

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. Opposed to the dogmas of papal and protestant christendom. Upholding the Truth as Bereans since 1923.

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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

ODIADO, Busia Ecclesia S.S. 9am Memorial, 10am; Wed. Bible Study, Home Visiting 10am-1pm; Fri. New Friends Class Lecture 2:30pm; Bro. Humphreys O. Budedu, Box 142, Bumala, Kenya.

Beloved Brothers and Sisters,

We here in Odiado hope fine and finds well and we pray that as we watch the signs around us we might all be strengthened as we wait the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are pleased to report the following activities this year. 23rd April – 25th April 2004 brothers and sisters from Odiado Ecclesia attended a successful Bible School in Kimkungi Bungoma.

On 27th July 2004 – 31st July 2004, brother Humphreys Odaba, Francis Muchuwaju and sister Judith Odaba attended the Bible School in Kilifi at Mutondia Ecclesia. Our sincere thanks goes to all Brothers, Sisters friends of Maweni Mtondia, Kaereni and Takaungu for their service.

We were greatly blessed through the Bible School held between 27th August – 29th August 2004 at Odiado Ecclesia Hall it was wonderful. Among the brethren who attended were: - Stephen Juma, John Kuto, David Mukoro, Everline Juma from (Kimkungi) Bro. Shawn Tayler and and Bro. Samweli Simiyu from (Kamkuywa), Bro. John Simuyu (Mayanja) and Sis. Caroline Musebe (Kimilili). We want to say Special "Thanks you" to all Brothers and Sisters who gave us support, helped us and attended. It was really a spiritual lift. Our theme was in Mark 16:15-16 and all speaking Brethren did an excellent job. It focused our minds on the joyous time that is soon coming on the earth, a time when the earth will be filled with peace and righteousness.

We look forward to the return of our Lord Jesus Christ to this earth and pray that we all remain on the straight and narrow. Remember always to help each other in times of need for the days are quickly flying.

We say thank you and may the Almighty bless you.

With love in the Truth on behalf of Odiado Ecclesia,
Bro. Humphreys O. Budedu (Odaba)

LAMPASAS, Texas, Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia – S.S. & Study Class, 9:50 am.; Memorial 11:00 am.; Seasons of Comfort Class 1:15 pm, Lecture – 4th Sunday 1:30 pm, Bible Class Wednesday, 7:30 pm; Fraternal Gathering, 2nd weekend in June – Bro. Lee Freeburg, 200 Gabriel Forest, Georgetown, TX 78628; 512-869-2008, email freebs@gtwn.net

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It has been a long while since we have reported any news from the Lampasas ecclesia. We are very happy to report that Amy Hurst was baptized into the one saving name. Sis. Amy's examination took place at the home of her uncle and aunt and we used their swimming pool after the examination to immerse Amy, following this we had a nice dinner and enjoyed an evening of Bible readings and fellowship. It was a very enjoyable occasion for all who were able to attend.

Bro. Matthew Neely was received back into fellowship after a good interview with the arranging board. We look forward to Bro. Matthew taking up an active roll in our meeting.

Since our last correspondence we have gained Sis. Sarah Brown by way of transfer from the Austin ecclesia and we welcome her to Lampasas. At the same time we have lost Bro. Craig Kiley to the Austin Ecclesia, He will be missed. We commend him to that meeting. Our Sunday School scholars, Wesley and Christine Hurst Had a baby boy recently. Wesley is the son of Bro. George Hurst. Kyle Hurst is his name. Bro. Justin and Sis. Amanda Patterson are now members of the Lampasas Ecclesia.

We have enjoyed exhortations and talks from several visiting Brethren, and we thank them for their work of administering God's Word to us. Lampasas Holds Sunday school at 9:50 am, followed by Memorial Meeting at 11am. We welcome any who are passing through to join us.

With love in the bonds of the Truth,
Bro. Lee Freeburg, Recorder.

SAN ANGELO, Texas – Sunday Memorial Meeting, 11 am; Meetings are held at Riverside Nursing Home. Bro. Gary Smith, P.O. Box 447, Blackwell, TX, 79506 915-282-3829; email BsmithG@aol.com

Loving Greeting in the Lord's Name,

On May 12, 2004, two of Adam's race put on the Saving Name of Jesus Christ. Justin Patterson and Amanda Neely gave a good confession of their faith. They were immersed in the presence of Bro. and Sis. Paul Neely, Bro. and Sis. Mike Neely, Bro. Todd Smith, Bro. Matthew Neeley, and Bro. and Sis. Gary Smith. Bro. Justin and Sis. Amanda were united in marriage and are now members of the Lampasas Ecclesia.

Bro. Nick Mammone resides in the Riverside Nursing Home, 609 Rio Concho Dr. San Angelo 76903. He has his good and bad days and would like to hear from those of our precious faith.

The San Angelo ecclesia meets each Sunday at Riverside for the convenience of Bro. Nick. Our ecclesia now consists of Bro. Todd Smith,

Bro. Nick Mammone, Sis. Becky Knox, and Bro. Gary and Sis. Brenda Smith. We invite all to come and visit our small ecclesia.

Love in the Truth,
Bro. Gary Smith

Ecclesial Correspondence

The words to a couple verses of Hymn 185 sung Sunday morning in my ecclesia after my trip to Wales brought these thoughts to mind.

One of the pleasures in our life in the Truth is spending time with brethren and sisters in their homes. It is a wonderful privilege. We see their lives diverse from ours - they have their blessings and trials and we have ours - but we see the unity. Being able to sit around the Word of God and be reading in God's Word in the same place as theirs, is so warming.

"And cheered and strengthened be". We need this time with one another. We were created social creatures and if we do not find support in one another we might be tempted to find it in the world where the Truth is not.

God graciously granted me the opportunity to be with the brethren and sisters in London, Sweden and Wales over the last while. It was a pleasure to spend the evening with Sis. Rachel Theaker, Darren and Sis. Clara and do the readings with them. The exchange of ideas on the chapter (although mine might not have been too bright after over 24 hours without sleep!) rejuvenates us spiritually.

Next Bro. Steve, Sis. Liz Male and girls and I flew to Sweden and spent time with Sis. Lori Gustavsson and family. Bro. Aleksey Matveev of Estonia also joined us. We saw the beautiful countryside, the city of Stockholm and the lettuce hothouses that Sis. Lori's husband Peter has. Then we also had a study with Bro. Steve on Evolution Verses Creation on Sat. afternoon followed by the readings. The beauty of the Scriptures was supported by medical, scientific and archeological findings. Sunday we of four countries were joined together in remembrance of our common Savior. Bro. Alexey exhorted us on the subject - Be Ye Doers of the Word. He brought out some interesting thoughts with excellent Bible advice. We were able to sing the hymns with the help of the CD's made by Sis. Sharon Johnatty. Bro. Steve then shared some excellent thoughts on Man of the Flesh versus the Man of God. While Casey (15) and Jessie (9) and I shared a study on the Kingdom of God of the future. The others did the readings of the day. I was able to bring some Bible inserts on Ezekiel's Temple and we went back to the creation of man, the sentence of death after disobedience and yet the hope God offered for obedience. We enjoyed our

time together and then it was flying back to London and a 3 hour drive back to Wales.

The visits in Wales over Bible Readings, at ecclesial hall, in the countryside and homes all were so upbuilding. Sis. Liz Hughes and I went up into the north of England and to Edinburgh, Scotland. These are times of refreshing which we must remember when we are home and back to work.
Sis. Annetta Jones

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held God Willing)

KILIFI-MTONDIA FRATERNAL GATHERING.....Dec 10–12, 2004
Bro Fred Omoto, Mtondia Ecclesial Hall, PO Box 1177, Kilifi, Kenya.

NORTH CAROLINA – VIRGINIA STUDY WEEKEND..... May 28–29, 2005
Bro Dale Lee at dleecpa2@mindspring.com

LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING.....June 11–12, 2005
Bro Lee Freeburg, 200 Gabriel Forest, Georgetown, TX 78628, USA. 1-512-869-2008

RICHARD FRATERNAL GATHERING.....July 8–11, 2005
Bro Sid Jones, RR #1, Richard, Sask, S0M-2P0, Canada. 1-306-246-4468

HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING..... July 25–31, 2005
Bro Curtis Hurst, Rt.1, Box 40, Mullin, TX 76864, USA. 1-325-985-3868
Study Class Topic: **Ephesians**; Daily Bible Readings; Discussion

TENNESSEE FRATERNAL GATHERING.....Oct 8–9, 2005
Bro Jim Rankin, 115 Sherwood Dr., Camden, TN 38320 USA. 1-731-584-6039

God Manifested In The Ecclesia

As we have already considered this weekend, the nation of Israel constituted the ecclesia of God during the Mosaic dispensation. In the Old Testament we frequently read of a particular gathering of Israelites, as translated in the KJV as an ‘assembly’ or ‘congregation’. One of the four Hebrew words translated as congregation is the word ‘qahal’. It is found in the law, in the prophets, in the Psalms, in Proverbs, in Job and in the historical books. The following are representative of its use:

“And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.” (Numbers 20:12)

“And the king turned his face, and blessed the whole congregation of Israel: and all the congregation of Israel stood.” (2Chron 6:3)

“Praise ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints.” (Psalm 149:1)

“Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.” (Joel 2:16)

The word ‘qahal’ is also translated in the KJV as ‘assembly’. For example in Numbers 20 we read from verse 6: “And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they fell upon their faces: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto them.” The Greek equivalent of the word ‘qahal’ is ‘ecclesia’. Young’s Analytical Concordance defines the word as “an assembly called together” or alternatively a “called or invited gathering.” Hence, just as the Gentile ecclesia is a congregation or assembly of called out ones, called out from the world, so was the nation of Israel called out from the bondage of Egypt. That Israel constituted the ecclesia of Yahweh of old is clear from the testimony of Stephen in Acts:

“This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us.” (Acts 7:38)

If Israel, then, was the ecclesia of the Most High Ail in the Mosaic dispensation and, Yahweh was to be manifested in and through them, then it stands to reason that He would similarly create and develop the post Mosaic ecclesia to manifest Himself. Indeed the Scriptures reveal that this is the case.

Yahweh instructed Israel: “For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy...For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.” (Leviticus 11:44-45)

The Israelites were not called out of Egypt to please themselves, to spend their time in unprofitable pursuits and without a higher goal or objective in sight. They were called out of Egypt that they might sanctify themselves. They, thus, had a job to do, a higher occupation with which to be engaged. There was a loftier objective to achieve — to manifest, the holiness of their God.

The meanings pertaining to the word ‘sanctify’ are: ‘to make or pronounce clean’, ‘to be set apart’, ‘to be consecrated, dedicated or devoted’. It is clear from the Scriptures that to be sanctified is more than a declaration of status but is in fact a process. Stated differently, a sanctified nation or people are not just called out to be separate for a special use or purpose, but are in need of preparation to be worthy for the intended use. Equally clear, is that fleshly beings, whether called forth out of Egypt

literally or figuratively, need help in order to achieve the grand objective of their Creator. To this end, Yahweh has called Himself “Yahweh M’qaddishim,” which can be rendered “Yahweh that doth sanctify you.” (See Exodus 31:13. “Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you.”) (See also Lev 20:7-8; 21:8,15,23; 22:9,16,32) Through the schoolmaster of the law, Israel learned what sin was, how it was to be cleansed, what they were required to do, and how Yahweh would help them.

For the ecclesia called out from the Jews and the Gentiles by the Word of God through His apostles and His disciples. Peter wrote to the ecclesia of his day: “Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” (1Peter 1:13-16)

Similar to the ecclesia of national Israel, the ecclesia of this dispensation is selected and called out for a purpose. Similar to the Mosaic ecclesia, it has responsibilities required of it. Similar to the Mosaic ecclesia it has need of instruction. And the cause is the same: because Yahweh is holy, He requires holiness of those whom He has called to Himself. “Be ye holy for I am holy.” Consider what that great apostle to the Gentiles wrote to 1 Thessalonians (4:1-7): “Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification...That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God...For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.”

The ecclesia of the post Mosaic dispensation is as completely unable to achieve its worthy objective without aid, as was its predecessor. The natural being, the fleshly mind, cannot obtain holiness, cannot obtain godliness without the help of Deity. And, as in the case of Israel, He has not left the ecclesia on its own in the process of sanctification. Paul instructed, “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:12-13) The ecclesia has been provided with abundant assistance in order to achieve its goal. In addition to the testimony provided Israel, it has

the inspired writings of the New Testament, the gospel accounts, Acts of the Apostles, the inspired epistles and the testimony of Jesus Christ in the Apocalypse. The ecclesia has the divine guarantee that the complete testimony, Old and New Testaments combined, is an infallible guide to sanctification. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.” (2Tim 3:16-17) The ecclesia has the assistance provided by prayer. “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” (James 5:16) The ecclesia also has the care and assistance of the Deity through the Elohim. “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” (Hebrews 1:14) But unlike the Mosaic ecclesia, God has provided the ecclesia — called out of every nation and out of every kindred — with a high priest that has passed into the heavens, who, unlike the Aaronic high priests, never failed in his obedience to God in the days of his flesh, tempted in all points as those of his flock, yet without sin. Thus in its quest for sanctification, the ecclesia is enabled to come boldly unto the throne of grace that it may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16)

God’s manifestation in the ecclesia is particularly portrayed in the Scriptures by the relationship that pertains to a father and a son. When called forth out of Egypt, Moses was instructed to tell Pharaoh “Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn: And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn.” (Exodus 4:22-23) Yahweh was the father, Israel was His son. As any good father, He cared and provided for His son. He offered an eternal inheritance in return for His son’s obedience and respect or reverence. The Scriptures testify that Israel pledged obedience to their heavenly Father. “And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.” (Exodus 19:8) But as we know, Israel was not an obedient son. From the Complete Jewish Bible translation, we read from Hosea: “When Israel was a child, I loved him; and called my son out of Egypt. [But the more the prophets called them, the farther] they went from them. They sacrificed to Ba’alim and burned incense to idols.” (Hosea 11:1-2 Complete Jewish Bible) Thus they failed to emulate the character of their Father and failed to heed His instruction.

The ecclesia of the post-Mosaic dispensation has also been called forth to be sons of God. He has provided them with the example of His only begotten Son, that they, in seeing and knowing the Son have seen and can comprehend the character of the Father. Furthermore, the obedience, the faith and the reverence of the Son has provided the ecclesia with the

perfect model for all desiring to be true sons of God and consequently manifesting Him. The ecclesia, as the spiritual sons of Deity, should emulate its spiritual parent that it may receive the rewards of being true heirs. A number of passages address this parent-son relationship between God and the ecclesia. We read from the apostle John: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1John 3:1-2) The Philippians are exhorted: "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;" (Phil 2:14-15) Paul likewise in his epistle to the Hebrews exhorted his readers to receive chastening with the correct attitude as befitting true sons: "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." (Hebrews 12:7-8)

At this juncture, it's worthwhile to point out that many families have a standard to maintain or a reputation to uphold in the community. Unfortunately, in the times in which we live, standards that are noble or virtuous, are being obliterated by vulgarity, deceitfulness, malevolence and a host of other ungodly characteristics. But Deity wants His family, the ecclesia, to uphold the standard of His holiness, and to do this they must be separate. The apostle Paul addresses this requirement of separateness in the context of the ecclesia, as the offspring of Deity. "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. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. (2Cor 6:14-18) To be led by the Spirit Word, to learn it, know it and obey it is to manifest the divine family traits. Paul wrote to the Romans: "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Romans 8:13-14)

Romans 8 and other passages clearly indicate that the ecclesia's sonship is now only conditional and that not all who claim to be sons are

led by the Spirit. Hence the manifestation of the divine standard in the ecclesia varies both individually and collectively: individually with respect to the spiritual strength of each constituent brother or sister, and collectively with respect to the faithfulness of each aggregate group of believers. The testimony of the Scriptures, for example, the epistles to the seven ecclesias in the Apocalypse, as well as our own experience, testify that this is so. Therefore, in this dispensation, the ecclesia has 'Pauls', 'Timothys', 'Philemons', and similar as members, but it also has 'Demas', 'Alexanders', and 'Hymenaus' as members. Likewise, some ecclesias may be Philadelphian in attitude, but others may be Laodicean. This then leads us to consider another analogy with respect to the God manifestation in the ecclesia.

Brother Thomas in Elpis Israel wrote the following:

"Among the many and various titles of the Supreme Being in the Scriptures of truth, is that of a Builder and Architect, as it is written, "The BUILDER of all things is God." Pursuing this suggestion, I remark, that "a wise master builder" never begins to build without a design. He draughts this after a scale of so much to the foot. This is the extension, or time, so to speak, of the building, or edifice, to be erected. Having well considered the whole, he concludes that it is the best possible plan that can be devised in harmony with the rules and principles of architecture. The plan then becomes his "purpose," his "foreordination," "predestination," or design. All subsequent arrangements are made to conform to this recorded purpose, because it is the very best his most deliberate wisdom and ingenuity could devise; and no extraneous suggestions, or considerations, will cause him, to diverge in the smallest iota from his predetermination.

"The next thing the builder does is to collect together all the necessary materials, whether of brick, stone, lime, sand, wood, or aught else that may be needed. If a spectator desired to know what all these crude matters were heaped up together in one place for, the architect would reveal to him "the mystery of his will which he had purposed in himself" (Eph 1:9), by submitting the draught of his plan, in all its lines, circles, angles, &c.; and he would describe to him such an arrangement of the materials as would impress the spectator's mind with an image of the edifice, though it would fall infinitely short of the reality when perfected.

"If we suppose the edifice, call it temple, or palace, to be now finished, the architect would next order the rubbish, or materials which were left as unfit to work into the building, and therefore worthless, such as broken bricks, splinters, shavings, sand, and so forth, to be cast out to be trodden under foot, to burn (Mal 4:3; Matt 5:13), &c. Thus the

edifice is built out of the accumulated materials, according to the outline of the draught, or purpose of the builder; and the work is done.” (Elpis Israel, Chapter 6)

Bro. Thomas, using the Scriptures as his guide, likens the development of the ecclesia to the erection of an edifice, in scriptural terms, a temple. We are familiar with the scriptural presentation of this analogy. We know that, to borrow from the words of Paul to the Ephesians, the ecclesia is a building, fitly framed together, growing unto a holy temple in the Lord to become a holy habitation of God through the Spirit. We know that Christ is the chief cornerstone of this building. (Eph 2:20-22) We should consider two implications from this analogy in connection with our topic of God manifestation in the ecclesia.

First, we should note that the ecclesia is a work in process. Bro. Thomas in the same chapter of Elpis Israel spoke of the state which the present ecclesia subsists:

“The Almighty Builder of all things intended not to translate the whole human race from a state of sin and death at once into a state of unmingled good and glory. He foresaw that the living race would never be fit for this, but that they must be previously disciplined and prepared for the transition. Hence, He proposed to develop an INTERMEDIATE STATE upon the earth, and among the nations of mortal men contemporary with it, in which, good and evil would still be commingled, but differing from the preceding state (the present) in this, that, though evil would continue to be, sin should not have dominion over the world, but be dethroned by righteousness. We have styled this state intermediate, because it is designed to occupy a middle place between the present times of the Gentiles, and the unchangeable constitution of the globe, when there will be "no more sea," and all men will be immortal.” (Elpis Israel, Chapter 6)

Hence, in the intermediate state, the ecclesia is definitely not perfect. The ecclesia is a work in progress. Consider that a building at any stage of its construction is not as attractive or as useful to its builder until the work is complete. So all believers, as members of this work in progress, should not become discouraged by the present state of imperfection and lose sight of the ultimate state of glory and perfection to come. We should keep in mind that we reflect the light of the Father in earthen vessels and bear each other's infirmities as we build on the foundation of Christ. This then leads to the second consideration from this analogy of God as a Builder or Architect and the ecclesia as His creative work of construction, namely that we all should be careful how we build on the foundation that is Christ.

Paul wrote: “let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss.” (1Cor 3:10-15) All who are called out from the world to become part of this work need to remember that it is God's plan and we are not to alter the plan. The word is His, the doctrine is His and the plan is His and we are not allowed to corrupt it, to pervert it, to fold, spindle or change it in any way. We should always remain true to the principles of the faith, which are the blueprints for the completed work.

In the same chapter, as previously cited, Paul warned the Corinthians and us: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.” (1Cor 3:16-19) Whether by perverting the doctrines of the Truth or by engaging in immoral behavior that in and of itself constitutes a blatant denial of Christ and Yahweh, a so-called believer is not manifesting God or Christ and his future is at peril.

Bro. Thomas equated the consummation of the building of the temple with the position of being sons of God in the eternal world:

“Now from these testimonies it is plain that to attain the rank of sons of God in the eternal world — where, indeed, all are sons, without exception — human beings, without respect to age, sex or condition, must believe and obey the truth; for "without faith it is impossible to please God." This rule provides for no exceptions, but declares the principle without qualification. If faith, then, be required, it is manifest that God designed to move men by motive, not by necessity, but by intellectual and moral considerations.”

And he summarized the building analogy with the following ending:

“The means by which from the beginning He determined to accomplish this magnificent work were, first, by His creative energy to lay the foundation; secondly, by constitutional arrangement and angelic oversight, which men term “providence,” to shape the overrule all things so as to work out the end proposed; thirdly, by the moral force of truth, argued and attested; fourthly, by judicial interference in human

affairs; and lastly, by re-creative energy in the renovation of the earth. When the gigantic work is perfected the edifice will be complete, and the topstone imposed with joyous acclamations, saying, 'Grace! Grace unto it.'" (Elpis Israel, Chapter 6)

In the passage from 1 Corinthians 3 previously quoted, Paul instructed the Corinthian believers that they were the temple of God and that His Spirit dwelled in them. Thus we see that Deity is not only the Almighty Architect and Builder of the ecclesial temple, but that He is also its INHABITANT. This is supported also by Paul's inspired testimony to Timothy: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1Tim 3:15)

In this passage, Paul equates the ecclesia to the house of God. Moreover, he states that the ecclesia is a pillar and ground of the truth. A pillar is a supporting column or post. The term ground has alternatively been rendered as 'foundation'. But Bro. Thomas provides us with the greater significance of both these terms in Eureka. In volume 1, in the section titled "A Pillar in the Temple," — which is an exposition of Rev 3:12, a passage that is very much related to a consideration of 1Tim 3:15 — he wrote that the Pillar, "is representative of a saved person. Therefore, to make such a pillar in a temple of Deity is to make him an integral part thereof; and for a saint to be part of the temple, indicates that the temple itself is composed of persons. Now a temple is a dwelling; not a common dwelling, but a habitation of Deity. A temple composed of the saints is a habitation of Deity, which the Lord pitches and not man (emphasis added). Upon this principle the pillars and the house, temple, dwelling, or habitation, become identical and inseparable."

Bro. Thomas proceeded to examine the Scriptural usage of 'pillar' with respect to the pillar of Jacob, and, in so doing, provided an alternative rendering of 1Tim 3:15 and an analysis of the word translated as 'ground'. His conclusions are very pertinent to the subject of God manifestation in the ecclesia. He wrote:

"But there is a sense in which Jacob's pillar of the stone exists as a house of Elohim even now, and in intimate connection with the house he will see when he awakes from his present know-nothing state. Paul presents to us this sense in the saying, that "a House of Deity is an ecclesia of living Deity, a Pillar and material habitation, (hedraïoma from hedra, a habitation of gods,) of the truth" — 1Tim 3:15. This pillar and habitation is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Anointed being chief-corner" — Eph 2:20. As a monumental pillar, the inscription upon it is "the exceeding great and precious promises" believed by each saint, or "living stone," of which

the pillar is composed — "promises" concerning the kingdom and name made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as narrated by Moses. This pillar was anointed on the top of it on the Day of Pentecost, when the spirit was poured upon the apostles. That anointing was perpetuated in "the testimony for Jesus" which has reached even to us, and with which every true believer is anointed. An ecclesia, however, is not only a pillar inscribed with the truth, but is a hedraïoma of the truth. It is a material thing made up of "gods," as David styles them or of "children of Deity," according to 1 John 3:2; Psalms 82:6. These are anointed with the truth, and therefore they are a god-habitation, or hedraïoma of the truth."

"In regard to this word, hedraïoma, it may be remarked here, that it occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, nor in any classical author. The word is derived from hedra, which signifies "a seat, habitation, especially of gods, a temple, altar, &c." Hence, the expressiveness of the word, and its peculiar and exclusive application to a habitation of the truth constituted of gods, or children of Deity..."

The ecclesia then is an aggregation of God's children, anointed with the Truth, obedient to the Truth, supportive of the Truth and faithful to the Truth. As children, the ecclesia exhibits the characteristics of its spiritual and divine parentage. The ecclesia seeks to honor and glorify the name of their God (see Psalm 79:9) and to strive to be a part of that greater glory to be manifested on earth at the appointed time. As bearers of the divine Name, all members of the ecclesia should consider the instruction of Bro. Thomas: "The glory of the Deity is intellectual, moral, and physical, all of which is covered by His name, which expresses what He really is." (Eureka vol. 1) The ecclesia is exhorted to manifest the intellectual and moral glory of God in the present age, in anticipation of the greater glory in the age to come. Let us then not be weary of the task and overcome by the cares of this life, for as the apostle wrote:

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." (Romans 8:15-19)

Bro Dale Lee

Numerous flowers are mentioned in the Bible. Almonds blossoms, Bulrush, Calamus leaves, Camphire flowers (Henna), Caperberry flowers, Cockle flowers (stink weed), Crocus, Fitch, Leek, Lily, Mandrake, Mint, Myrtle branches, Pomegranate blossoms, Roses, and Saffron. These are but a few and we will briefly discuss them.

Almond blossoms: This tree is a member of the rose family; it has beautiful pink blossoms that the Israelites used as models for engravers to adorn the cusp of the golden lamp stand or menorah. The Almond tree is the first tree of spring sometimes beginning as early as mid December and has radiate white blossoms before leafing.

In Numbers 17:5-8 a miracle was performed by God in making Aaron's staff blossom and bear fruit: Bro Roberts writes in *The Visible Hand of God*:

“The miraculous budding of Aaron's rod was no frivolous or wizard feat, such as it is apt to appear when mentioned as an isolated fact. It was a reasonable measure adopted for an earnest purpose. The object is thus stated: “I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the Children of Israel” To accomplish this Moses was directed as follows “Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod, according to the house of their fathers, of all their princes, according to the house of their fathers, Twelve Rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod... And thou shalt lay them up in the tabernacle of the congregation, before the testimony where I will meet with you And it shall come to pass that the man's rod whom I shall choose shall blossom.’ The rods were accordingly collected and laid up in the tabernacle; and next day, the rods being brought out, it was found that “the rod of Aaron, from the house of Levi, was budded, and brought forth buds and bloomed blossoms and yielded almonds” (Num 17:8) And Moses brought out all the rods from before the Lord unto all the children of Israel” (there were no concealments or demands for confidence” in the measures that established the authority of Moses) and they looked and took every man his rod. Except Aaron, whose budded rod was ordered to be laid up in the tabernacle, and kept for a token against their rebels.”

Bulrush. In Exodus 2:3 this was the material that was used to make the ark in which the infant Moses was placed to protect him from the edict of Pharaoh requiring that every male Hebrew child be drowned. It was a kind of reed plant; it was also used to make paper.

Papyrus is a kind of bulrush. New Testament manuscripts produced before the fourth century were written exclusively of papyrus, after this almost all New Testament documents were preserved on parchment.

Calamus leaves were a sweet smelling cane or ginger grass that smelled like ginger when crushed. It was apparently imported from India for use in worship as in Jeremiah 6:20;

“To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me.”

Camphire flowers sometimes referred to as Henna. This was a small plant or shrub that bore beautiful cream colored flowers that hung in clusters like grapes and were highly scented. It was also used for orange dye. It's mentioned in Song of Solomon 1:14,

“My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi.”

Caperberry flowers: The caperberry was a prickly shrub, which produced lovely flowers, and small edible berries as it grew in rocks and walls. It was supposed to stimulate sexual desires and powers. In Ecclesiastes 12: 5 the Hebrew word “ab-ee-yo-naw” is translated desire.

Ecclesiastes 12:5, “Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets.”

Cockle flowers were the purplish red flowers of a noxious weed called the cockle or darnel. This plant grew abundantly in grain fields.

Job 31:40 “Let thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockle instead of barley. The words of Job are ended.”

Crocus was a spring flowering herb with a long yellow floral tube tinged with purple specks or stripes. It is sometimes translated rose: in Song of Solomon 2:1,

“I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.”

Fitches: This flower was a member of the buttercup family and grew widely in most Mediterranean lands. The plant was about 2 feet high and had bright blue flowers. The pods were used like pepper. It is mentioned in Isaiah 28:25,

“When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rye in their place?”

Lily: This covers a wide range of flowers ranging from the rare flower that resembled a glowing flame in Song of Solomon 5:13,

“His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.”

To the lily of the valley in Song of Solomon 2:1,

“I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.”

The lily in Hosea 14:5,

“I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.” This is probably more like an iris.

The lilies of the field in Matt. 6:28, “And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin.”

These were probably colorful spring flowers such as the crown anemone.

The Mandrake in Song of Solomon 7:13,

“The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.”

This was a herb of the night shade family. It has a rosette of large leaves and mauve flowers during winter and fragrant and round yellow fruit during spring.

Mint:

Matt. 23:23, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law”

This was an aromatic plant with hairy leaves and dense white or pink flowers. Mint was used to flavor food. The Jews scattered it on the floors of houses and synagogues for its sweet smell.

Myrtle branches:

Nehemiah 8:15, “And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written.”

These had fragrant evergreen leaves and scented white flowers. The flowers on the myrtle branches were used as perfumes.

Pomegranate blossoms:

Exodus 28:33, “And beneath upon the hem of it thou shalt make pomegranates of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, round about the hem thereof; and bells of gold between them round about:”

These were from the pomegranate tree and had dark green leaves with large orange red blossoms. Decorators carved pomegranates on public buildings. Now, since pomegranate were orange red, I don't know why they were instructed to make them blue and purple. I would imagine a study of colors in the bible would reveal more about this.

Rose:

Isaiah 35:1, “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.”

Several varieties of roses could be found in Palestine. The rose was a member of the crocus family. Traditionally what is considered a rose is not the flower mentioned in Scripture but is a crocus.

Saffron:

Song of Solomon 4:14, “Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices:”

Saffron is a species of crocus. The petals of the saffron flower were used to perfume banquet halls.

These were some of the flowers mentioned in the bible and their uses. Flowers were used to make things smell good, people ate the fruits of the flowers and parts of the flower were used to make paper and baskets. In a figurative sense flowers can be compared to the transient nature of our human life. Just like when we are born, flowers start to bloom, we look best in our youth, as do flowers in full bloom. Then we start to slowly wither away, our hair grays, our bodies start to ache, the visits to the doctor becomes more frequent, then the next thing you know we are old, just as a flower withers away. This is mentioned in Psalm 103:15,

“As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.”

Psalm 103:16, For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.”

And Peter writes in 1 Peter 1:24,

“For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away.”

We go to great lengths to try to maintain our youth and worldly beauty. We work out to try to get that great looking youthful body; we starve ourselves to be skinny and youthful. Don't get me wrong there is nothing wrong with working out and dieting, if it's done with the proper frame of mind and right reasons. We need to be good stewards of our bodies and to take care of them just like anything else God has given to us.

Plastic surgeons abound, ready to smooth out wrinkles and to tighten sagging flesh. Botox, a poison, is injected into the face to puff out the depressions and to make lips look fuller. Dentist's cap and straighten teeth for that youthful appearance, and Doctors dispense record numbers of antidepressants to help you make you feel good about yourself if you are not able to attain that youthful body.

We are taught not to be satisfied with our selves and our possessions, we are taught by Madison Avenue to buy more and more things, a new car that we can barely make the payments on let alone the insurance premiums, a bigger house, the latest gadgets — the list goes on and on. All the things are like flowers — they look good for a while but wither away.

But, there is one thing that will not wither away.

Isaiah 40: 8, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."

I guess that is this exhortation in a Nutshell. All things of this world will wither and fade away but the Word of God shall stand forever.

Just like flowers need the sun for proper growth and nourishment we also need a "Son" for proper growth and nourishment and that son is Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Mary Magdalene thought him to be the gardener in John 20:15, and he is our ultimate gardener, who we meet today to remember through these emblems on this table — the Bread and the Wine — the body and blood of our Lord and Saviour the Gardener of Gethsemane, Jesus Christ.

Bro. Mike Murphy

Daniel – A Time Of Trouble, Deliverance And Glory

"Him that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies BY HIS SPIRIT that dwelleth in you." (Rom.8:11; emphasis added) Here is a second birth to be effected by the spirit of God; and on the principle laid down by Christ, all who are the subjects of this operation of the spirit upon their mortal bodies, will be "born of the spirit," and will, therefore, be "spirit" in nature or "spiritual" bodies – bodies sustained in life by the direct operation

of the spirit of life, without the intermediate agency of the blood – immortal, bloodless embodiments of the spirit of life in flesh and bones, like the Lord Jesus; not pale and ghastly as a human body would be without blood, but beautiful with the electrical radiance of the Spirit which can show colour otherwise that by blood, as witness the jasper and the ruby, and the rainbow. Living by the thorough permeation of the life-spirit in the substance of their natures, they will be glorious and powerful, "pure as the gem, strong as adamant, and incorruptible as gold," glorious in the sense of physical luminosity, as exemplified in the Lord Jesus when he shone with the lustre of the sun on the mount of transfiguration, and according as it is written – "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." (Dan.12:3) (Christendom Astray, page 100-101)

We have now arrived at the seventh and final division of the last two chapters of Daniel's prophecy.

Chapter 12

"The revelation closes with the prediction of his (the northern king's) final destruction at the hand of Michael, the great prince of Israel, their consequent deliverance, the resurrection of many of the dead, and the exaltation of the wise in the kingdom of God." (Elpis Israel, page 397)

This is the great epoch in earth's history when the long promised advent of Israel's Messiah becomes a reality. "And at that time (the time of the end) shall Michael (the Lord Jesus Christ – "Who is as El") stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people (Israel). The standing up of Messiah will introduce an unknown power into the world. A power that vanquishes the military might of Gog, thus delivering beleaguered Israel from the cruel hands of their oppressors, "...at that time thy people shall be delivered." (verse 1). This omnipotent power sets itself up in the Holy Land, an unrivalled sovereignty that has surprised the world at the ease and speed in which Russia was overthrown.

By this time the saints will have passed through the Judgement Seat. The faithful will have received the joy of being with their Lord and possessing the gift of immortality. They were actually the invincible host whose military power has made the nations of the world tremble.

The unfaithful however await their lot in the lake of fire countries, the most miserable inhabitants on the face of the earth. They had known the way of salvation, being invited to eternal life and joy, but had sown to the flesh, and given the things of the spirit second place in their lives. Now this worthless community reap what they have sown, and languish in

regret and remorse. Their folly is all too apparent, but they realise it too late. The door has been shut, and the Wedding has taken place without them. The release from their misery in death is longed for, and will arrive after the required amount of stripes. As Daniel records in the second verse:

“And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”

As for the world, stunned at the inexplicable overthrow of the Russian military machine, they will enter into a fearful time described in this chapter as “a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time.” (12:1) The history of the world (since the time of Babel when nations were formed) has seen the most terrible atrocities. The battles and strife of empires and nations have taken multitudes to the grave in violence; the French Revolution for example, soaked France in a frenzy of blood; the World Wars witnessed some of the most harrowing scenes in so called civilised countries, and the list could go on and on. But all of the spine chilling events will be surpassed by this “time of trouble such as never was.” (12:1) The nations of the world are indulging in all the pleasures of the flesh, completely oblivious to the catastrophic storm that is to engulf them, and shatter into fragments their plans and treasured possessions.

What part of the picture will be ours? We have the “wise (who) shall shine as the brightness of the firmament.” (12:3) These faithful brethren and sisters of Christ become the glorious luminaries of “the new heavens and earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (2Pet 3:13). These faithful followers of the lamb are beautifully described as “the stars” (12:3) that display their light against the black vault of the night sky. They have turned “many to righteousness” (12:3) and are now rewarded with the resplendent glory of the divine nature.

And we have the rejected whose fate it is too painful even to contemplate! Can we be so foolish as to sow to the flesh, and spend our time and energy on things wherein there is no profit? Yes we can, and so often do! What can arouse us in these last dark hours approaching the dawn before it is too late? And truly we are living in the last days. Daniel was told in verse 4:

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

There appears to be in the days in which we live the ability to extensively run to and fro, and knowledge in many fields has increased to an amazing extent. The appearing of the King of Israel is on the verge of

becoming a fact. It is incumbent on us to daily ask ourselves “How long” (12:6) and to prepare for that glorious day.

Daniel did not understand the details he heard in verse 7 when two angels discoursed by the river. He was told “go thy way Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end” (verse 9). The concluding part of Daniel’s prophecy contains details of chronological times, namely the “time, times, and an half” (verse 7) (or 1260 days); 1290 days (verse 11) and 1335 days (verse 12). These will be considered in a subsequent article, God Willing.

We will conclude our present study by the concluding words of comfort to Daniel:

“But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.” (verse 13)

Daniel was not to see the consummation of the purpose of the Deity at that time. He was to rest in the grave after his life of obedience and dedication to the Father’s will. He was however assured of a place in the Kingdom, and he would be able after his pilgrimage in Babylon to close his eyes without fear, or regret. He would be able to rest his eyes in the sleep of death in the knowledge that he would one day see the Land of Israel in glory, the land that had filled his desires and his prayers, but which he had spent the major part of his life in exile from.

Daniel has left us a wonderful example to follow, as we have traced his life from youth through to old age. As a young man, he resigned himself that he would not follow the crowds. He had made up his mind that he would serve Yahweh. He distinguished himself as wiser than all his contemporaries, because he knew and trusted in the “God of heaven that revealeth secrets.”

His faithfulness could not be shaken even in the face of death. The jaws of the king of beasts that devoured Daniel’s adversaries were powerless before the faith of Daniel (Heb.11:33). His desire to know and understand the Divine purpose constantly shines throughout the book that bears his name.

What an example we have in this remarkable man that we will have the great privilege of meeting if we are found faithful. Let us follow that example in the few days that are left to us, so that we may stand with him in that Great Day.

“O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong.” (Dan 10:19)

Bro. Phillip Hughes

As Ye See the Day Approaching

All around us we see signs and conditions indicating that the return of Jesus Christ is imminent. We live in the time of which Daniel tells us that many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. Knowledge has increased so greatly and rapidly that man cannot even accurately chart the geometrical progression of its advance! The world indeed is moving ever closer to that time of trouble (mentioned in the Scriptures) such as has never been. Men's hearts are failing them for fear and for looking after those things coming upon the earth. Perhaps the greatest fear that man has, is fear of nuclear proliferation and nuclear holocaust. Not only do the larger nations have nuclear weapons, but smaller ones too, are obtaining them. India, Pakistan and Israel have them. Authorities believe that North Korea has from four to seven nuclear bombs. Iran is rapidly acquiring the means to develop a nuclear bomb. Truly, the (formerly) weak are saying: "I am strong."

Terrorism is of grave concern throughout the world. We are all familiar with events since 9/11, though terrorism long predates that event. Nations such as Israel, Spain, Russia and Jordan have suffered recent attacks, as well as other nations around the world. Suicide bombings have become the main mode of attack by Islamic terrorist organizations. Russia has sustained three horribly tragic terrorist attacks within the past month.

Chemical and biological weapons are a very real fear and concern, though none were found in Iraq. They are, none-the-less, a very real and existent threat. Many can be produced relatively easily and can be smuggled into areas more easily than authorities would like to admit. Others are more difficult to develop, but still find their way into the arsenals of both nations and terrorist organizations. Advances have been made to detect them. However, the equipment and technology is expensive and far from thorough. Terrorist organizations, such as Al Qaeda, are believed either to have or to be able to produce or acquire such weapons. Evidence aplenty, was obtained in Afghanistan from the Al Qaeda and Taliban caves and bases. Remember the very close call in Jordan earlier this year? Had those chemicals (20 tons) been unleashed in Jordan and in Israel, the results could have been catastrophic! Perhaps as many as 80,000 could have died in those attacks! There is great concern that nuclear materials (such as dirty nukes) might fall into the hands of terrorists. There is a lot of nuclear material that is "loose" and unaccounted for, since the collapse of the Soviet Union. There are many only too eager to get their hands on these materials.

Staggering sums of money are being spent throughout the world to try to deal with the threat of terrorism and to obtain a sense of security. The

situation in the world is one of rising tensions. Economics are the main driving factor in the rising vexation and frustration among the nations. There is a great inequity between the wealthy nations and the poorer ones. War, disease and famine are stalking poorer nations such as Sudan; it is heart-rending to see these deplorable conditions in the Sudan. War rages on in Afghanistan and in Iraq where insurgents are striving to destabilize the interim governments. Greed, covetousness, hatred vice and decline in morality are rapidly bringing that day which will come as a thief upon the unsuspecting world.

How much longer can the planet stand the abuses, excesses and stresses placed upon it? Desertification is spreading through vast sections of Africa. Water shortages are an ever-growing concern as populations increase. Aquifers are being drawn down and are not being replenished fast enough. Septic systems and other pollutants are defiling the water tables in many urban and suburban areas. We hear so much about slash-and-burn farming and of the destruction of the rain forests in South America. Logging companies have cut down a lot of the old-growth forests. There must be something to the theory of global warming. Over the past one hundred years, glaciers have been receding (melting) steadily. Water levels are rising in the world's oceans as a result of glacial and polar icecap melting. Ocean waters are warming, as are atmospheric temperatures. Pollution is a major problem throughout the earth. Some of the wealthier nations are trying to do what they can, environmentally, but the damage has already been done through many years of abuse and neglect, such as in the former Soviet Union. Remember Chernobyl? Cleanup is astronomical in cost, and in many areas funds are simply non-existent. Many species of animals are dying off each year as a result of over-hunting and fishing and through invasion of animals' natural habitats by developers.

In light of all that we see going on in the world around us, what manner of people ought we to be? The Creator and sustainer of heaven and earth and all that in them is, has called us out of the nations that we might be unto Him a holy and peculiar people; a royal priesthood. We are to love, serve and obey Him in thankfulness and reverence. He has offered us so very much! He has given us power to become His adopted sons through Jesus Christ, His only begotten son! Being children of God, we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if we suffer now with him — through the crucifying of the flesh with all of its vile affections and lusts (Rom. 8:17). We are invited unto the glories of the age of the ages and the beyond! Imagine the Holiness, Blessedness, Peace and Joy forevermore we will experience if found faithful at the return of Jesus. He comes back to take unto himself his Kingdom and to reign upon the restored throne of David. First,

however, he must raise the sleeping multitudes who are his at his coming. Judgment begins — must begin — at the house of God. It is written in 1Peter 4:17-18: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

If we would stand with the approved in that day, yet future, we must do what is prescribed by our master to the best of our ability. We will need all of the mercy we pray might be given us, in light of that passage listed above from 1 Peter. It is so easy for us to be wasters of the time and opportunities given of our heavenly Father. Now is the time for us to take the Spirit's advice — there are many warnings, so that in that day, we will be without excuse. Some of the clearest and best advice comes from the book of wisdom's way — the Book of Proverbs. "The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces" (Proverbs 30:28). When we think of a lowly creature such as the spider, can we not see our own natural weakness, our mortality? Christ, as the forerunner, has opened the new and living way for us. He has shown us the way. He is the way, the truth and the life! If we are found faithful, having taken hold with our hands, we will (in the time of its establishment) dwell in the King's palaces! Of course, the King's palaces are the glorious house of prayer for all peoples to be built at Jerusalem during the transition period just before the Millennium. Where the King is, there we will be, also! What joy! What a vision! This reminds us of the Scripture that is written: "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18).

Proverbs 6:6-8 is the next passage that comes to mind in regard to what we are to learn in this day of opportunity. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest" We see in this passage that the ant does that which is expedient, and necessary without delay. How easily we can forget that our heavenly Father and His son can always see us. We are not to serve with eye service. We are to be about our Father's business. We are not to be pleasers of men or of ourselves. If we do forget (or even worse, reject through negligence or apathy) the fact that we do indeed have a guide, overseer and ruler, we will certainly find this out in the day of inspection. Let us be like the wise ant and provide our meat in the summer and gather our food in the harvest. Let us seek the sincere milk of the Word that we may grow thereby, partaking of the oil, bread and wine of the Spirit's providing, while it is called today. Let us anoint our eyes with the eye salve of the Spirit.

Proverbs 30:26 is next on the list of sound and profitable advice. "The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks." Yahweh is our Rock. He is our sure and steadfast confidence! His son, Jesus Christ, is also spoken of as the rock. Remember Peter's name and how he got it? We must remember that Jesus is the anointed of Yahweh. Yahweh has borne witness of him that is indeed the Christ. It is upon this foundation, confession, that the ecclesia stands! What a lively hope we have upon these wonderful facts and things of faith — the things of the kingdom of God and the things of the name of Jesus Christ!

The very next verse in Proverbs chapter 30 is of great importance to each and every one of us. Verse 27 states: "The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands." We have a king, though at present invisible. We must keep him ever in view through the eye of faith. The locusts go forth in bands; we are organized into ecclesias, but as a whole, we are the body of the anointed Jesus. We must function as one body. Though comprised of many members, yet are we one body. We should be of the same spirit, of the same mind. We should have the same care one for another. We must love one another as Christ has loved each and every one of us. We should be empathetic one toward another. Each of us should be striving toward the collective goal of being (as much as possible) without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, so that in the day of Judgment, we might stand before the King as the bride of Christ brought to the King in fine white linen of beautiful needlework.

Let us not be like the slothful in the day of inspection. It is recorded for our instruction and admonition upon whom the end of the age has come: "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man." (Proverbs 24:30-34).

May we each be busy doing that which our master has commanded, walking and living by faith that works by love? In light of all we see around us, that day must be very near, indeed!

Bro David VanPet

Thoughts:

Three Classes

In relation to life and death there are three classes of mankind; first, the true believers or heirs of eternal life; second, the unbelievers or rejectors of the Truth, who are the heirs of the resurrection — to suffer punishment ending in eternal death; and third, the descendants of Adam, not yet placed under law, together with those who are physically incompetent of belief or obedience, and whose lot is consummated in death eternal, undisturbed by future life.
Bro. John Thomas – Revealed Mystery

“Behold I Make All Things New”

The delivering up of the kingdom to the God and Father is apocalyptically intimated in the words of he who sits upon the throne, saying, “Behold, I make all things new...” Now he that declares this, also announces himself to be “...the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end” (Rev 21:6); “the first and the last, who was dead, but is alive” (Rev 2:8); and living for the ages of the ages (Rev 1:18).

This same personage who was dead, but now living, says, “He that overcometh, shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son” (Rev 21:7). In this, the resurrected one reveals himself in the relation of “the God and Father.” The Sonship, which he sustains for a thousand previous years, is abolished; and thenceforth, as he said to Philip, He that sees me sees the Father. (John 12:45)

The kingdom continues; but its constitution is changed: and the change becomes the basis of an age, of which all that is known is that then the tabernacle of God will be with men; that they will all be His people; that there will be no more death; that there will be no more sorrow nor lamentation upon earth; that there will be no more night; and that every curse will have ceased. All things preceding this consummation will have passed away; but what will be the developments thenceforth, are things which God hath not as yet, deemed fit to exhibit in the Scriptures of truth.

Bro John Thomas, The Christadelphian 1872

Come Out From The City Of Confusion

We must press on toward the Goal unto the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phil 3:14). Brethren we ought to be purposed and wholly committed. And we must face the coming light and let it shine upon us more and more unto the perfect day. Because many nations shall come and say come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord to house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, and we shall walk in his paths for out of Zion the law shall go forth and the Word of the Lord from

Jerusalem. (Micah 4:2) Do you not know the prize? So run that you may obtain it (1Cor9:24) Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witness, let us also lay aside every weight and sin, which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us (Heb.12:1).

The Lord Said To Noah

Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation. Take with you seven each of every clean animal a male and a female two each of animals also seven each of the birds of the air, male and female, in seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights and destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made. And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him (Gen.7:1-5). This teaches us to obey the commandments of the Lord as Noah did. Also, Jacob called his sons to gather together that I may tell you what shall be fall you in the last days (Gen.49:1). And when Jacob had finished commanding his sons he drew his feet up into the bed and breathed his last and was gathered to His people (Gen 49:33). Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was 8 days old as God had commanded him (Gen 21:4). Also, Moses called for the elders of the people and laid before them all these words which the Lord commanded him (Exodus 19:7).

After this, three obeyed the commandments of the Lord. To them He said, You shall not add to the Word which I command you nor take from it that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I commanded you (Deut 4:2). He who keeps the commandments keeps his life but he who despised the Word will die (Prov.19:16). Jesus asked, why do you transgress the commandments of God for the sake of the tradition? (Matt 15:3).

Questions To Moses

And the Lord said to Moses, how long do you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? At the present time, this question goes to all denominations who have gone astray from the laws of God. At this: God is three persons; Jesus was co-eternal with the Father of God; Christ was born with a free life; the Holy Spirit is a person; no sin in flesh; righteous will go in; dead rise in the immortal state; child sprinkling; wicked will suffer eternally; heathens, idiots, pagans and young children will be saved; devil is a supernatural person; baptism not necessary; earth will be destroyed; save without gospel; breadwinner not necessary. Cursed is the man who does not obey the words of His covenant, love and status which I command you today that “all these curses shall come upon thee and overtake thee” (Deut 28:15). For it is written, cursed is everyone who does

not continue in all the things which are written in this book of the law. If you keep His commandments and abide in His love, may God bless.

Bro. Philip Wekati

Ezekiel's Temple Perspective

APRIL 15th (1899)—We visited the Washington monument today, not for the sake of Washington, however, but for the sake of comparison with other things. The monument is a plain obelisk, fifty-five feet square at the base, and five hundred and fifty feet high. Its walls, faced with white marble, and lined with Jersey granite, are fifteen feet thick at the base. The interior is occupied by a large lift and a wide staircase. Entering the lift you rise slowly to the top in about the space of seven minutes. From the top floor, through eight small windows you obtain a magnificent view of the city of Washington and the surrounding country. The dome of the Capitol, a magnificent classical structure, one hundred and thirty-five feet in diameter, and rising two hundred and eighty-seven feet, looked like a large pepper-box, while horses and carriages seemed like tiny mice and toy wagons, and the men like bees crawling over the streets in the distance.

This monument is the most remarkable erection I have seen. Absolutely without adornment, its walls are smooth and white, and so uniform in appearance that you cannot gauge its size, or realise the immensity of the building. When you are near it, you are led to exclaim, "What! this five hundred feet high? Impossible!" Nor is the deception much lessened when you stand half-a-mile away. It is not till you get almost into the outskirts of Washington, upon some elevated spot, that you begin to realise its height, and then, if you chance to be there when the sun is shining brightly and shade clouds flitting over its surface, giving peeps of sunshine by swiftly flitting shadows rising and falling like a curtain, just as you see the sun shadows creep up a hillside—then you rise to a conception of its size, and begin to think after all that this bare, lank, sharp-pointed stalk, has points of beauty of a unique and positive kind. But the most interesting feature of the visit to this structure was the comparison it affords with the corners of the corner courts of the Temple, which, according to Ezekiel will be erected in the Holy Land.

The towers depicted in the prophecy are one hundred and eighty cubits square, or say three hundred and sixty feet each way. The form of these buildings appears to be ruled by the intersection of the outer court buildings, and the outer court. Towers so high and so wide as the "corners" of the Temple would need some very substantial erection at each corner of the square building which forms the tower-structure. Before I saw the Washington obelisk (?), it appeared to me that four strong solid structures would be required at each corner of the corner courts. They would,

moreover, contain the means of access to each floor of the towers. I am more impressed with this idea than ever, after seeing the Washington monument. If, as I believe, each of the four corners of the towers are forty cubits square or eighty feet wide, they will form a splendid approach to the extensive towers of which they form a part. They would be large enough to contain three lifts differing in speed, and sufficient staircases also.

Each floor of the large tower of which they form a part would be very extensive and something like those large high buildings which we see in the large American cities. Comparing the building specified by Ezekiel with the Washington monument, it seems that each corner of those immense temple towers would be two-and-a-half times larger than the American example, and since there would be four corner structures to each tower, and there are four corner towers to the Temple, that would give a mass of building in the corners alone, thirty-six times larger than the monument to Washington, to say nothing of the buildings which extend between the tower corners and form the larger portion of the corner structures of the Temple.

The buildings in the corner courts, which extend, as I suppose, between the corners already described, may be compared to those light airy tall structures which we see in many American cities; some of them twenty-four to twenty-nine stories high. At a rough guess, I would think all the "sky scrapers," as these high buildings are called, of New York, Philadelphia and Detroit rolled into one, would scarcely equal one of the Temple towers, so immense and extensive are those Temple towers to be.

The development of such high buildings as those we see in America seems to be a necessary prelude in preparation for the erection of that magnificent "house of prayer for all people." The American character has been developed in the way of great ideas by the circumstances of life, and the political exigencies of the nation.

Bro. Henry Sulley – Christadelphian 1889

The Deep Things of God: The Door

Jesus says, "I am the door." This is one of those graphic figures that carry their meaning home at a stroke. By Christ only, can we enter the sheep-fold. He immediately adds a comment to this effect: "By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John 10:9). This is enough. Men who work apart from Christ work without hope; that is, any hope they indulge must prove illusory. Men are naturally without hope, as Paul testifies in Eph. 2:12. They are straying on the inhospitable mountains of sin-caused evil and death. Remaining there, they must perish. There is a fold in the mountains, entering which, there is safety. The door of this fold is Christ:

and how we enter in was expounded by the apostles. It was their work to do so. The mode is too simple for most men. It was defined by Christ himself in the memorable words about the Gospel, which he addressed to the apostles before he sent them forth: "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). What this double process of faith and baptism does for the believer is stated by Paul, in terms which can only be read with one meaning; "As many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27).

When a man believes the Gospel apostolically delivered, and submits to the baptism apostolically enjoined, he enters in by the door of the sheep-fold. He enters by Christ, [through] whom there is no other entrance—a negative fact of the first importance to recognise. Men who think there are other doors, are liable to neglect him. There are many such now-a-days. Almost all men nourish the idea that a fairly moral life will secure salvation (if there is any, of which many are in doubt). In this, they hold the views of "natural philosophy," which Paul, in his day, declared to be a foolish and a spoiling, because an untrue thing (1 Cor 3:18, 19; Col 2:8). The foolishness of the world's wisdom has not become the wisdom of God with the progress of time. "The simplicity that is in Christ" remains the truth, though unfashionable now as ever. Christ is the door, and "by him," and by him alone, "if any man will enter in, he shall be saved."

Bro. Robert Roberts - 1887

What Does That Mean?

"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son." (Hebrews 11:17)

Why is Isaac called Abraham's "only begotten son" when we have clearly been told of his other sons? Abraham's firstborn son was Ishmael (by Hagar), and six other sons (by Keturah) are listed by name in I Chronicles 1:32.

The Greek word 'monogene' is translated 'only begotten' in this verse. This is not an incorrect (or inappropriate) translation, for according to Strong's Concordance, the word does imply 'single of its kind' or 'only.' This verse is best understood if we understand it to say that Isaac was Abraham's 'unique son.'

Indeed, Isaac was a 'unique son'. He was alone and "single of kind" because he alone was the son of promise. This is the point that is being emphasized in this chapter of Hebrews. Abraham did not just offer one of his sons — but his "only" son. Abraham came to understand the uniqueness of this son. He had earlier requested that Ishmael be accepted by God since Ishmael was the only son he had. However, Abraham was told: "And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him

fruitful, ... But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year." (Gen. 17:20-21)

The promise was fulfilled, the son was born; Abraham accepted this "son of promise", and realized that all the things God had promised him would be fulfilled through this special son. However, now he is called upon to offer him up. This was his own son, part of himself, a son whom he loved, his heir, the son of his old age, the unique son of promise, on whom he placed all his expectations. We know that "Abraham believed God" and understood that "in Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Heb. 11:18) and yet, he showed a willingness to slay his son, a great eagerness to obey God's command. He arose early in the morning, traveled for three days, took the wood, the fire and a knife, built an altar, laid the wood in order on it; bound his son, and laid him on the wood. He then "took the knife and stretched forth his hand to slay him." How could he do this? This chapter in Hebrews is showing that he could do this "through faith." He then goes on to explain why; "Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." (Heb. 11:19)

So convinced was Abraham that Isaac was the son through whom the promises of God would be fulfilled, that he did not hesitate to go through with this deed. He knew that this was the son of promise; he therefore, had no doubt in his mind that God would raise Isaac from the dead to fulfill those promises. How great is our faith? Do we, like Abraham, do what God request of us without hesitation? He is called "the father of the faithful" and we have the assurance that: "They which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." (Gal. 3:9)

If Abraham could raise the knife to kill his "unique" son in obedience and faith, cannot we, through that same faith, endure the trials we face in this time of our probation?

Bro Jim Sommerville