7, "therefore, she wept," that is, because she provoked her constantly. But we see how it all turned out to be of God for Hannah's ultimate glory and thanksgiving.

We are told in verse 5 that the LORD had shut up her womb. It was not just an accident of nature. It was a deliberate act by God for His own wise purpose. And that was that Samuel should be a very special God-given child, not just an ordinary normal birth. So what seemed like a liability was an asset. It often is.

There is no hint that Hannah either complained to Elkanah or railed back at Peninnah, rather she took her grief in prayer to God.

Verse 9 – Eli sat upon a seat by a post of the temple. This word seat should be translated throne. It is the basic and only word for throne all through the Old Testament. It is translated throne 130 times and seat only seven. For Eli was the head of the nation. He was both judge and high priest, and this seat was his position of rulership, where people would come to him for judgment. It would be raised up so as to be prominent and impressive. This makes it

clearer how he could fall from it and be killed, as we learn in chapter 4, when he had the news of the Ark being taken.

Peninnah's tormenting and Hannah's consequent misery drove her to God (verse 10). And so both were blessings, and would have been blessings even if God had not taken the action that He did, for to be driven to seek God is always a blessing in itself. But in this case blessing was added upon blessing, and her prayer was answered, as she desired.

Did Hannah desire a son for herself or for God? That is, for her own gratification and justification, or for God's work? There is reason to think that the latter was a major aspect. That is why she becomes so prominent.

Israel was in very deep trouble—oppressed and leaderless. Her song in chapter 2, which was obviously Spirit-inspired, shows a vastly wider range of thought than mere personal interest. It ranks with the sublimest prophecy and introduces new factors of the Divine purpose not previously mentioned.

Not long before this time, a barren mother had given birth to a special child who was dedicated to God as a life-long Nazarite, and who mightily delivered Israel, though only temporarily, because of their apathy and his weakness. That was Samson. This would be fresh in Hannah's memory. She saw the need for total dedication. If God would give her a son (verse 11), he should be given totally to the LORD, and he should be a life-long Nazarite, like Samson was.

There were three life-long Nazarites in the Scriptures—Samson, Samuel, and John the Baptist. But only Samuel was voluntarily so dedicated. The other two were so-commanded by God, before they were born.

Hannah's song shows that she recognized herself as a special instrument and Samuel as a special child. He began and heralded a new phase in the Divine purpose. A long train of good came from her anguished prayer—Samuel, David, Solomon, and the glory of the kingdom—typical of the greater David and the true glory to come.

Verse 20 – She "called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD." The margin gives the meaning of the name asked of God. But others translate it heard of God, lent from God, appointed of God, and name of God. We know the word Shem means name. We know the Hebrew words are all built on roots of three consonants, and according to how they are divided and what vowels and secondary consonants are added, these three here—s, m, and l—can mean any of these things, and doubtless, all the meanings are included.

Samuel was one of the seven special births of Scripture—Isaac, Jacob and Esau, Moses, Samson, Samuel, John, and Christ. All, except Moses, were foretold. And all, except Moses and Christ, were born of previously barren women.

Verse 24 – "When she had weaned him, she took him...to the house of the LORD in Shiloh." From all indications and authorities, this could not be much after he was three years old—an extremely young age to be taken from his

family and put into the care and service of the aged high priest. Samuel, obviously, was a very special child, who was, like Christ, of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD.

We read in verse 28, the end of the chapter, “As long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD. And he worshipped the LORD there.” Three or four years old—even in the natural, apart from the influence of the Spirit, such is not unknown. The musician Mozart composed music before he was four years old and at seven was writing symphonies that were played by orchestras.

As soon as there is understanding, it is not too soon to worship and serve the LORD. It is striking in natural things, but how much better when youthful ability and zeal is applied to eternal things and not the passing rubbish of the world.

The worship of a small child can be very important in God’s purpose, as we see here.

Verses 1-10 of the second chapter are Hannah’s prophetic psalm. There are several similar songs in Scripture—prophetic inspired praises on special occasions of joy and deliverance. The first is that of Moses and Miriam on the shore of the Red Sea, when God had destroyed the Egyptian army and Israel was, at last, free. And again Moses’ solemn song of witness just before he died, as he left for Israel (Deut. 32). And then there is the wonderful victory song of the brave Deborah, who rallied a dispirited Israel against the oppressor. And then this marvelous song of Hannah, as she dedicated her tiny son Samuel to the work of the LORD and the deliverance of her people. David is next with many songs—the whole Book of Psalms. Psalms 9, 18, and 89 are especially of this personal, prophetic, rejoicing character. Solomon’s songs were 1005, of which the choicest of all songs was the Song of Songs. Then Isaiah’s sad song of the beloved and lovingly cared for vineyard, but fruitless, which was Israel. And Hezekiah’s joyful song of praise at his redemption from the gates of the grave.

Coming to the New Testament, we have three: Zacharias’ tongue-loosed hymn of thanksgiving at the birth of John and at the prospective birth of him whom John came to announce. And then Mary’s thankful song, when greeted by Elizabeth; so similar to this one of Hannah’s. And finally, the glorious triumphant song of Moses and the Lamb, rising like silver thunder to the throne of God from the vast multitude of the redeemed in Revelations.

Verse 1 of chapter 2 – “My heart rejoiceth in the LORD.” Two things we should deeply impress ourselves with: 1) There is no true rejoicing outside of the LORD. All merriment outside of God is simply part of the great mad human dance of death. 2) If we are truly in the LORD, there can be nothing but rejoicing, as the deepest layer of our feelings and character, though there may be surface sorrows, and will be.

Continuing verse 1 – “Mine horn is exalted in the LORD.” We know that a horn stands for power. And for the horn to be exalted, it shall be victorious and triumphant. But there was another aspect to lifting up of the horn, which

is perhaps more applicable here. 1 Chronicles 25 tells us that Samuel’s grandson Heman and all his sons and daughters were appointed for song in the house of the LORD, “to lift up the horn”—clearly, there referring to the musical trumpet of praise.

“My mouth is enlarged.” Paul says somewhat similarly to the Corinthians (II Cor 6), “O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open to you, our heart is enlarged...ye are straitened in your bowels.” That is, ye strain in your affections. “Be ye also enlarged.” Enlargement of mouth is expansion and freedom of expression.

In her sorrow, she spoke silently within herself. But God’s answer had given her great boldness and joy to cry aloud.

“Enlarged over mine enemies.” The plural enemies and the whole majestic tone of the song shows that it relates to the broad purpose of God at which she rejoiced at being part and not to any small feeling of triumph against Peninnah, who was inconsequential. This is further shown by her continuing, “because I rejoice in thy salvation.” Her mind is on the vast purpose and the mighty attributes of God.

Verse 2 – “There is none holy as the LORD.” This is the first of the attributes that she extols, and it must come first. It is fundamental—holiness. It was because of God’s immutable and inviolable holiness that Christ must die the dreadful death that he did, and nail the sin-body to the tree. All other religions—man-made religions—have no such conception even as holiness—a pure spotless God calling upon all His children to purity and holiness. Most so-called Christian religions today have forgotten this. They’ve lost it, and they pander to the corruptions in the name of what they call love. But the divine decree still stands—“Without holiness, no man shall see the LORD.”

Continuing in verse 2 – “There is none beside thee.” This is God’s great theme through Isaiah—one alone, unique and incomparable, eternal and supreme over all. We must keep bringing ourselves back to God’s infinite supremacy and our own utter nothingness. We must walk continually in awe and fear and reverence. This is the very opposite of the spirit of the flesh and of the world. Let us never for a moment relax our awareness of it.

“Neither is there any Rock like our God.” This is the first use of this term for God, except in the song of Moses, which of course Hannah would be familiar with. It is a favorite term with David in the Psalms, but it appears very little elsewhere. The primary idea is strength, permanence, immutability—the basic foundation of everything. And secondarily, it is shelter and protection, safety and security—something on which to build with assurance for eternity.

Verse 3 – “The LORD is a God of knowledge.” The fourth attribute—wisdom, understanding, limitless infinity of knowledge and observance, even to the fall of a sparrow.

Finally, “By him actions are weighed.” Justice and judgment, reward and punishment, discernment even to the deepest hidden thoughts and intents of the heart.

Verses 4-8 speak of God’s total control of human affairs and how quickly they can be reversed—the mighty brought down, the low exalted. We see it in the fortunes of nations and individuals. It is illustrated in miniature in Hannah’s own case. As we first see her, she is in abject misery, and could have lived and died in total obscurity—a mere passing object of local pity and reproach. But one fervent prayer and she is raised to heights of joy and divine prominence that few women, or men, ever attain to.

Verse 6 – “The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up.” This is one of the earliest of the Old Testament references to the resurrection, though Abraham manifested it in his faith on Mt. Moriah, and God declared it to Moses at the bush.

Verse 9 – “He will keep the feet of His saints”—His holy ones. Here again is holiness. “It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” But those who walk by the lamp of the Word will be divinely kept from stumbling or wandering or slipping. “The path of the just is as shining light; it shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” Let us be sure that as we grow older (we all do inevitably—daily), our path shines more and more by ever growing deeper and wiser in the Word. We can never just drift into the Kingdom of God. It’s an upward, constant, joyful effort—more and more. God is not satisfied if today is what we attained to yesterday.

The song reaches its climax in verse 10 – “The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth.” Here is the final and inevitable culmination of the purpose. “The LORD SHALL JUDGE the ends of the earth.” All the prophets point to this great day, and Hannah was among the first to do so.

Continuing verse 10 – “He shall give strength to his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.” Hannah was the first to apply the title anointed, or Messiah as it is in the Hebrew, to Christ. The only occurrences of the word before are in the regulations of the Law of Moses concerning the priesthood. But it was the very prominent essence of Israel’s hope thereafter. Again, David picks it up in the Psalms, joyfully, as in Psalm 2, where the kings of the earth strangely unite against Yahweh and His anointed. And apart from the mystic prophecies that Balaam was forced to utter against his will and beyond his understanding, “Israel’s king shall be higher than Agag,” and the voice of a king is among them. Apart from this, Hannah is again the first to apply the term king to Christ—his other principle title that is applied so widely to him afterwards, and which culminates in the Revelation—“the King of kings and Lord of lords.” There are two other previous prophetic references to kingship, but not to Christ individually. God said of both Abraham and Sarah that kings of people should come from them (Gen 17). And God told Israel as he

assembled them at Sinai that they should be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

Again in verse 10 – “He shall give strength to his king.” This was fulfilled in Christ in a much deeper sense than the mere conferring of power and authority. We see it beautifully unfolded in the divinely assisted perfection of his life and character that he might accomplish what weak unaided man could never do, and therefore offer a powerful and acceptable sacrifice of perfect holiness and purity, as a foundation of redemption for the whole race.

Therefore says David (Psalm 80), “Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself.” And now ever involved in his obedience and victory, he is made eternally strong in immortal strength and able to save to the uttermost those who come to God by him. Here is real inner strength for eternal kingship—far beyond mere external power and authority, because ourselves are nothing.

In verse 11, we come back to Samuel—a very young child left with the aged high priest. “And the child did minister before the LORD before Eli the priest.” We are told this three times—here, verse 18, and the first verse of chapter 3. And we are told also twice—verse 21 and 26 that “Samuel grew before the LORD” in favor with God and man. These five references to the young child Samuel are scattered significantly through the saddest recital of the wickedness of Eli’s sons and God’s announced condemnation upon the house of Eli because of it.

Verse 18 – “But (this is to Eli, and in contrast with the conduct of his sons) Samuel ministered before the LORD, being a child, and girded with a linen ephod.” An ephod was a sleeveless jacket—the outer garment of the high priest’s attire, to which was attached the breastplate of judgment. In the Mosaic regulations the ephod is specified only for the high priest. But in referring to Saul’s slaughter of the priests of Nob, we are told they all wore linen ephods. It was a mark of priesthood. Here we find Samuel, as a child ministering before God in this priestly garment, though he was not of the priesthood. He was a Levite, but not of the family of Aaron to which the priesthood was restricted. The only other occasion of non-priestly wearing of an ephod is when David wore one as he danced before the Ark.

Verse 19 – “Moreover, his mother made him a little coat.” This word coat should be robe, as it is in the Revised Version. Notice the little—he was still a small child. The term is not exclusively applied to the priestly garment, as ephod is, but it is the term that is always applied to the robes of the ephod—the long garment that the high priest wore under the ephod and which was related to it.

The mention of these two garments together seems to have a special significance. We find later that Samuel offered sacrifices, which activity is by the Law restricted to the priesthood. In fact, he rebuked Saul from presuming to offer sacrifices himself and not wait for Samuel, as he had been instructed. From all this, it would appear that Samuel had an especially appointed

priesthood from God. This emphasizes the specialness of his work and position, and its typical nature—a faithful, non-Aaronic priest, who had served God all his life from his earliest youth, taking over the rulership of the land from a corrupt Aaronic priesthood and delivering it from its oppressors.

Verses 27-36 are God's judgment on the house of Eli—one of the most terrible denunciations in Scripture. Eli himself was not wicked, and he raised his voice against the wickedness, but his sin before God was that he did not go beyond just denouncing it. He did not take the proper action to keep the priesthood sound and the worship unadulterated. He vainly hoped that just talking against it would be acceptable to God. How terribly mistaken he was! There is a great lesson here. Many today will denounce error, but they see no need of separating themselves from it and taking the proper action to keep the body sound.

Eli was of the line of Ithamar—the youngest of Aaron's two surviving sons. We remember two died, because they offered strange fire. The high priesthood had started out in the line of Eleazer, the older son, but somehow, not recorded, during the period of the judges it had been transferred to the house of Ithamar. Now, it was to go back, and the line of Ithamar was to be cursed for ever, because of Eli's sons' wickedness.

Saul also annihilated the line, killing 85 priests in cold blood. Only Abiathar escaped. He served during David's reign, but at its end, he joined the Adonijah conspiracy against Solomon, whom God had chosen to follow David. Solomon banished him, and the priesthood returned to the line of Eleazer in Zadok, completing the curse on Eli's house.

There is much of deep prophetic significance in the closing words of this curse on Eli in verse 35 of chapter 2, "And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed (My Messiah) for ever."

It is our desire and hope and lifelong effort to be a part of that faithful, eternal, Zadok priesthood to serve before Christ for ever.

Bro.G.V.Growcott

Is He Still My Brother?

During the past fifty or sixty years much has been written in Christadelphian magazines upon the above question; some good, some bad and indifferent. The good has not been acceptable to the carnally-minded because it has reflected the mind of the Spirit; and the bad has been out of keeping with The Word because it has reflected the mind of the flesh.

Many Christadelphians contend there is no justification for withdrawing from other Christadelphians except for outrageous misconduct; such, for instance, as would cause The Truth to be spoken of reproachfully by those "outside."

On the other hand, there are a few Christadelphians who, on the least suspicion of "offence" against either doctrine or practice, rush in with Matt. 18:15-17,

demanding a completion of the process within a few weeks.

These brethren invariably assume the role of dictators, soon fall foul of all who do not accept their conclusions; and, realising they are not appreciated, "fly off," as Dr. Thomas expressed it, "in a tantrum to mulishly break bread alone, or with a few others," regarding themselves as latter-day Noah's, complacently refusing to tolerate any who do not fall in with their behests.

Reverting to those referred to in paragraph 2; many of these think that no Christadelphian should be withdrawn from until there is a certainty that the "offender" is outside the pale of salvation; and who having been withdrawn from, is no longer to be regarded as a Christadelphian (or brother of Christ); but treated as a spiritual leper, or outcast, with whom we should have no further dealings.

This attitude they found on Matthew 18:15-17, which reads:

"If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; and if he shall hear thee, thou shalt have gained thy brother. But, if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; but, if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican."

Concerning these three verses, the writer, and many other long-standing Christadelphians, have never been able to shut their eyes upon the possibility that Jesus was here referring to personal offences (note the pronouns, first person singular—"thee," "thou," "him," "he")—and not to matters affecting Ecclesial fellowship. However, after all that can be said one way or the other on the question, certain it is we must aim at being "workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth;" (2 Tim. 12:15); among other things, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual," (1 Cor. 2:13) which is the reverse of setting Scripture against Scripture; Jesus against his Father; or Paul against Jesus. We must also see that our conclusions are always in harmony with what else the Bible declares, namely, that what the Son said was always the mind of the Father, and what the Apostle Paul said was always the mind of the Son (John 14:24; Acts 9:15-17; 1 Cor. 7:10, etc.).

Coming to Paul, we find he has written fully, and plainly, as to how we are to regard and treat Christadelphians who have strayed from the narrow way, and from whom we have withdrawn in accordance with the commands of the Spirit; for it is clear that, in faithfulness to Christ our Master, and in order to maintain the Truth in its purity, we have, on occasions, to withdraw from some; there is the evidence in Paul's instructions to Timothy, where, in referring to certain brethren, he says, "From such withdraw thyself" (1 Tim. 6:5); and to the Thessalonians, "Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly." (2Thess. 3:6)

From the foregoing inspired testimony, then, it is manifest that, if we would keep the Truth in its purity, we must not hesitate to withdraw from

those whose leavening influence would, sooner or later, make shipwreck of the Faith, realising as Paul said, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." (Gal. 5:9) This eliminating work must be faithfully done if we would please the Captain of our salvation; not only for the spiritual well-being of ourselves, but for the good of our erring brethren (1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Thess. 3:14).

It is certain, however, from what our beloved brother Paul has written on the matter, that we must not ostracise the withdrawn-from Christadelphians as lepers, or as outcasts beyond the pale of salvation; nor take for granted that because a fallible Ecclesia- or the majority of an Ecclesia-has pronounced judgment upon a given matter, and excluded from its fellowship a certain brother that, therefore, the rejection of the excluded one at the Judgment Seat is equally certain. If the act of withdrawal from those who "walk disorderly" carries that meaning with it, then the write] frankly confesses he would never be a party in taking that drastic step; he would continue to fellowship any, and all, who had complied with the letter of Mark 16:15, 16. To do otherwise, he would consider arrogating to himself a function which is the prerogative of the Great Judge-our Lord Jesus; and his only.

Now let us turn to Paul's Second Epistle to the Thessalonians chapter 3, verses 14 and 15,, which read :

"If any man obey not our word by this Epistle, note that man and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Ye, count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."

Here, Paul leaves us in no manner of doubt as to either the offence or the offender. The offence is "walking disorderly" (verse 6) which the Apostle defines as "walking contrary" to what he taught whether by word or epistle; which, as we have seen from the Lord's own words, was of divine authority. A Christadelphian, then, walking disorderly, would according to Paul, include one holding wrong view: of the Resurrection (1 Cor. 15) ; the Judgment (Heb. 5:1, 2) the nature or sacrifice of Christ (2 John 7-11) ; or, one who cause (strife or division, by introducing a false doctrine or practice. Hence to prevent the leavening influence of such, Paul's command must be (respected and obeyed-namely, to "withdraw" ourselves from such.

But, however, imperative as it is, that we have recourse to that drastic action, nowhere does the Spirit say a withdrawn from Christadelphian ceases to be "our brother," or that we should refuse to regard him as "a brother." No, no; a thousand noes! He is still a brother-our brother-and must be so regarded and treated. He may be an unfaithful brother, a disobedient brother, a blind brother; but all the same, he is still a brother, and must be counted as such until our Elder Brother and Judge decides to the contrary and who are we (you and I), that we should dare to presume as to the final verdict, and, in advance, rank our erring brother among the "cursed" on the left of the Judgment Seat (Matthew 25:41)

Nay, Nay ! That is not what the Bible teaches us. We have no so learned Christ; nor had Paul; for, as we have already seen after commanding the Thessalonians to withdraw from certain "disorderly" Christadelphians, he bids us:

"Count him not as an enemy but admonish him as a brother."

Therefore, although we cannot fellowship him, or be a partaker in what we believe to be an undermining of some First Principle of doctrine or practice, we must at all times keep in mind that he is still our brother, praying and hoping that his Judge, and ours, will be able to mercifully overlook his errors as forgivable, even as we ourselves pray, and hope, he will so deal with ours, notwithstanding the probability that such errors may mean a less exalted position in the kingdom; hence, our daily prayer to God is: Father, bless and guide all my brethren who are striving to know and do Thy will, whoever and wherever they may be, and grant that in the great day of account, we may all prove to be "VESSELS OF MERCY."

Let us realise what is involved in that prayer-namely, that our Father in heaven will help and bless ALL who are striving to know and do His will. If we are really sincere, and are fully alive to that petition, we shall aim at being "co-labourers together with God" in trying to assist our erring brother back to the narrow way; and, we shall miss no opportunity of pointing out to him wherein he is in error. That being so, we cannot, we dare not, make any agreement to call a truce to sink our doctrinal differences, and shut our eyes to unpleasant facts in order to enjoy a temporary peace, and for a time to be "Hail, fellow! Well met." No not for an hour. To enter into any such compact would be to play the part of a traitor to our Captain; it would mean keeping silent on things that matter-things highly esteemed by Christ-and, that too, merely to gratify the flesh-our old Adam; for who would deny that such is wholly and solely the reason of those who "go on holiday" with such an understanding?

No other conclusion can be come to by a Scripturally enlightened and disinterested onlooker. The conclusion is confirmed by what is stated by the Apostle John, thus:

"If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." (2 John 10)

No reasonable Christadelphian will contend that the Apostle meant we are to refuse to admit a workman into our house who happened to be a brother with wrong views on the nature of Christ; nor will he contend that, on our embracing the truth on that doctrine ourselves, we should turn out of our house a wife, or son, or daughter, who maintained erroneous views on "this doctrine." No; what the Apostle meant had clearly to do with "fellowship" (companionship-partnership); his inspired interdict had reference to a Christadelphian's choice of social companions. While, in a certain sense, our spare time, like our money, is our own (Acts 5:4), the decision as to how, and with whom, we shall spend it, must be as in God's sight, and with a view to pleasing Him and our Elder Brother.

We may be asked this: Suppose at one of the holiday seasons, when a fraternal gathering has been arranged, our fleshly relatives who are out of fellowship, have also arranged a gathering of our kith and kin, and we know that, as hitherto, they are expecting us to join them. Yea, they have expressly written, calling us to

join them-what shall we do? Do! Do just what you think the Master would do under like circumstances; and he has left us in no manner of doubt, for he has given us a concrete solution to what otherwise would be an abstract question. Just open the Bible at Mark 3. Beginning at verse 31 we read :

"There came then his brethren and his mother, and standing without, sent unto him, calling him. And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee. And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother."

Thus we see the mind of Jesus, and what he did when face to face with a difficulty we have all had to face at some time or other. He chose the company of those who "sat about him" to the company of those who were not in his fellowship (John 7:5); even though his mother was found-and quite naturally so-in the company of her other sons upon the special occasion-possibly a family gathering. Christ's mind upon such things was just the same now as it was twenty years previously, when, also addressing his mother, he asked her: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:49) That cannot be our Father's business, in which we undertake to drop doctrinal differences, and withhold "a word in season."

With the foregoing facts in mind, let us, when called upon to make the choice, soliloquize thus: Here I am with some spare time at my disposal-maybe a few hours, a day, a week, or even longer; it may be at home or abroad; I want company; and I remember what happy times I have had with Brother This or Sister That. Now, they have asked me to again spend my leisure with them. But times have altered since then, for we are no longer in fellowship; we each believe the other to have taken a wrong step, and to be fellowshiping false teachers; and whenever we do happen to broach the subject in dispute, unpleasantness and bad feeling ensue. It is suggested, however, that for the period we shall be in each others company, we shall sink our differences and that during our visit we each undertake not to refer to the matter that divides us in fellowship!

Fie, Brother! Fie, Sister! Do you think it will be pleasing to the Lord for you to pledge your word, that, no matter how favourable the opportunity may be to speak a word in season, and emphasize the unscriptural position of your companion, you will keep your mouth shut, and refuse to "buy up your opportunity;" and all because you have, for the sake of present comfort, deliberately made a selfish and unrighteous vow? The suggestion is too horrible for words!

A Christadelphian who was knowingly a party to such an arrangement who had deliberately made so unholy a contract - how could he at the end of the day, and on bended knees, ask God's blessing and forgiveness, knowing he had deliberately for mere fleshly reasons, refused to speak the "word in season" ? And knowing too, he intended to do so, time and again, so long as the holiday lasted. Such social or family peace can only be bought at the price of the "peace which passeth all understanding."

Should any Christadelphian think our picture overdrawn, let such ask himself, or herself, this question as an alternative: "Will my proposed companion agree that we spend the time together, on the clear understanding that, should an opportunity present itself which I consider favourable, I shall be at full liberty to open the question that has severed the most precious of all ties or links-spiritual fellowship; and, also, that during our daily readings together of the Word, I shall be allowed to point out how they justify the stand I have taken on the matter that divides us? "Let those questions be frankly, honestly, and unreservedly faced and answered, as in the sight of God; and, it is absolutely certain the proposed "time together" will not materialize unless, of course, our profession is an empty one, and we are willing to give our religious "convictions" a back seat.

The foregoing conclusions, however, are not intended to, nor indeed must they, minimise our loving consideration for, and interest in, the present well-being of our misled brethren and sisters; nor will they lessen our appreciation of those divine and priceless words of sympathetic love, penned by Paul:

"Count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."

We must be on our guard, and not separate that dual injunction -not to put asunder what the Spirit has joined together, which is each other's company, we shall sink our differences, and that during our visit we each undertake not to refer to the matter that divides us in fellowship!

What do the extremists do in this matter? One extremist counts the withdrawn-from Christadelphians as an enemy, and shuns him as a leper or outcast, and the other extremist counts the withdrawn-from Christadelphian as a friend to whom he can extend all that goes to make up fellowship, except the ordinance of breaking bread and drinking wine on the "First Day of the Week." As is so often the case, truth lies between the two extremes: "Wisdom is profitable to direct."

A mutual social time together, or a joint holiday cannot be compared to a meeting to deal with matters of business or family affairs. The latter are not things attended to by anyone merely for the purpose of occupying leisure time, nor yet to merely satisfy one's amenities, but, in order to carry out definite duties. To compare, or confound, the latter, with arranging a pleasant time in the company of those from whom we have withdrawn our fellowship, on the mutual understanding that for the time being we sink vital differences, is not only to confound things that differ, but to run in direct opposition to the divine command, "make not provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof." (Romans 13:14)

Finally, we emphasize the lesson ; let us avoid extremes, one of which is the contention that a Christadelphian ceases to be a Christadelphian when he or she is withdrawn from; and the other extreme, the contention that although we withdraw from another Christadelphian it should make no difference in our social relationship, and that we are at liberty to make arrangements to sink spiritual differences, pocket our convictions, and withhold any exhortation or rebuke likely to interfere with our fleshly peace.

Both these extremes will be avoided by every true Christadelphian who heeds the Spirit's command:

"Count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."

Bro. Frank G. Jannaway – 1930 Berean

The TRUTH Shall Make You Free

"Because they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie"-2 Thessalonians 2:10

BELIEF IS the motive power behind all human activity. Without a strong belief in the desirability of one's objective, failure is almost certain. The inventor toils, often in poverty, and endures the jeers of the skeptical, because he believes that eventually he will be rewarded for creating some device which will be of great benefit to mankind, and bring to the inventor fame and fortune. The explorer sails into uncharted seas, or plunges into the trackless wilderness because he believes that he can reach that goal for which he is seeking and the fulfillment of all his dreams.

Whatever one's character may be, good or bad, depends chiefly on the principles believed. A strong belief in right principles tends to building of good character, belief in evil principles leads to immorality, crime and wickedness.

And so we could go on to include the whole range of human activity, showing that each action, good or bad, was the result of belief in something. To this all informed people will agree. It is inescapable; it is a matter of common and universal knowledge.

YET, STRANGE to say, when it comes to the most vital matter of all-that action which makes all others pale into utter insignificance-popular thought does a complete about face and says true belief is not essential at all. That is, when it comes to one's eternal salvation, we are told it makes no difference what we believe, if anything at all, concerning the great issues involved. This notion is not only commonly accepted by the rank and file of humanity, by the overwhelming majority of church members, but by professed preachers.

We affirm, on the basis of infallible scripture testimony, that it not only makes a difference what we believe, IT MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD-the difference between eternal salvation and eternal death.

Is it reasonable to assume that the God of heaven would condescend to reveal His eternal plan of redemption, for the specific purpose of making known His will and purpose to man that he might be saved, and then permit these weak, fallible creatures to do as they please about believing it?

Is it logical that God should so lightly esteem His own Word, delivered through His inspired prophets and apostles, many of whom suffered death in doing so, and then permit man to treat it lightly-believe or disbelieve it as he chooses?

Can we believe that God will crown with "glory, honor and immortality" those who reject or disbelieve His Word delivered through His only begotten Son? Will He save anyone merely because he is "sincere" in his unbelief or misbelief of divinely revealed truths?

God has given to no one the right to tell his fellowman what he must believe, or how he shall worship God. Neither has God given to anyone the right or privilege of choosing his own creed, or worshipping God in any way except THAT WAY WHICH GOD PROVIDES.

Cain and Abel (Genesis 4) offer the first example of what God requires of man in this respect. Abel followed God's way and was accepted. Cain chose his own way and was condemned. Let us be sure we follow the example of Abel and not of Cain.

IN THE absence of divine revelation, man's religion must depend solely upon his own thinking and reasoning. It is because so many have assumed the right to formulate their own creeds, and use the great blessing of religious freedom as license to ignore God's Word and believe as they please, that we see so many creeds and conflicting religious beliefs in the world today.

Sinful man is altogether incapable of framing his own way of salvation. His natural tendency is to go contrary to God's will and purpose. Therefore, when he attempts to choose his own religion and think as he pleases, he is certain to go wrong. There is nothing more evident in Bible history than the fact that the vast majority of mankind have always been wrong. Only a small minority have ever been in full accord with God and His Word. Only a few in any age have been willing to heed the divine injunction.

"Let the wicked forsake HIS way and the unrighteous man HIS thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are MY ways higher than your ways, and MY thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:7-9).

The very first consideration in the delivering of God's message of salvation to man was that it might be believed, and it was through this belief that salvation was to be obtained. In John 20:30-31 we read,

"But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his Name."

The Gospel preached by Christ and his apostles was a message requiring belief. Christ's commission to the apostles was (Mark 16:15-17)

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that BELIEVETH and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned." Scriptural belief involves more than a vague belief in some kind of a Supreme Being, or the mere acceptance of Christ as a Saviour. It refers to a certain form of doctrine, or teaching, as noted in the following testimonies "Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me" (2Timothy 1:13).

"Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you." (Romans 6:17).

"It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye contend earnestly for THE FAITH once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).

The purpose of the Gospel to the Gentiles was,-

"To turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me (Christ)." (Acts 26:18).

No one can "call upon the Name of the Lord" in the scriptural sense, or come into fellowship and relationship with the Father and the Son except through a knowledge and belief of the Truth of the Gospel, as we read,

"For whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?...So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." (Romans 10:13-16).

Eternal blessing is obtained only through a belief in God's Word (Revelation 1:3)

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and KEEP THE THINGS written therein."

On the other hand, in the last chapter of the Bible, God warns that if anyone shall add to His words, that God shall add unto him all the plagues written therein; and if anyone takes anything from that word, God will take away his part in the book of life.-Rev. 22:17-18.

In writing to the church at Galatia, Paul warns them against permitting false teachers to pervert or adulterate the saving Gospel, saying

"As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach ANY OTHER GOSPEL unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:9)

A lack of knowledge and belief of the Gospel definitely bars one from salvation. We read in 2 Cor. 4:3-4

"If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost."

Paul reminds the Ephesians that when they were ignorant of the divine plan of redemption as revealed in the covenants of promise

"That at that time ye were without Christ ... having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:11-12).

It is an indisputable fact that all of whom it is testified in the Bible that they were accepted of God have been accepted on the basis of belief in His Word. Cornelius, the first Gentile to be offered salvation in Christ, was accepted only after he had sent for Peter, at God's direction,

"Who shall tell thee words whereby thou and thy house shall be saved." (Acts 11:14)

It is said of Abraham, the great example of faith and righteousness (James 2:23; Romans 4:3)

"Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he was called the Friend of God."

Only a casual reading of the 4th chap. of Romans and the 2nd chap. of James should teach anyone something which the "liberal-minded" entirely overlook. It is that God forgives sins and bestows rewards only on the basis of belief in His Word and obedience of His commands.

The notion that God will save anyone solely on the basis of sincerity and morality is completely foreign to the Scriptures. Abraham became the friend of God because he believed the Word of God and did what God told him to do. What faith and righteous works did for Abraham it will do for us, because Paul tells us that it was not written for Abraham's sake alone, but to all who (Rom. 4:12-24)

"Walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham."

Now it amounts to a certainty that the way of salvation has not changed since the days of the Apostles. There has been no further revelation. The only change that has taken place is that Christendom has departed from The Faith once delivered to the saints. The doctrines of men have undergone many changes, but:

"The Word of God abideth forever."

The Gospel is still "the power of God unto salvation." The Gospel or "good news" of salvation, which the Apostles preached is defined as:

"The things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ" (Act 8:12).

It is God's message of a coming kingdom on earth, which will bless all nations and in which the saints will receive their reward of the inheritance. The things concerning the Name of Jesus Christ are composed of the things relating to Christ his nature, his mission, his sacrificial offering for sin, his resurrection, and everything pertaining to salvation in him. This Gospel has the power to save, for (Rom. 1:16-17)

"Therein is the righteousness of God revealed."

In it God has revealed Himself, His purpose, His will. It is that which makes us free (John 8:32); it is the word of life (Phil. 2:16); it is "able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32); "By which also ye are saved" (1Cor. 15:2).

To briefly summarize, Jesus and his apostles taught:

- That God has offered to man a plan by which he can be freed and inherit eternal life (Rom. 6:23);
- That salvation depends on a belief in God's plan of salvation centered in Christ (John 3:16);
- That there is but one faith (Eph. 4:5);
- That none can please God without this faith (Heb. 11:6);

- That this faith comes by hearing and believing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17);
- That all who were blind or had no knowledge of the Gospel were lost (2 Cor. 4:3);
- That to reject God's Word brings certain condemnation (John 12:48);
- That to neglect "that great salvation" is fatal (Heb. 2:1).

One of, if not THE greatest, sin of the present age is the neglect of God's Word. The baneful effects of this general unbelief and skepticism are already apparent in the awful wave of crime and immorality which is sweeping over the world, and in the obvious weakness of popular "liberal" religions which stand helpless as they face an unbelieving world which they have taught "it makes no difference what you believe."

Such "broad-mindedness" has been very pleasing to the world. They have taken the preachers of smooth things at their word and have rejected everything which might interfere with the pursuit of their worldly ways. God's saving Word is ignored and in its place we have everything that is pleasing to the flesh, things that,

"Seem right unto a man, but the end, thereof, are the ways of death."

Let us follow the advice of the inspired apostle, and,

"Receive with meekness the engrafted Word which is able to save Your souls ... and be doers of the Word and not hearers only." (James 1:21)

Uninspired man may offer us much in things that pertain to this life but he stands mute and helpless at the graveside. God's Word alone can guide us into eternity.

Bro. Oscar Beauchamp

Thoughts:

Brother Thomas

Brother Thomas was the tool used by Yahweh to uncover the great Truth which we now possess. We should all recognize this as a critical part of our lives.

What if Yahweh had not revealed His plan through men during all these ages? Is not this what He did during all the times before? "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy - Spirit."

There were always men used to bring the message of hope to all who would hear. Should we believe that this changed? No. He has done this in our time as well, as a continuing of the work formerly set forth by Inspiration in His Word.

Let us not be like some who lived contemporary with Brother Thomas and who challenged and opposed his work. There are some in our day who wish to do this. Others keep his expositions closed, and give only lip-service to that which Yahweh provided in him. Some delay to read and learn what be the first

principles of the foundation of our community in these last days.

What a terrible thing it is if we would become this way and cast off our foundation! Instead, let us "stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein." The result of this approach is one that will serve us well. "And ye shall find rest for your souls."

All Things Are Lawful – But...

Regardless how "lawful" a thing may be for us, if it is not a necessity but just a matter of our pleasure and desire, and we know it will distress our brethren and sisters, and weaken the ecclesia, and perhaps divide it; and if we ignore the tears and pleadings of those who implore us to put the love of God and the peace and welfare of the ecclesia ahead of our own selfishness, and if we still go ahead with our willful course, then we have committed a serious sin before God. We have brazenly declared that we neither have nor understand the beautiful, self sacrificing spirit of Christ, and that we are, therefore none of his.

Bro. G. V. Growcott

Take Time to Smell the Roses

Walking on Finlayson Island, which is in the middle of the North Saskatchewan River between Battleford and North Battleford, the flowers were in abundance because of the blessing of rain this year. There were 3 shades of pink roses, lady slippers, wild lily of the valley, buttercups, trees in bloom, flowers we didn't even know the names of, yet God knows them all and puts them there for our pleasure.

We see many times that trees, flowers and plants are used in the Bible under inspiration so we also know that our Creator loves beauty in its natural form. The narratives show He used plants even for lessons to the people. It is enjoyable to bring nature and God's Word together while we are relaxing.

One record of God using trees is in 2 Sam. 5:23-24, "And when David inquired of the Lord, he said, Thou shalt not go up: but fetch a compass behind them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees. And let it be, when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself: for then shall the Lord go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines."

We are reminded of the shriveling of the fig tree as a sign that outward show of serving God is not enough - there must be fruit. Pruning of ourselves to produce fruit comes about from the trials of life and we strive to grow in fruitfulness unto our Creator.

The lesson of the beautiful lily of the field indicates that God provides for what He has created. Our faith is revived by these times together. May you be encouraged in seeing the beauty of God's creation and be assured that He careth for each one of His children in a personal way.

In Brotherly Love

The following letter was recently sent by the secretary of a small ecclesia to a sister who had been absent from the table for a considerable time. (It is published here as a specimen of the kind of communication that comes of brotherly love):—

“To Sister—, affectionately.—In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom we must be faithful in all things and to whom we must render account of our stewardship, I write to express our united sorrow at your long-continued absence from the Lord’s own appointed meeting place—“the breaking of bread.” And, in the greatest love and affection, we would unitedly ask if there is any cause of hindrance in the ecclesia, either individually or collectively, so that we may judge ourselves and purge out the evil. Weak and failing we know ourselves to be, yet we are earnestly desirous to honour our heavenly Father, and to advance the cause of His truth as well as comfort and help each other. Being few in numbers this is greatly needed, and we cannot help but feel the loss of one member at the Lord’s table at any time, but your long-continued absence causes the greatest anxiety and grief, and, in faithfulness to our Lord and Master, we would humbly ask the cause and your mind upon the subject, so as to guide us aright in this most serious and difficult matter. Sincerely hoping that you will accept this in the same spirit of love in which I am sure it is sent, and reply as soon as you conveniently can.”

Christadelphian - 1883

DANIEL – THE KING AND THE STRANGE GOD

“The thirty-fifth verse of this eleventh chapter brings us down to the end of 430 years from the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans. There is here a break in the prophecy. Nothing more is said about Israel and the king of the north, until the prediction is resumed in the fortieth verse, which may be regarded as continuous with verse thirty-five. The latter speaks of their being tried and made white to, or till, the time of the end, and then the fortieth re-introduces the king of the south and the king of the north, and outlines the events they were to bring to pass in that time, and which will end in the resurrection, when they who have been tried and made white in the long interval, will stand in their lot with Daniel at the end of the 1,335 days. With the exception of the “little help” derived from the victories of the Maccabees, the history of Israel has been a series of calamities to this day; and will so continue to be till the “time appointed for their deliverance arrives”. (Elpis Israel page 404)

In an earlier article we gave a structure taken from Elpis Israel (page 397) that divided the last two chapters into seven parts. Our last article finished the review at verse 35 of Daniel chapter 11. That was the end of the third section and we will now deal with the fourth section covering verses 36 to 39.

Verses 36 to 39

This part of the prophecy, in the words of Bro. Thomas, “relates to the Little Horn of the goat and the Accursed One whom he should acknowledge and increase with glory” (Elpis Israel page 397). (The Little Horn here incidentally, is not to be confused with the Little Horn with eyes and mouth in Daniel chapter 7 and verse 8 - although there is a connection).

This is essentially the emergence of a dominant power in world affairs superseding the northern king that we have been dealing with in verses 3 to 35. We have considered this power in some detail in previous articles when looking at earlier prophecies of Daniel. It is the Roman power, and is symbolised by the Little Horn that emerged on the Grecian he-goat as described in Daniel chapter 8 and verse 9.

The Roman power was particularly manifested on the Northern Horn territory of the four horns of the he-Goat. This was the territory that belonged to the Kings of the North that was so often in conflict with the Kings of the South. Out of this territory, the Little Horn power emerged, described as “a king of fierce countenance” in Daniel 8 verse 23. The power, as Bro. Thomas points out, “appeared on the territory of the north, and absorbed its dominion into itself, so that it became all in all” (Elpis Israel page 405).

This is “the king of Verse 36 of Daniel 11, (that) shall do according to his will.” The power of Rome was supreme during the second and third centuries BC. The “iron” power was able to make itself master of the Mediterranean world.

Verses 36 to 39 are therefore dealing with the fourth Beast of Daniel chapter 7 i.e. the power of Rome.

However the very next part of the verse in Daniel 11 indicates that the emphasis in this particular part of the prophecy is not on Rome as the Imperial pagan power, but Rome with a religious aspect. (The prophecy also provides an indication of the duration of the power). We read in verse 36 that this power would “magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods.” Verse 37 also goes on to say that this power would not “regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all.”

These words remind us of the Apostle Paul’s prophecy in 2 Thessalonians 2 and verse 4. There we have a clear reference to the development of the papal power, and this is the explanation to the words we are considering here in Daniel. The Roman Empire from its inception was pagan, and continued so for hundreds of years until the time of Constantine (AD313). From then on, it was deeply involved with the Church and took on an ecclesiastical aspect as the power of the Church began to grow and become more influential in secular affairs. In this respect we can see the connection with the other Little Horn of

Daniel's prophecy that arose on the fourth Beast's head as recorded in Daniel 7:8.

Bro. Thomas makes the following remarks in *Elpis Israel* in the reference to the way the Roman Empire became involved with the Church, thus disregarding "the God of his fathers," and tracing the development of the ecclesiastical power:

"This is evidently not descriptive of the Pagan Roman power, but of that power invested with a new ecclesiastical character. In other words it is descriptive of the imperial Constantinopolitan Catholic power. Of all who swayed this sceptre from Constantine, the founder of the city, to Palaeologus, who lost it to the Turks, the Emperor Justinian is the best illustration of the willful king in his secular aspect. "Never prince," says Dupin, "did meddle so much with what concerns the affairs of the church, nor make so many constitutions and laws upon this subject. He was persuaded that it was the duty of an Emperor, and for the good of the State, to have a particular care of the church, to defend its faith, to regulate external discipline, and to employ the civil laws and the temporal power to preserve it in order and peace" (page 406).

"The work of recognition thus far advanced by Justinian was perfected by the edict of the Emperor Phocas, who began to reign in 603. He also wrote to the Roman Bishop in 604, and acknowledged his spiritual supremacy" (page 409)

"When the Bishop of Rome was honoured as a god by the Little Horn of the Goat, the other Little Horn had not yet made its appearance among the ten-horned kingdoms of the Beast. There elapsed 266 years from the date of Justinian's letter, and 193 from the decree of Phocas, before this came to pass; for Charlemagne was not crowned Emperor of the western third part of the Roman Empire till A.D.799. Upon this occasion, he also "acknowledged and increased with glory" the Universal Bishop as a god "above every god" of his dominions. Through his policy he also caused craft to prosper by his power. Priestcraft gained an ascendancy in Europe which it had never attained before the rise of the Germano-Roman Little Horn among the kingdoms of the West." (page 409)

Rome renounced the gods of paganism and embraced (false) Christianity (as opposed to the Truth). The celibate priesthood is also referred to in the words of verse 37 "neither shall he regard the desire of women" or "wives" as translated by Bro. Thomas (see also 1 Timothy 4 and verse 3 where the Paul again makes reference to the development of this apostate system).

Verse 38 of Daniel 11 also seals the identity of the apostate church of Rome in its reference to silver and precious stones. This is a striking characteristic of the obvious wealth of the Roman Catholic system. The words

of the eighteenth chapter of The Apocalypse come to mind, and can be easily connected with our present considerations.

Our attention should also be drawn to verse 39 of this eleventh chapter where we read "Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall increase with glory." This is a difficult verse to understand. Bro. Thomas translates it as "Thus shall he do in Bazaars of Guardians with an Accursed Dissembler," and has the following remarks to say about the translation:

"The Hebrew words are *le-mivtzahrai mahuzzim*. The root of *mivtzahrai* is *bahtzar*, and signifies "to enclose with a wall, or the like, for safety. As a noun, it signifies store, or treasure so secured. Derivative – a bazaar, a kind of covered market-place among the eastern nations.....Understanding that *Mahuzzim* are deified ghosts, worshipped as patrons and protectors, the question need only be asked, what are their strong holds, or bazaars? And every reflecting mind will answer immediately – Why, the churches to be sure!"

This is the truth. The churches, chapels, and cathedrals are the strong holds, and houses of merchandise, dedicated by the prospering craft to guardian-saints and angels." (*Elpis Israel* page 411)

As Bro. Roberts comments in "Daniel and His Great Fulfilled Prophecy", the priests were given authority over all ranks of society, dividing the lands of the empire among them for gain (end of verse 39). The origin and development of the Roman Catholic apostasy is a study in itself, and there are numerous history books that provide information on this subject. It is an evil system that has existed for centuries but is destined to be hurled into the abyss. It will not always continue. This too is indicated in the prophecy. The power, described in verse 36 as "the king (who) shall do according to his will," prospers until "the indignation be accomplished." This is the time when the Master appears and Judgement is given to the saints.

The eleventh chapter of Daniel is bringing us to the time of the end, after a considerable amount of historical detail. We have considered the "King of the North," the "King of the South" and "the Little Horn of the Goat" ("the king that shall do according to his will"). It would be useful to try and bring all these aspects together and understand their significance to the days in which we live, especially when we consider the signs of the times leading to the Return of Christ.

In the light of these remarks, Bro. Thomas makes some extremely interesting and helpful remarks in *Elpis Israel* concerning the time when Russia invades the land in conjunction with what we have been considering in this prophecy. We will (again) quote a lengthy extract from *Elpis Israel* to conclude this article:

“I am particularly desirous that this part of the prophecy should be understood. Perhaps what I mean may be better comprehended by the following homely illustration. Suppose we were to take a goat’s horn, and with a fret-saw were to cut out a small piece of its surface. Then fix this piece upon a spring, the lower end of which should be fixed inside the horn itself. Now if pressure be applied to the small piece it would be brought down to a level with the general surface of the horn. In this state, the horn would represent the Assyro-Macedonian kingdom under the Seleucidae; but remove the pressure and the small piece of horn would start up to the height of the spring’s length. Let this represent the Little Horn upon the Goat’s horn, and we have the symbol of the power which prevails from the conquest of Assyro-Macedonia, B.C.65, until “the time of the end.” But if pressure be afterwards applied to the small piece, it is brought down to a level with the surface of the horn, and it again appears like one horn, for by the pressure the Little Horn is merged into it. This last action and its result will represent the merging of the Little Horn power of Constantinople into the Assyro-Macedonian, or Russian, Horn of the Goat in the time of the end; so that the Constantinopolitan, and Russo-Assyrian, powers, become one horn, as before the Little Horn arose. In the time of the end, the Horn of the North, in its enmity against Israel, plays a similar part to that it did of old by the hand of Antiochus Epiphanies in the days of Judas Maccabeus. Therefore, he may fairly be taken as the type of Israel’s last and greatest enemy, who shall come to his end, with none to help him.” (pages 405-406)

Bro. Phillip Hughes

SIGNS AND EVENTS

Friendship with the World

“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”

Christendom Astray, Chapter 18: "Be not conformed to this world (Rom. 12:2). There is not much danger of mistaking the meaning of this. The world is the people, as distinguished from the earth which they inhabit. Peter puts this beyond doubt in calling it "the world OF THE UNGODLY" (2 Peter 2:5). Jesus also makes it plain in speaking of the world as a lover and a hater, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own" (John 15:18). This could only apply to the people. The command is to be not conformed to the world of people upon the earth as it now is. Jesus plainly laid it down that he did not belong to such a world, and commanded his disciples to accept a similar position in relation to it. "The world to come" is the world of their citizenship. Of their position in the present world, Jesus said in prayer, "They are not of the world even as I am not of the world" (John 17:16). By John he commanded them, "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 of the world" (1John 2:15). By Peter, he indicates their position in the world as that of "strangers and pilgrims" (1Peter 2:11), and their life in it as a "time of sojourning" (1:17), to be passed in holiness and fear (v. 14 and 17).

The world that hated Jesus was the Jewish world. Consequently, we are saved from the mistake of supposing that by the world is meant the extremely vile and immoral of mankind. The Jews were far from being such: they were a very religious and ostentatiously professing and ceremonially punctilious people, among whom the standard of respectability was high in a religious sense. All their conversations with Christ shew this. That which led to the complete separation indicated in Christ's words and precepts, is indicated by Jesus himself, in his prayer to the Father, so wonderfully recorded in John xvi: "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee" (verse 25). It is the world's relation to God that cuts off the friends of God from the world (if the friends of God are faithful). The world neither loves, nor knows, nor considers God. They care for Him in no sense. His expressed will - His declared purpose - His intrinsically sovereign claims, are either expressly rejected or treated with entire indifference. His great and dreadful and eternal reality is ignored. Daniel's indictment against Belshazzar is chargeable against them all. "The God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified" (Dan. 5:23).

This is an all sufficient explanation of the matter we are considering. If the world is God's enemy, how can the friends of God be friends with it? It is not without the profoundest reason in the nature of things, that it is written, "The friendship of the world is enmity with God. Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). "NO MAN CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS.... YE CANNOT SERVE GOD AND MAMMON" (Matt. 6:24).

The force of this reasoning increases tenfold when we contemplate the present situation in the light of its divine explanation and the divine purpose concerning it. We must seek for this explanation in the beginning of things - the beginning as Mosaicly exhibited (an exhibition endorsed by Christ, and therefore to be trusted in the face of all modern theories and speculations). This beginning shows us man in harmony with God, and things "very good." Then it shews us disobedience (the setting aside of the divine will as the rule of human action - alias, sin), and as the result of this, the divine fellowship withdrawn, and men driven off to exile and to death, permitted only, thereafter, to approach in sacrifice, in token of the final way of return. The present world is the continuance and enlargement of the evil state of man, resulting from man's alienation from God in the beginning. It is enlarged and aggravated. "The whole world lieth in wickedness" (1John 5:19), "dead in trespasses and sins . . . by nature children of wrath" (Eph. 2:13), "without Christ, having no hope, and without God." (Eph. 2:12).

The most prominent trial for the majority of the brotherhood nowadays is 'humanism' and its affects. Bro Growcott makes it crystal clear in the Berean Re-Statement that the reason for many Bereans returning to the Central body in the late 1950's lay fair and square on 'worldliness' and brethren's attitude towards it. We are called upon Scripturally to repudiate all kinds and forms of worldliness, in the same way as Christ and the apostles. Noah was a preacher of righteousness to a wicked world; Abraham 'came out' from Ur of the Chaldees (a society of moon worshippers with 'humanistic' views) to a Land of separation; Lot vexed his righteous soul from day to day observing the evil and wickedness that was so prevalent amongst the city life, etc.

The point to this is that the faithful, characterised in the Scriptures, are characterised in a very specific way - they are a separate people, servants of the Most High God, and they stood aside from the attractions and pursuits of what was going on around them. On the other hand, certain are characterised in a different way. Take Solomon as a fore-example; Solomon was directed by Yahweh against multiplying wives and horses, advice given to him for his own good and for the good of the nation. We know that he rebelled and during the middle part of his life forsook Yahweh to indulge in the pleasures of the World (riches, multiplication of wives, power etc). These events have been recorded for our learning and for our instruction in righteousness.

We need to constantly remind ourselves of the dangers that come with having friends in the world. We are directly commanded against having any kind of friendship with the world to any degree, and in any capacity. Scripture language in this area is plain: 'friendship with the world is enmity with God'. It is worthy of special note to say that this counsel is for our good and the good of the brotherhood.

The apostle warns us that in the last days a time shall come when every man shall do that which is right in his own eyes, those who are 'lovers' of everyone and everything that is not of God. The days spoken of, if not already here(?), are fast approaching! "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (II Timothy 3:1-7).

The question has been raised by many as to how we can preach the truth to those around us if we don't build up a friendship with them, and form a trust-based relationship? Bro. Roberts makes the simple statement in Seasons of Comfort that to mix with the world in this context is 'folly'. We do not need to build up a trust relationship with anyone in the world in order to preach the truth. Our job, as it was Noah's, is to preach the gospel and warn the world of impending furious

judgements. We can sow and water (and that is all we can do and is all we are called upon to do) - only God can make the increase.

The sweeping trend in the wrong direction of the friendships Christadelphians are forming with the world is a sign of the times and demonstrates to us that end of all things is nigh at hand! Paul's command to the Corinthians is unmistakable. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." We must walk in the purity and light of the Truth if we desire to have Yahweh dwelling amongst us.

In 1 John we read, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For ALL that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." However, in these last trying days of our probation we can take comfort that as John continues, "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

Europe and Britain

The recent European elections brought big gains for the UK Independence Party which had campaigned on a "No To Europe" ticket. They won 12 seats and gained 17% of the vote, a huge swing to their party and election platform. This shows the unpopularity of any further integration with Europe and a large swell of opinion in favour of pulling out all together. The Party has pledged to expose the corruptions in Strasburg and block any legislation against British interests. Mr. Nigel Farage of UKIP says the aim is to turn the Party into a mass movement (Times 14-06-04).

Mr. Blair may have gone to Brussels and signed up to the new European Constitution, but on Britain's terms, much to the disapproval of France and others. The British government will still maintain it's tax making powers and also remain unrestricted in areas of defense and foreign policy. The hand of God has decreed a separate role for Britain at the time of the end and present difficulties make it very easy to see how this situation could arise in a very short period of time. She will play her role as a maritime power increasingly antagonistic to the powers of Europe, which will feel chagrined at perfidious Albion floating away in the opposite direction to where they would like to have her - under their domination, tied up with innumerable laws, reduced to an offshore province of a gigantic Popish confederacy, none less than the apocalyptic Beast with seven heads and 10 horns (Rev. 13:17). Let us lift up our heads for our redemption draweth night, and the long expected but stealthy advent of the King of Israel will shortly become a historical fact.

The question, as always, is: "are you ready"?

Bro Stephen Male

The Deep Things of God: The Two Debtors

"There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave the most. And he (Jesus) said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged" (Luke 7:41). The bearing of this is best seen in connection with the circumstance calling it forth. Jesus had accepted a Pharisee's invitation to dine. In the house, while reclining Oriental fashion at a table, a woman of blemished character approached Jesus from behind, and began to kiss his feet and wipe them with the hair of her head, and anoint them with precious ointment.

The Pharisee, who knew the character of the woman, watched the proceeding with some considerable contemplations. He was undecided in his mind as to the true character of Christ. He had evidently asked him to dine for the purpose of getting a closer view of him than he could get out of doors or in the synagogue, and this incident of the woman taking such liberties with him unrebuked, exercised him unfavourably. The argument going on in his mind was, "This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him." The parable was Christ's way of meeting this argument, for he not only knew who and what manner of woman the woman was, but he knew what was passing in the Pharisee's mind, though the Pharisee was not aware of it. Christ's application of the parable was that the very character of the woman was the explanation of her affectionate attention -- so different from the Pharisee's cold courtesy. Her greater love was the result of the forgiveness of her many sins.

"To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." On reflection, it will be found that this principle goes beyond the individual case that called forth its enunciation. It supplies the key to the plan on which God is guiding the earth to its everlasting place in the universe. That plan is the permission and the cure of evil, with reference to the supremacy of His declared will in the minds and actions of men. It is a distressing process while it lasts: as Paul testifies, and we all know from experience: "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." But enlightened intelligence is enabled to endure it in view of the other testified fact, that the affliction is "working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." But for the evil, the good never could have been appreciated as it requires to be -- in humility and gladness. The prevalence of sin provides the occasion also for forgiveness of sin; and forgiven sin opens the way for love and joy.

The multitude of God's glorified children could never have sung the thrilling strains of the gladsome song heard in vision by John in Patmos, if there had not first been a population requiring to be washed from their sins by the blood of the Lamb. It required the reign of sin, misery and death to prepare the way for that glorious song, and all the unutterable glories it represents in detail: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and wisdom, and riches and honour, and glory and blessing.... Thou hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue and people and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth."

Bro. Robert Roberts

What Does That Mean?

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." Galatians 1:6-7

This sounds like a contradiction. Is it another gospel or not?

The word "another" is {het'-er-os} which means one not of the same nature, form, class or kind, something entirely different. This concept is reinforced by the use of the word "removed." "I marvel that ye are so soon removed" which indicates "to desert." By embracing the new theory put forth by the Judiazers they were, in fact, deserting the truth, and embracing an entirely new way of salvation. The Gospel taught by Paul and that taught by his opponents were mutually exclusive. It was "another" (heteros) gospel.

Why would he then in the next verse say that it was not "another?" This word in verse 7 is {al'-los} which indicates another of the same variety; a point of distinction or variation. It is like me saying, "it was not green it was blue green," I am making a more exact distinction. Paul informs them that this is not what is going on here, it is not a mere variation, but they had embraced a totally different Gospel by accepting this doctrine.

This has been the hallmark of errorist from the beginning. They sell their doctrines as a more exact variation, or as clarifying a controversial point. However, when we examine their argument in detail, as Paul does with this controversy, we usually find, as he did, that if we embrace the modification we are soon turned away to another gospel.

Look back on the recent history of the Truth. Bro. Ashcroft published the "exgetists" about the work of inspiration which lead to the "partial inspiration" idea. We have seen several variations of the "clean flesh" issue, and "partial atonement" theory, as well as the "responsibility question." They claim to be {al'-los} a point of distinction or variation but in reality are {het'-er-os} something entirely different. Let us, brothers and sisters, ever be on guard against those wishing to "clarify" by adding to our basis of fellowship. We must hold fast to the basis of fellowship that has served us for approximately 150 years and beware of those who want to change it.

When God determined that the Seed of the Woman would overcome the Seed of the Serpent it was upon the basis of divinely-appointed enmity. That enmity has manifested itself throughout the ages. The Master had to contend vigorously with the Scribes and Pharisees whose philosophy made the power of God of no account, and whose teaching destroyed the elements of salvation: "Woe unto you, for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Matt. 23:13). Very clearly, the Master did not tolerate wrong doctrine on matters relating to eternal salvation.

We see this same attitude was repeated by the apostle Paul in this letter. He exhorted them to preserve the purity of the gospel he had delivered to them, since "there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ". It is not surprising, therefore, that the latter-day ecclesia should face similar disparity. Let us like Paul endeavour to hold fast the truth, while working together in love one toward another.

Bro. Jim Sommerville