

THE BEREAN CHRISTADELPHIAN ECCLESIAL NEWS

A monthly magazine devoted wholly to the Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial welfare. 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.

Greetings in Christ's name.

I take this opportunity to thank the almighty God for his mercy and the love he has shown to us, we strongly wait the return of our Lord Jesus Christ in his glorious kingdom on earth.

Our Odiado Ecclesia last year, 2004, was blessed with a number of visitors from Canada i.e. Bro. Ed Truelove, Bro. Darren Truelove, Sis. Kaye Yuen and Sis. Jeanne Humphreys for devoting their time to visiting Kenya and more so the visiting of all the homes of the brethren and sisters of Odiado Ecclesia for 2 and 1/2 days from 18th November to 20th November and half of Saturday. Bro. Ed Truelove had a brief lecture on ecclesia organizations and communication, which was of great value to our daily life.

On 21st November, 2004, Bro. Epa Wekati presided over Memorial Meetings while Bro. Ed Truelove gave a good exhortation on "The Temple of Ezekiel's prophecy", which is the future house of prayer for all nations. During the occasion, also attended by Bro. Rogers Musebe, Sis. Everline Juma and Sis. Caroline Simiyu all from Bungoma. We also thank Bro. Epa for devoting his time to stay with the visitors until their departure at the airport.

On a sadder note, our Sis. Jenipher Anyango fell asleep in the Lord on Monday night, February 7, 2005. She had been ill for two years. She sleeps in the hope of resurrection to life eternal. Our prayers are with her family.

Thanks to all who attended and participated in various activities. We hope when the Lord returns he will get the rightful people to be rewarded.

Please pass our warm greeting to all brothers and sisters over the world. May the Almighty God bless you all.

Yours in Christ,
Humphrey Odaba Budedu

WORCESTER, Mass., 29 Ekman St., Worcester, MA 01607

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

Loving greetings,

We have had visits this past year from Sis. Dorothy Rankin, Sis. Donna Rankin, Sis. Terri Rankin and Bro. Jim Rankin. We were gladdened to have with us around the table of our absent Lord, our Bro. Jim and Sis. Terri Rankin from the Holladay Tenn. Ecclesia this past week. We enjoyed the words of exhortation by our Bro. Jim on Sunday morning. Bro. Jim and Sis. Terri were brought to Worcester by the falling asleep in the Lord of her father, Bro. Edgar Davey, who had formerly been a member of the Worcester Ecclesia. We mourn with their family, but look forward, with hope, to the resurrection morning.

With Love to all the Brethren and Sisters,
Sis. Jessie Prentice

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

NORTH CAROLINA-VIRGINIA STUDY WEEKEND.....May 28-29, 2005
'The Parable of the Priesthood'; Bro. Dale Lee at dleecpa2@mindspring.com

LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING.....Jun 11-12, 2005
Bro. Charles Banta, 949 County Road 335, Burnet, TX 78611, USA.
1-512-756-6298

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

HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING..... Jul 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...(Note corrected date)..Oct 1-2, 2005
Bro. Jim Rankin, 115 Sherwood Dr., Camden, TN 38320 USA. 1-731-584-6039

Peter's Conversion

“And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”
“And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” Brethren and sisters, why would Peter, at this point in his life need to be converted? With the title of “Peter’s conversion”, you may have expected me to be talking about Peter’s calling from being a fisherman to being a fisher of men. But that obviously was not what Christ was referring to in this verse. Christ said this to him at the very end of his ministry, in those hours between the last supper and the crucifixion. After being one of Christ’s closest companions for the three and one half years, how is it that Peter needed conversion? And as we are here to examine ourselves, could it possibly be that we still need to be converted? “And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”

What was it that Peter needed for conversion? We normally think of conversion as coming to an understanding and belief in Christ. Could it be that Peter did not really believe all during the ministry? Emphatically NO! Peter was the disciple who received this understanding directly from God. Christ asked, “Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.”

And again later in the ministry after feeding the multitude they followed Jesus to the other side of the lake looking for more loaves and fishes, but there would be none. He instead tells them; “Labor not for the meat that perishes.” “He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.” This is a hard saying—how can this man give us his flesh to eat?” So we read “From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.” Gradually the multitudes sink away with scorn and ridicule until finally Jesus is left alone on the bank with only the 12. He turns to them and asks, “Will ye also go away?” This was supposed to be the King of Israel, the one to deliver Israel from the hands of their enemies and establish God’s kingdom. First, he had angered the leaders by not cooperating with them, but at least he still had the following of the common people. Now he has lost even that, it appears that the 3 years of preaching and miracles are lost, now it is only Jesus and his 12 disciples left. Once again, it is Peter who rallies the 12 with a declaration of belief, which is comprehensive and complete showing great understanding. “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.” No, Peter’s belief and understanding of who Jesus was, was top rate and second to none. Even if we feel that our conviction is as great as Peter’s, could we brethren and sisters still need to be converted? “And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”

You may say that Peter had the understanding but lacked the faith that he needed. You might site his failure to walk on the water with Jesus as an example of his lack of faith. But brethren and sisters, if you think this, you would be wrong! That night on the ship, the disciples, as a group, were not sure the vision that they saw was real; they supposed that they saw a “spirit” or an “apparition”. It must be something in the foggy night that made it look as if a person was walking out there in the storm on the dark billowing waves.

Remember they were in the middle of the sea, in the middle of the night and in the middle of a storm. Any one of us would be clinging onto the most solid timbers of the shaken boat as the safest thing we could find. But, once again it is Peter who stands apart from the rest as usual. “Lord, if it be thou, bid me to come unto thee upon the waters!” Jesus simply says, “come”. That is all it took—one word—and Peter was over the side of the ship into the raging dark waters. James challenges, “Show me thy faith without thy work—and I will show you my faith BY MY WORKS!” Peter was a fisherman, he knew the dangers of a raging sea at night, but that did not stop him. The man’s faith was astonishingly great! Do we

exemplify the faith of Peter in our lives? “And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”

Maybe it was lack of resolve or his determination to follow through. We read in Matt. 26 after the last supper: “And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.”

“OH sure, that is what Peter said, but that is not what he meant—or he may have meant it, but he really was not as strong as he thought, he really did not follow through.” Brethren and sisters, if this is what we think of Peter, then we don’t know Peter very well! Having finished the Passover supper (it was night) they go into the garden. Their eyes were heavy. Luke says “He found them sleeping for sorrow.” Things were going poorly, everything seemed to be unraveling with no relief in sight. It was getting worse every day, things just seemed to be falling apart. Judas decided to salvage what he could from the endeavor and get out; the others were confused. Beside that, they were weary both physically and emotionally. Jesus awakes them, “Arise, let us be going: behold he is at hand that doth betray me.”

“And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude.” We are told that they had weapons, swords, lanterns, torches, and staves obtained from the chief priests and elders of the people and the Pharisees. Have you ever wondered how you would respond under these circumstances? What would it be like to be awakened at night to face a great multitude armed and ready to do battle with you?

We once again see Simon Peter coming forward and drawing his sword—There are only twelve of us against the great armed multitude, and we only have two swords! Yet, Peter awakes and draws a sword; single-handed he takes on this multitude. He obviously was not good with the sword, but he goes right after the servant of the high priest and takes a whack at his head. He was prepared to take them all on—all by himself—he was no coward. He said he would be willing to die for Jesus—He said it; and he meant what he said! And he was willing to carry it through! No, I am afraid there was no lack of resolve in Peter. Do we have the resolve

of Peter brethren and sisters? “And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”

Maybe it was his lack of humility that was the problem. Just a few hours earlier that night we are told: “He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?” Peter is horrified that his lord and master would act the part of a slave toward him. “Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.”

Peter may appear a little naïve, a little child like, but it indicates complete surrender by a man who realized that surrender was needed. Therefore, what was it about Peter that caused Christ to tell him he needed to be converted? Well brethren and sisters we are dealing with that incident right now, it was stated right after this washing of the feet incident. Jesus tells Peter “What I do thou knowest not now: but thou shalt know hereafter.—So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.” It was just after this that he says, “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”

Peter was willing to completely surrender himself to his lord, but what Peter needed to understand, what he needed to have impressed on him was the concept of stooping down and washing his fellow disciples feet. He needed to understand the responsibility he had to “strengthen thy brethren.” In each of the incidents Peter was ready to go it alone! If no one else would stand up for Jesus, HE would, if others would sink back in denial HE certainly would not. But there is more to standing up for Christ than taking everything on ourselves. “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”

Peter in the garden was willing to give his life for his master, but his master stopped him. “Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?”

And Jesus reaches out and un-does Peter's pre-emptive strike and heals Malchus' ear. Then Jesus asked them, "Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way." You do not need a multitude; I will simply give myself over to you. "Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him." He surrendered without a fight, not even a word of protest! Peter was not prepared for that! Peter was prepared to stand-alone and fight to the death for his messiah, but he was not prepared to surrender.

Peter began to be seriously troubled; he had been resisting the doleful tendency of Christ's communication for some time now. He made it through the sad Passover where there was talk of betrayal by one of them. His conviction that Jesus was the king of Israel and that the restoration was near enabled him to bear up against all these problems. But now he sees that something of a real terrible nature was happening. His heart sank within him—sank more than the facts warranted—sank as if this time there was no rallying from the trouble. Peter did not understand what was happening. He did not know why!

Can we relate to Peter brethren and sisters? Have we ever wondered why—why are things happening this way? Why doesn't God do something to make these people stop—to alter the course of events? Things should not go this way—it is not good—it is not right! Peter that man of great faith and understanding—did not understand! "Now we see through a glass darkly." Peter, in total physical and mental exhaustion, left in circumstances that he does not understand, now approaches his worst hour. His long honorable and practically unbroken record of loyalty and courage is to come to its end in a calamity made worst by his apparent utter confidence in himself. It is hard enough to fail when no one is watching, but to fail after proclaiming, "Even if I must die with thee I will not deny thee," "Although all should be offended yet will not I." Especially brethren and sisters because he really meant it! Those were no idle words spoken by Peter, he was truly ready to do it all, and do it alone for his lord. However, he was stopped, his understanding was imperfect, as is ours when we need to ask why—when we just do not understand.

Peter had done very well! By all our standards he had been a splendid disciple. No one here can deny that—he can be examined any way we want and he comes out triumphant, head and shoulders above the rest. But human examination is not what is needed. We look for triumphs and see if the man is still standing—the divine test is otherwise. Is the servant of God yet on his knees? If he is not, God will persuade him to kneel. Failing

that, it is better to force him down, than allow him, stiff-necked and proud to go on standing to his own destruction. "And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter—and Peter remembered the words of the Lord—and when he thought thereon he went out and wept bitterly."

And now Peter is down—sickeningly, helplessly lost in his own disillusionment with himself. From that position a man may rise—and Peter rose. He was not a Judas that gave up. Three days after this awful fall, we hear the message' "The Lord hath arisen indeed, and hath appeared unto Peter." We do not know what was said at that meeting, there is no record. The next interaction that we read of between Peter and his lord is after eating on the shore. It appears that Jesus and Peter walk away from the others. Jesus begins the conversation with a question. "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?"

What Jesus was asking was; "Peter, can you still say that you love more than these other disciples do?" No, Peter had learned the lesson—those bitter tears shed were not in vain. He no longer sees himself as the invincible one who would go to his death standing up fighting while the others stood back. He sees the picture differently now. He consciously and deliberately left his friends out of the discussion and confirms only his love for his master. "Yea Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." We also need to note the words that have been translated "love". Jesus asked Peter if he loved "agapao" him. A self-sacrificing, thoughtful love. Peter responded with the word "Philo"—a love connoting personal attachment and friendship. Christ tells Peter if you have love for me then, "Feed my lambs." Peter has grown; he is ready to give milk to the little ones.

Jesus then "saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" This time Jesus does not ask Peter if his love was greater than that of the others, but asks the soul searching question—do you, yourself have agapao love for me? Peter did not rise to the bait. How could he profess agapao love for his master? Peter would think of that great love his master showed in surrendering to his enemies, the mocking, the crucifixion and death, all done for his friends. How could he, who had denied the dying one claim such a love as this for him? Nevertheless, Peter did love Christ, he was truly on his side and he would claim no more than that, so in response he uses the word phileo again. Christ says, "Feed my sheep." If we have more faith, more courage, more spiritual strength than some of the others then use it—not in looking down on others, but to serve others, to wash their feet. To help those who are less able than we are. Peter your work is to help others to advance to where you are. "Feed my sheep."

After the second question, Peter may well have expected the third. It did come. This time once again a little different, "He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" This time Jesus steps down to Peter's level and asks Peter if he really had that phileo love for him. Peter is grieved at this third question. Which one would we be? The pent-up knowledge of just what was going on comes out. But this time instead of frightful blasphemies from his lips we hear only overflowing words of abject, beautiful surrender: "And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." Lord there is nothing hid from you, look inside me and see, there is nothing in my heart that would separate me from you, you know I have phileo love and affection for you. This is as much as Peter could say, but of this, he was absolutely sure. "Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep."

Some have said that in the gospels, Peter saw his Lord transfigured; and in his epistles, we see Peter transfigured. Twenty-five years later, we see a very different man. He is no longer belligerent, boastful and headstrong; but we see a mellow shepherd of the sheep who, with loving care is anxious to tend and guide the sheep. We see Peter drawing from his own experiences to help them, and us. "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:" That is the point Peter did not understand. When Christ talked of suffering his response was, "be it far from thee Lord, this shall not be unto thee." But now he says:

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

Peter got the point. He now understood agapao love—love that is self-denying and compassionately devoted to its object. Love in its fullest conceivable form. Brethren and sisters is that not the reason for our being together this morning? We look at these emblems on the table and we see that agapao love. Speaking of this, Brethren Roberts says in Nazareth Revisited: "The broad-headed nails driven entirely home, the soldiers would then lift the cross with its bleeding burden, and plant it in the hole dug in the earth to receive it. Firmly fixing it there, they do the same for the two thieves, and put the climax on the shame of his cross by placing them one on each side of him. Jesus is still able to speak. What are those words that come from his parched lips? "Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do!" Compassionate in the midst of his sufferings, he prays for his murderers. O Lord of heaven and earth, help us to conform to

the example he hath left us. Our hearts break for love and pity. Help us to do his commandments."

So Peter leaves us with his message. He says, "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love [agapao] as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing." The last thing we have on record that Christ said to Peter is "Feed my Sheep." As an old man about to be crucified himself, Peter leaves this message to us. "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."

When Christ washed Peter's feet he said, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." Peter learned the lesson the hard way. Let us brethren and sisters learn from Peter and follow the example of our master.

Bro. Jim Sommerville

We Know That the Law Is Spiritual

"Do we make void the Law? . . . Rather, we establish the Law!"

The Law, says Paul, was "Holy, just and good" (Rom. 7:12). He says it was "ordained unto life" (Rom. 7:10). Like David (Psa. 119:77, 97), he said he "delighted in the Law" (Rom. 7:22). But elsewhere he calls it a "ministration of death" (2 Cor. 3:7), a "ministration of condemnation" (2 Cor. 3:9) and a "yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1). He notes this apparent paradox:

"Is the Law sin? . . . Was then that which is good made death unto me?" (Rom. 7:7-13).

Can we blame the Law for sin and death, and the failure of man to attain to the life which was ordained by the Law? In both cases he immediately answers, "God forbid!" or more correctly, "Let it not be!" Do not entertain such a God-dishonoring thought, for the Law was a holy ordinance of God. He says,

"We know the Law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin."

The Law was ordained to life. It was man who failed. The Law had its perfect fulfillment in Christ. It was designed for him, and he for it. But the Law could not give life to even a perfectly righteous man without first an atoning death. This arose from a condition previous to the Law, which the Law itself was powerless to correct. At the very moment of birth, the Law

recognized the condemnation that man was born into, and the penalty already due.

Even for the birth of Jesus, Mary must be unclean 33 days and then offer a sin offering—"A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." Those turtledoves had no efficacy except in the sacrifice they foreshadowed. "The Law made nothing perfect," but it signified the way by which perfection must come.

It may be said that even Christ himself came under the curse of the Law, for "Cursed is everyone that hangeth upon a tree" (Gal. 3:13). This is true, and is one of the marvelous details of the working out of God's wonderfully intricate plan, but here again it was sin, and not the Law, that was to blame. This particular ordinance of the Law was perfectly just. But sin banded together and hanged an innocent man. The Law did not contemplate the hanging of the innocent. Only sin could do that.

And here is one of the places where we can legitimately make a distinction between the spirit and the letter. The obvious spirit and intention of the Law was, "Cursed is everyone that is deservedly hanged on a tree." Christ, personally in character, was free from the slightest shadow of a stigma of this curse in its true intention.

Did he then just come under the letter and not the spirit of the curse, and forfeit the life to which the Law was ordained by an unjust legal technicality? This would not be a fitting ingredient in God's great and glorious plan. His death was to declare the righteousness of God, and this could not be done by merely fulfilling the letter in violation of the spirit. God's arrangements are not technical and mechanical, but living and in harmony with truth.

As a strong, sinless, voluntary representative and covering for his weak but humble and repentant brethren, Christ's sacrifice was beautiful and just. He became a curse for us, not merely when the technicality of the breaking of the Law was fulfilled in the actual crucifixion, but when he freely presented himself in obedience to the Father's will as the Redeemer on whom the history and destiny of the race was centered.

"Our old man is crucified with him" (Rom. 6:6).

There was no technicality about the curse on this old man. The crucifixion on the cross was the symbol and climax of a life-long victory in the crucifixion of the flesh. That flesh came under the just condemnation of the Law, and hung upon the tree in perfect justice.

These thoughts arise from a consideration of Deut 22. With David we are led to exclaim, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy Law!" (Psa. 119:18).

Verse 1: "Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt in any case bring them again unto thy brother."

The meaning of "brother" here has the same broad, liberal intent that Christ placed on the word "neighbor," for in Exo. 23:4, the same command is worded—

"If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forebear to help him, thou shalt surely help him."

Could a law of this character be found in force anywhere in the world today? What of the so-called Christian nations who seek to pervert the Old Testament into a justification of their ungodly wars? God's people went to war at God's command for purposes that God decided, and at God's command they be refrained. When God commanded Zedekiah and the children of Israel to submit to the domination of the wicked Nebuchadnezzar, they brought God's anger and punishment upon themselves by a misguided resistance. They felt that, in the wars that God had previously sanctioned, they had ample justification and precedent, but they did not grasp the underlying principles. They only had half the picture, and they destroyed themselves in misguided zeal.

It is the principles behind the commands that we must grasp and apply. The Law was holy, just and good. Christ came, not to destroy it, but to fulfill it in all its beauty. "Do we then make void the Law?" asks Paul (Rom 3:31). Again that same emphatic, "God forbid—Let it not be so!" "Rather, we establish the Law." And he explains that God, through Christ—

"Condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us" (Rom 8:3-4).

The principle in the first command in Deut. 22 is identical with the principle of Jesus' beautiful words on the Mount—

"Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you."

This is the new-old commandment that Jesus brought—new in that it has so rarely been used or understood, old in that they had had it from the beginning.

V.5: "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth to a man, neither shall a man put on woman's garments; for all that do so are an abomination unto the Lord thy God."

This word “abomination” is a very strong term. It denotes utter abhorrence. The principle here is crystal-clear. Each sex has its proper place in the all-wise arrangements of God, and each in its place is beautiful and fitting and a glory to God, but for either to attempt to fill the position that God has designated for the other is intensely displeasing to Him. The world, in a misguided zeal for what it terms equality, uses all its powers to destroy the individuality and distinction and complementary harmony that God has created in making man and woman. “In all its works, the world knows not God.”

V.8 "When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house.'

Responsibility—"Am I my brother's keeper?" The principle here is that we are responsible for others to the extent that our actions do or could affect them. We think of Jesus' solemn words:

"Whoso shall offend—or cause to offend—one of these little ones that believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea" (Mt. 18:6).

And Paul's inspired commentary upon this:

"If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth" (I Cor. 8:13).

"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak" (Rom. 14:21).

We cannot run away from this heavy responsibility.

"None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." (Rom. 14:7)

Every action, and every failure to act when action is called for, will have its effect upon others which we must answer for. It is easier to build a house without a parapet around the roof. It has certain advantages. We may feel quite safe ourselves, but God says that in whatever we build, the protecting wall must be there for the sake of others who may not be as surefooted or as quick to perceive the dividing line as we.

V.9: "Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seed."

Here again the principle is unmistakable—

"Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seed, lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be **DEFILED**."

"The seed is the Word of God," said Jesus. "If any man preach any other Gospel, let him be accursed." Hard words indeed, but they are not ours: they are the necessary words of warning from God. In all the world,

there is no hope of life except in the true seed. Whoever contributes in the slightest way to the contamination of that seed is a murderer, however exalted his intentions may be. This is a matter of life and death. Very, very few things in this world really matter or are important, but here is one that is vital.

Whoever we cannot conscientiously welcome to the table of the Lord has another Gospel. We dare not encourage them, nor bid them Godspeed. It is neither kindness to them nor ourselves, nor faithfulness to God, to allow the seriousness of the issue to be lost in a haze of ill-advised fraternization. We are stewards and custodians of something far more important than ourselves. Great plainness of speech is called for, although at the same time great kindness and forbearance.

It is always easy to condemn and destroy, but to build takes time and work. Those who by nature are firm have a natural tendency to be harsh and bitter: those who by nature are soft have a tendency to be weak and compromising. Whatever comes naturally to us must be distrusted, for in our flesh dwells no good thing. There are no natural virtues. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit. To pride ourselves on our natural reactions—whatever they are—is to glory in our shame. We are only safe when we are consciously restraining nature and following the Spirit's expressed instructions contrary to nature.

V.10: "Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together."

"Doth God take care for oxen? or saith He it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written" (1 Cor. 9:9-10).

An ox and an ass—clean and unclean, a true believer and one with another Gospel. Can they plow together? Can they have joint activities? Can they join hands in anything and expect God's favor and blessing? What saith the Scripture?

V.11: "Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woolen and linen together."

A variation of the same basic principle, with certain different aspects. What could possibly be wrong with a mixture of weaving materials? God is simply driving home the same old lesson—purity, separation, holiness—over and over again, even to the point of not mixing in their clothing—a mixed covering—a mixed protection—a mixed dependence—wool and linen: the natural, fleshly, animal covering, or the Spirit's white garment.

If God is our covering, it must be God alone. We must choose, and be faithful to that choice. "I would that ye were hot or cold!" Be all the way inside or all the way outside. To stand in the doorway discourages those that are inside and hinders those that are outside. It is belittling to God's

Holy Truth, and a mockery of God. How often that lesson is repeated and still it is so hard to learn!

Bro. G. V. Growcott

As Ye See the Day Approaching

“Also to the Angel of the ecclesia of Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the Witness faithful and true, the Beginning of the creation of the Deity. I have known thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. Would that thou wert cold or hot! Thus because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to vomit thee out of my mouth.

Because thou sayest, I am rich, and have abounded in wealth, and have need of nothing, and has not known that thou art the wretched, and pitiable, and poor, and blind, and naked one. I counsel thee to buy from me gold which has been refined by fire that thou mayest be rich; and white garments that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness may not be apparent, and anoint thine eyes with salve that thou mayest see. Whomsoever I love I discipline and admonish, be zealous therefore, and change.

Behold I have stood at the door, and I knock; if any one may hear my voice, and open the door, I will enter in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

The victor, I will give to him to sit with me in my throne as I also vanquish, and sat with my Father in his throne.

He that hath an ear let him hearken to what the Spirit saith to the ecclesias.” (Rev. 3:14-22) The Translation is by Bro. J. Thomas.

As Christadelphians we have learned of the terrible apostasy that was extant in the earth in the Apostle John’s day. This, the letters to the seven ecclesias in Asia Minor clearly illustrate. The Apocalypse was given to John on the isle of Patmos in A.D. 96; which indicates the apostasy developed in just 63 years, necessitating those letters to the representative seven. For what was said to each of them was said unto all of the ecclesias extant in the earth at that time and thence forward to the return of Christ to the earth. “He that hath an ear let him hearken to what the Spirit saith to the ecclesias.” was the reiterated message of warning. It seems almost incredible before really thinking about it that such a terrible declension could develop in so short a period of time. But it did! A review of the world’s history and of Israel’s history will show just how constantly and rapidly apostasy sets in. Sin’s flesh or sinful flesh is so very changeable, deceitful, corruptible and desperately wicked and tends to gravitate to the

lowest level of depravity. It is like water – seeking the line of least resistance. Besides the above mentioned letters found in the second and third chapters of the Apocalypse, there is an abundance of Scripture testimony clearly documenting the departure from the faith as apostolically promulgated. The first mention of open disobedience is recorded in Acts 5:1-11 and is the beginning of a 280 year period of time, culminating in the birth of the man-child of sin being “forcibly carried up to Deity, and his throne.” and manifested in the Roman heaven, having dethroned paganism. Constantine lavished almost unimaginable wealth, power and prestige upon the Roman Catholic Apostasy. The 280 year period is a magnification of the 280 days of human gestation. The apostate Catholic woman was now invested with the sun of the Roman heavenlies; the moon under her feet and upon her head, a wreath of twelve stars.

The remnant of the woman’s seed (the small minority who have held to the truth) has ever had to stand fast in vigilance against apostasy. Down through the ages there have been myriad multitudes which have caved in and capitulated to the enemies of Yahweh and His anointed. Pagan philosophy, sophistry, false doctrine, Judaism, pseudo Christianity, “profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called” (1 Tim. 6:20) have taken their insidious and deadly toll.

As we see the day approaching, we should continually be asking ourselves: what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? We must be ever on guard against the evil that is in the world through lust. We must realize that “...It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” (Jer. 10:23) This means that left to our own goat-like nature, we will surely stray—just like the goat that wanders from the herd and then finds himself lost or in danger. “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” (Prov. 14:12) Of first importance to us in these last and evil days is: to whom or what are we committed? We know that we cannot serve two masters. We cannot serve God and mammon. We mouth these words, but do we really understand the truth of them? If we don’t in this day and time, we will surely understand them when we stand before the judge of the whole earth and have to give an account. The principle is clearly seen in the passage of scripture found in I King. 18:21: “And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, ‘How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him’.” We know that on that same day the assembled multitude were given indisputable proof of Yahweh’s reality and existence. “Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the

water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.” “Yahweh, He is the Elohim; Yahweh, He is the Elohim.” (I King. 18:37-39)

We need to set our heart as Joshua did when Israel came in unto their inheritance. “Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” (Josh. 24:14-15) We must make sure that we are really sincere in our commitment and service. The record in Joshua continues: “And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods; For the LORD our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed... therefore will we also serve the LORD; for he is our God. And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good. And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the LORD. And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve Him. And they said, We are witnesses. Now therefore put away, said he, the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel. And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and His voice will we obey.” (Josh. 24:16-24)

We must remember that our deity is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient! He is not mocked. Whatsoever a man sows, the same will he also reap. What Yahweh rightly desires is seen in the following Proverb: “My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.” (Proverbs 23:26) Our all-wise and glorious, eternal heavenly Father has associated all real and true pleasure and happiness with Himself. He is the only one who can give us the true and everlasting happiness and pleasure for evermore. All else is dead-ended, so temporary and cheats us out of the joy that could be ours. We need to remember that Yahweh’s plan is to fill all the earth with His knowledge and glory. He will eventually be the all things in all. The earth is destined to be a splendid and radiant redeemed

Israelitish polity! It will be a jewel most beautiful and precious in His Universe. Do we really realize that we are dealing with The Eternal?!

Why do we give so much time and energy in other directions? We all know that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. The Kingdom of God is easily attainable if we keep our eyes on the goal. Having taken hold of the plough, let us not look back. Each of us needs to constantly examine ourselves to see just what we are doing with our time. What are we filling our minds with? We are blessed with an abundance of high-tech devices. However, we have to be sure we are using them in the right way and for the right reasons. Otherwise, terrible evil will result through abuse. What we read, see and take into our hearts and minds is going to make the difference as to whether we are accepted or rejected at the judgment seat of Christ. With all we see going on around us in the world, we should be preparing for that day soon to be apocalypsed. We must be vigilant and strive to conform to the divine standards as much as we can, knowing that we could never completely do so. Mercy and grace will be extended to those who show Yahweh and His only begotten son that they really desire it by the way they live and spend their time. Time is such a rare and precious commodity. The day is coming when Yahweh’s anointed will sit as a refiner of silver. If we are to be of the class of the redeemed, we must reflect the image of the son of God. Let us remember that the servant is not above his lord. It simply is not the time for us to seek great things for ourselves now. It is now that we are making the answer we will receive in that day about to dawn upon this troubled and benighted planet. Will Christ see his (and his Father’s) likeness reflected in us? Will we have the seal of the living Deity in our foreheads (understandings)? Will we be found to have a tried faith, like the refined and purified gold? Will our garments be white, indicating deeds and works of righteousness, manifesting that golden faith that works by love? We need to keep in memory that these things won’t just magically happen. We have to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.” (Rom. 13:11-14) Let us fill our remaining time with the doing of the things we know will meet Christ’s approval that we may find grace in that day and hear those welcome words: “...Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world...” (Matt. 25:34)

Bro. David VanPelt

The Writings of the Pioneers

“There are two kinds of Christadelphians: those who recognise and appreciate the value and soundness and stability afforded by the writings and labours of brethren Thomas and Roberts – and those who do not. Not much can be done to help the latter kind. They are on their way back to the old apostasy. Resuscitations of the Gospel Truth have run this pattern over and over: a period of soundness; then a drifting of the majority back to the main orthodox stream. Brother Thomas assembled the total Truth. Admittedly, others had disjointed parts, some this, some that. He revealed a beautiful, harmonious, living whole.” (Bro. Growcott – Search Me O God).

All sincere lovers of the Hope of Israel are bound to appreciate the sterling works of the pioneer brethren—and for that matter, their individual labours in promoting the ancient apostolic faith in the face of numerous difficulties and fierce opposition. Both men had specific, though different, roles to play as instruments of Yahweh in the revival of the Truth in the Latter Days. Both were fully committed to the Word of God, and fearless in its advocacy and defence.

It was Bro. Thomas who actually revived the ancient apostolic Gospel. His pen demolished the teaching of the Churches, clearing away the apostasy and superstition that had smothered the Light of Saving Truth for centuries. In forthright and unequivocal language he established the One Faith upon an impregnable rock—the Scriptures of Truth which he dedicated his life to! The Scriptures of Truth were in fact what he wanted to set before his listeners and readers. He was not interested in self-aggrandisement. In Elpis Israel he wrote, “Let us be contented with nothing less than a ‘thus it is written,’ and a ‘thus saith the Lord;’ for He has laid it down in His law, that no one is worthy of belief who does not speak after this rule” (page 6).

He had many enemies who endeavoured to thwart the scriptural aim and ambition of his life, namely, finding out what was the Truth taught by Christ and the Apostles. It was not an easy position to take by any means. Far from it. He was however a single minded man who would not be diverted from the purpose he had set his heart and mind on. His relentless search for the One Faith was rewarded, and we are thankful for his labours. As Bro. Roberts once wrote “To the charge of holding “that the knowledge of Scripture, in the writings of Dr. Thomas, has reached a finality, WE PLEAD GUILTY.”

Bro. Roberts was a very different character, but the love of the Truth was the mainstream of his life also. He faithfully followed the

uncompromising line adopted by Bro. Thomas by strenuously defending the Truth that he recognised that the doctor alone had discovered in the mercy and Providence of Yahweh. The dedication of Bro. Roberts was seen in many ways as he vigorously proclaimed the Truth and supported the newly established ecclesias. This, too, was to be a task fraught with trials as the Truth’s enemies were constantly attacking his writings and seeking to “hinder” the work. In many ways, his work was more difficult as the enemy was often within the ranks! False doctrines blew among the ecclesias requiring the skill of a spiritually minded man to see the issues involved and defend the Truth from the assegaits that poured from those who received not the love of the Truth. Bro. Roberts was such a man, and again the Hand of Providence is discerned.

We ought to be deeply thankful to Yahweh for providing these men. In the works they have left us we have an aid to the better understanding of the Word of God, and the same zeal and dedication that they manifested should animate us.

Let us make no mistake about it, these writings stand head and shoulders above other Biblical works, and that includes Christadelphian writings! Very few writings come anywhere near the calibre of their expositions. Most expositions pale into insignificance by the side of them, and it is our wisdom to absorb them as much as possible. True, their writings reflect a style of a by gone age, and it is not always easy to get to grips with what they have to say upon a particular subject. Today we are much more familiar with simple words and phrases, staccato sentences, and easy to follow bullet points etc. These have a part to play, but they are no substitute for the invaluable works of Eureka, Elpis Israel, Nazareth Revisited etc etc.

If then there is such value in the writings of Brethren Thomas and Roberts, do we ever need to exercise care when reading them? As a general rule the answer would be no. Naturally in the very early writings of Bro. Thomas, there will be subjects that received further consideration by the Doctor. This is understandable as his knowledge grew.

However, we do need to be discerning in some articles that the pioneers have written in the early magazines; not perhaps in what they have said, but what they have not said!

In any exposition that might be compiled upon a subject, or series of subjects, it is not possible to deal with every aspect that might be associated with it. Nor is it possible to anticipate questions that might arise from statements contained in an article. No amount of human foresight can enable an article to be written which explained every facet of a subject, or that met the critic’s cavil before it was formulated! Sadly,

some of the writings of the pioneer brethren have been used by the Truth's enemies to bolster up a false premise, and we need to be on our guard when this form of attack is used.

We are told that an illustration is worth a thousand words, and we have an illustration of the sort of things that we are talking about in the article contained in the Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial News for February 2005, entitled "The Relation of Jesus to the Law of Sin and Death," by Bro. Roberts. The article was taken from the March edition of The Christadelphian for 1869.

The Nature and Sacrifice of Christ and related subjects has been one that has been seriously misunderstood since the days of the Apostles, and been the source of much controversy and division amongst Christadelphians. Sometimes error can be subtle, and wrong ideas and statements can be made in articles without being discerned by those unacquainted with the arguments on the subject. So acute is this particular issue that any article written upon this theme is likely to be put under the magnifying glass to ensure that it contains the Truth, and not error!

The article in question is not in error. It is actually a sound exposition on the subject. Bro. Roberts Scripturally outlined the fact that the nature of Jesus was of the same flesh and blood as ourselves – an absolute necessity for the work of salvation that Yahweh was to perform through him.

However, during the course of the argument Bro. Roberts appeared to indicate that the nature of Adam did not change after the transgression. Clause 5 of The Faith Forming Our Basis of Fellowship however is very clear upon this point. It says:

"That Adam broke this law, and was adjudged unworthy of immortality, and sentenced to return to the ground from whence he was taken – a sentence which defiled and became a physical law of his being, and was transmitted to all his posterity."

From what we know of the views continuously and consistently advocated by Bro. Roberts, he clearly believed that there was a physical change after the transgression in Eden. However, the article did not make that clear.

Some years later, the article was referred to during the Renunciationist Controversy when the Truth was fiercely under attack. Bro. Roberts valiantly defended the Truth at this time against powerful enemies from within who had previously stood with him in the warfare of faith. Bro. Roberts however was charged with having changed his mind on the nature

of Adam after the fall, and he was compelled to answer and explain what he had meant in the 1869 writing.

The answer of Bro. Roberts under the heading "No Contradiction" is reproduced below in full. It is an excellent extract that fully demonstrates the soundness of Bro. Roberts and explains his position. It is also essential that we correctly understand his position too. The article reads:

"Is there any difference in nature between a man in a state of health and a man dying of small pox? No. Both men have the same nature, but it is the same nature in different states. So Adam before and after transgression was the same nature, but in two different states—the second state being expressed by the word mortal or subject to death, which is not affirmable of the first. The sentence of death became a physical law of his being; hence it has passed on us who are derived from him. Its passing on us would be incomprehensible on any other principle. God's sentences are carried out differently from man's, who has no power beyond mechanical acts. When God decrees death, 'we have the sentence of death in ourselves' (2 Cor.1:9) as Paul expresses it. It is a law 'working in our members.' When man decrees death, he has to carry it out with rope or guillotine. This difference has to be kept in view. We bear 'the image of the earthly' in its second or condemned state, in which it became "heir" to "ills" unknown to the first. Hence the proverb. When the Dr. speaks of "nature unchanged taking its course," he means nature unchanged into the spiritual body. He does not mean that the law of death, inoperative before, did not set in. He does not contradict himself. The glib assertion that he does only indicates the superficial thinking of the speaker. 'Dying, thou shalt die' is a Hebraism not to be understood according to the English idiom. It occurs in the description of many other acts: e.g. 'living thou shalt live;' 'running thou shalt run;' 'hearing thou shalt hear,' etc etc. It expresses both the act and the result as future to the time of speaking. Hence, when it was said to Adam, 'dying thou shalt die,' it amounted to an intimation that the 'dying' would not commence until transgression. No one having understanding of the Hebrew idiom would suggest that it meant he was dying" (The Christadelphian February 1874).

So Bro. Roberts clearly indicates that there was a change in Adam's nature after the fall in Eden from what we term a "very good" state to a mortal state.

However, when something has gone to print and been circulated, it cannot be withdrawn! Nor is it easy to get into the mind of the critical

reader what was meant in the initial publication. At least, this was the case with some that seemed to hang on to the original article. They do not appear to have taken into account the explanation that Bro. Roberts gave, or even the numerous other articles that appeared in the pages of The Christadelphian setting forth the Truth during the Renunciationist Controversy.

In 1877 Bro. Roberts had again to make reference to the 1869 article under the section that regularly appeared in the pages of The Christadelphian entitled “Answers to Correspondents.” This particular “answer” was called “The effects of Adam’s Fall.” The article is also reproduced verbatim below:

“The article in the Christadelphian for March 1869, continues to represent our convictions on the subject of which it treats, viz., the relation of Jesus to the condemnation which we all inherit from Adam. On some details, however, of that general subject, we should, if we were writing it again, express ourselves more explicitly, in view of the searching controversy which has arisen on the subject of sin in the flesh. We should guard ourselves against forms of expression which seem to favour the false ideas that have come to be advocated. In asserting, for instance, that there was no change in the nature of Adam in the crisis of his condemnation, we should add, that though his nature continued of the order expressed in the phrase ‘living soul,’ a change occurred in the condition of that nature through the implantation of death, as recognised in the article in question on page 83, col.2, line 15, in the statement that death ran in the blood of Mary. And on the subject of sin in the flesh, while retaining the declarations on page 83, as regards the operation of our moral powers, we should add that the effect of the curse was as defiling to Adam’s nature as it was to the ground which thenceforth brought forth briars and thorns: and that therefore, after transgression, there was a bias in the wrong direction, which he had not to contend with before transgression. Our mind has not changed on the general subject, but some of its details have been more clearly forced on our recognition by the movements and arguments of heresy.” (The Christadelphian October 1877)

So the position of Bro. Roberts was absolutely clear, though the 1869 article taken in isolation could be used to misrepresent him.

Further reference to this particular article is made in the Editorial of The Berean Christadelphian for October 1934 on page 373 for any who are interested in reading the remarks made there.

In conclusion therefore, the reading of the pioneer articles are invaluable, while the above indicates that care sometimes has to be exercised when dealing with matters that have become the centre of debate. This should not deter us from reading them however. They are the greatest aids to the understanding of the Scriptures that we have, and we neglect them to our peril. Let us use them and be thankful for them.

Bro. Phillip Hughes

Foundation of The Christadelphians in Kenya

Bro. Stanly G. Owen has written a book, into all the world, with a chapter set aside (part 3) on Africa, and in chapter 20 “Foundations in Kenya.” He has reminded me of the early days of the Truth in Kenya and the part played in those hard days. He talked of my chance meeting with Bro. Perce Launder who had come in Kenya to meet a correspondent, Mr. Brown, but ended up talking to me instead. He left some pamphlets which turned out to be useful in the years that ensued.

That meeting was in 1957 when I was a Salvation Army officer. It was not until 1969 that I gave in to the inevitable; interview and immersion at the hands of an amiable person, the late Bro. Eddie Johnson, who was in Uganda then. I set out to go all over Kenya to tell my old friends of the new found precious faith. Some of the early converts to the Christadelphian faith were my friends in the Salvation Army, like the late Bro. David Kilonzo, the late Bro. Joseph Kaunda and the late Bro. Peter Maundu.

In 1970 my wife Florence and son Epaphras gave in to the faith and were immersed in the saving name of Christ. This was a great joy to me as I had company in my own home. While the piece makes very interesting reading and even mentions some of the early workers in the Kenyan vineyard. Some of these brethren helped in our growth of the Truth and we are so much indebted to them.

But we must point out here, as we did elsewhere, that others had problems with the grasp of the fundamental truths. It was these that made me and my son Bro. Epaphras take the hard decision of moving to the Berean fellowship. Bro. Stan Owen in winding up his piece on Kenya, under the reading “The sadness of parting.” Mention has been made of myself, Bro. Philip Wekati, who was the first Kenyan convert and his family. It is one of the sadness of the Missions work in Kenya that Philip and his family were for a time seduced by visiting Christadelphians from

North America into joining another fellowship with lavish promises of the benefits that would follow.

I would like to put the record straight. Perhaps Bro. Stan has forgotten my reminders from time to time, verbally and in writing of my complaints concerning some of the younger unschooled Missionaries. To jog his mind, I have a letter here from Bro. H.P Mansfield, of the Logos publications, South Australia, written on August 10th, 1984, and I quote in part; “Dear Bro. Wekati, We acknowledge your letter of 28th July, and thank you for correcting us in regard to your present stand. We note that you have joined the Bereans rather than the Old Paths fellowship. You have done this according to your letter because you feel that the teachings of the Central body are not consistent with the teachings of the Bible. You claim that they refute the belief of a resurrection at the end of Christ’s millennial reign. (Some of them did regardless of the B.A.S.F.). Your letter also states that brethren who visited Kenya from the UK were quite incorrect in their teaching. You claim that you advised Bro. Stanly Owen regarding this teaching.”

This was the position, and had nothing to do with lavish promises of benefits. My decision was based on doctrines and teachings prevailing then. The wrong teachings were highlighted at the Kitale Bible School in the early years of 80's. And even now there are a number of Central Brethren who still hold wrong doctrines on the Resurrection and the second coming of Christ. This can be proved without much ado. There is no doubt that those who remained in Central made the impression that I stood to benefit by my move and asked for funds to counter imaginary influence. One thing which is sure is that as far as the rudiments of the Scripture knowledge is concerned, there is a conspicuous difference between the Bereans in Kenya and those of other fellowships. No doubt about it. “Try the spirits.”

Bro. Philip Wekati

Day by Day

I heard a voice at evening softly say,

“Bear not thy yesterday into tomorrow,
Nor load this week with last week’s good or sorrow.
Lift all thy burdens as they come, nor try
To weight the present with the by and by.
One step and then another, take thy way—
Live day by day.”

“Live day by day.
Why art thou bending towards the backward way?
One summit and another thou shalt mount;
Why stop at every mound the space to count
The past mistakes if thou must still remember?
Watch not the ashes of the dying ember,
Kindle thy hope. Put all thy fears away,
Live day by day.”

Berean March 1923

WHO ARE PLANTED IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD?

Those who humbly accepted the word planted in them which can save them forever, “As Moses was faithful in all God’s house.” “Therefore blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven whose sins are covered. Whose sin the Lord does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit.” (Psalm 32:1-2.) As well are these who are called “Servants of God” (Gen.26:24): Friend of God (2 Chr. 20:7; Isaiah 41:8): “Prophet,” (Gen 20:7): “Father of Israel” (Ex.3:15; Isaiah 51:2.). “Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.” (Psalm 92:13) – “They shall still bear fruits in old age.” (verse 14). “The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree.” (verse 12) The scripture said, “But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God.” (Psalm 52:8.) Isaiah said, “Your people shall all be righteous. They shall inherit the land forever.” Jesus said, “Every plant which my Heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted.” (Matthew 15:13.) “Every branch in me that does not bear fruit He takes away and every branch that bears fruits He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. I am the vine you are the branches, he who abides in me and I in him bears much fruit for without me you can do nothing.” (John. 15:2, 5)

JEREMIAH'S COMPLAINT AND GOD'S ANSWER

Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why are those happy who deal so treacherously? Answer: When the wicked spring up like grass and

when all worries of iniquity flourish it is that they may be destroyed forever. Zophar's sermon on the wicked man is, "That the triumphing of the wicked is short and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment." (Job 20:5)

Brethren and sisters read carefully these questions and these answers and let these be your consolation. Let us believe that the way of the righteous is level and thou dost make smooth the path of the righteous (Isa 26:7). He who despises the word will be destroyed but he who fears the commandment will be rewarded (Matt.13:13). He who walks with the wise men, will be wise but the companion of fools will be destroyed. A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. Harsh discipline is for him who forsakes the way, and he who hates correction will die. There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing (Proverbs12:18.)

ABOMINATION TO THE LORD NUMBERED

1. The thoughts of the wicked, (Prov.15:26); 2. Lying lips, (Prov.12:22); 3. Dishonesty (Prov.11:1); 4. Do not sacrifice to the Lord your God an ox or a sheep which has a blemish.(Deut.17:1); 5. The perverse man, (Prov.3:32).

"You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts for what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God." (Luke:16:15.) If you are planted in the house of the Lord, set aside things the Lord hates. A proud look and a lying tongue—hands that shed innocent blood—a heart that devises wicked plans—feet that are swift in running to evil—a false witness who speaks lies— and one who sows discord among brethren. (Proverbs: 16:19). Therefore stand aside from everyone that deceives his brethren and sisters and anyone who speaks not the Truth, and have taught their tongue to speak lies. Their tongue is a deadly arrow, it speaks deceitfully with its mouth. Each speaks peacefully to his brethren but in his heart he plans an ambush. (Jer.9:5, 8).

WHO WILL ENTER IN THE GATE OF THE LORD?

Only the righteous shall enter through it and a highway shall be there and it shall be called the Holy way. The unclean shall not pass over it. Fools shall not enter therein. (Isaiah:35:8.) I am the Lord your God who dwells in Zion, my Holy Mountain, and Jerusalem shall be Holy, and strangers shall never again pass through it; but nothing unclean shall enter it nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood; but only those who are leaders in the Lamb's book of life, (Rev.21:27). O Zion, put on thy

beautiful garments. O Jerusalem, the Holy city; for the unsanctified and unclean shall no longer come to you. (Isaiah 52:1). Jesus says, "I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come in to him and eat with him and he with me and I will grant him to sit with me on my throne." (Rev.3:20-21).

QUESTION TO UNBELIEVERS AND WELCOME TO BELIEVERS

For who was it rebelled? Indeed was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses. Now with whom was he angry 40 years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? And to whom did he swear that they will not enter his rest, but to those who did not obey? So he said that they did not enter in because of the unbelief. (Heb 3:16-19). Beware brethren, lest there be any of you that are evil. He that is of unbelief, departs from the living God.

Therefore, be diligent to enter the rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. Behold the feet of Him who brings good tidings, who proclaims peace. The wicked shall no more pass through you. He is utterly cut off .Open the gate that the righteous nation which keeps the Truth may enter in. (Isaiah 26:2). The king will come and says, blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. (Mathew25:34). I appoint unto you a kingdom as my Father hath appointed unto me, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on the thrones judging the 12 tribes of the Israelites.(Luke22:29-30). But now you must rid yourself of all such ways as this anger, rage, malice, slander and filthy language from your lips. (Col.3:8). Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart since as members of one body you were called to peace and be thankful.

Bro. Philip Wekati

The Proposed Texas Gathering

Centre Point (Texas). — Brother G. Edmonds states that "The brethren at Camp Verde and Centre Point propose to have a fraternal gathering at Camp Verde, Ken. Co., commencing Friday before 3rd Sunday in July. Brethren and friends of the truth from all parts cordially invited; the gathering on the plan of the Birmingham movement of 1872."

Christadelphian, 1880

The Birmingham movement of 1872 was the first Christadelphian gathering put together by Bro. Roberts and the Birmingham Ecclesia. Brethren and Sisters from all across Great Britain and even a Brother from

the United States attended – sailing by ship for 4 weeks. There were five days of talks – each talk was about 15 minutes in length. Bro. Roberts wrote of the gathering as follows:

“THE “Gathering” was so successful in a spiritual sense that we propose to extend and consolidate its influence by a full report of the proceedings, and shall not consider it, in any sense, a loss that ordinary matter is excluded. The date of it is well-known: Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, August 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th. The weather was good, and circumstances generally concurred in favour of the object in view.

Two incidents—one pleasant and the other not so—occurred unexpectedly. The first was the arrival of brother Hezekiah Taylor, of Baltimore, Md., United States, who crossed the Atlantic for the purpose of attending the Gathering, without sending previous intimation; and the other was an accident to sister Wall, of Birmingham, which necessitated her conveyance to an hospital. Sister Wall was thrown from a vehicle in the street while riding with her husband to meet some brethren at the station, and suffered fracture of the skull. She is progressing favourably. With this exception, all went well.”

Second Coming of Christ

The phrase “second coming” is not scriptural. “Christ will appear a second time,” says Paul, “to them that look for him * * * unto salvation.” There are three comings, but only two appearings. John the Baptist preached Christ’s coming—Acts 13:24, which was the first; Jesus declared of himself that he would come before the apostles should have preached in all the cities of Israel, which coming was the second; and lastly, the apostles preached his coming to subdue all things to himself, to raise the dead, and to reign over the nations, which is the third. Christ’s first coming was an appearing in humiliation; the third coming will be a second appearing, not however in humility and suffering, but in exaltation with power and great glory. At the second coming there was no appearing at all.

Bro. John Thomas, 1852

Thoughts Gleaned By The Way

“...the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the Truth.”

The word church occurring many times in the New Testament scriptures, is translated from the Greek word ekklesia, and means that

which is called out. It refers to that body of people which God has called out as His saints, a people for His name.

This assembly of called out ones is referred to in I Tim. 3:15 as, “The house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground [or foundation] of the truth.”

The church, the true church of God, is that divine institution through which God is working out His purpose of calling out sinful men and women who are to form that host of redeemed ones to serve and glorify Him in the age to come.

God's Temple and Household

It is God's temple on earth, as we read in I Peter 2:5, where he says, speaking of the saints: “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”

And, of which Paul also speaks in Eph. 2:19-20, where he tells converted Gentiles that they, “Are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.”

The church of God is a divine, holy institution, built by the word of God, as revealed through the prophets, Jesus Christ and His Apostles. It is, and has always been, the lightstand by which the word of God, His truth, has shown forth to a darkened world. That is why the church of God is called the pillar and ground of the truth. It is the medium through which He has chosen to proclaim, to exhibit and to keep His truth, pure and unadulterated from error. Any organization, regardless of its claims to being the church of God or the Church of Christ; if it fails to teach and practise those principles of divine truth laid down in the word of God, it is not, and cannot be the church of God.

God's church is His temple, in which His truth is deposited, and in which He dwells, as we learn from 2nd Cor. 6:16 – “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.” Continuing in the same connection Paul clearly shows that the church or house of God is a distinct and separate institution from all worldly organizations, with which it is to have no connections whatsoever. He says: “Wherefore (because

they are the temple of God) come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

Here the family relationship of the church to the Father is brought out clearly. No one can be a member of the family of God, of the household of God, a child of God; and at the same time be identified with the unbelieving elements of the world, which is the great enemy of God.

Church of God and Christ

The church of God and the church of Christ is one and the same institution. It is called God's church because it was He who purposed it; He who designed it; and through which His purpose in Christ Jesus is to be realized. It became the church of Christ by purchase, as we are told in Acts 20:28, where Paul, in addressing the Ephesian elders, says: “Feed the church of God, which he (Jesus Christ) purchased with his own blood.”

And as Peter tells us in I Peter 1:18, 19 – “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.”

When He made an offering for sins, and opened the way for the forgiveness of sins in His name, God gave the church to Him as Paul says in Eph. 1:22, 23 -

“And hath put all things under His feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.”

The church then became the mystical bride of Christ, as we learn from Eph. 5:21-33. In a figure the church became “members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones.” Jesus Christ, the head of the church, became the great Example of what God requires of all members of that body, as we learn from Romans 8:29

“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

Exactly what the true church was to be like; what its members were to be like, was foreordained, or planned beforehand by the Father. It was to be according to the pattern of His Son. He was, “Holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners.” And we read in I Peter 2:21 – “For even

hereunto were ye called; for Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps.”

The immediate followers of Christ; those to whom He committed the work of laying the foundation of true Christianity, were godly men like their Master, who were set forth as examples of what true church members should be like, as Paul says: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."
Bro. Oscar Beauchamp

THE BEREAN CHRISTADELPHIAN

In reply to more than one reader we wish it to be distinctly understood that the Berean Christadelphian is wholly and solely a private undertaking, and in no way whatever subject to the control of any ecclesia... Its editors alone are responsible for its contents.

We also desire to make plain the fact, that although we take every precaution, and get the best information we can of the ecclesias whose Intelligence is inserted under the heading of Ecclesial News, and although we have not, and will not knowingly insert any Ecclesial News from those who are not "with us", we cannot guarantee that an unfaithful or unsound ecclesia may not "creep in unawares". Therefore it remains for each ecclesia to have its own doorkeepers.

At the same time, although the Berean Christadelphian is under no ecclesial control, the editors have sought, and will still seek, counsel from experienced and faithful brethren and sisters in...other ecclesias, not as authoritative decisions, but as advice to be respected. We have no use, however, for those whom we find watching for evil, or ready to make a man an offender for a word. There is a world of difference between winking at known sin, and looking for trouble. Heresy hunting when the heresy is detected is a godly duty, but an evil work when the heresy is only surmised. —F.G. Jannaway

What Does That Mean?

“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” (John 13:34)

Why did Jesus call this a “new commandment” when Paul informs us “love is the fulfilling of the law.” (Rom.13:10) Moreover, when questioned in Matt. 22 “Master, which is the great commandment in the law Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets”. (Verses 36-40) Is not this second greatest commandment the same as the “new commandment?”

What Jesus was teaching was, in fact, radically and amazingly new. The Law taught that we should love our neighbors equal to ourselves. We should not put our interests above theirs. Jesus is now requiring to love ones neighbor more than himself. A lot more! He wants us to love each other as he, Jesus, loved us. He wants us to be willing to give our lives for each other! "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

What Jesus is asking us to do is to give selfless love to one another every day. "If any man will come after me, let him DENY HIMSELF and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matt. 16:24) Jesus is asking us to exercise self-denial. He wants us to give of ourselves well beyond what is in our self-interest. Give more of our time, more of our money, more of our assistance, compassion, devotion and care. He wants us to do more than what is normally considered reasonable. It is not worldly wisdom to put others interests ahead of your own.

The New Testament contains an even higher level of love than the new commandment Jesus gave to his disciples. It is the love of God for us. “For God SO LOVED the world, that HE GAVE his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” This is a highest love of all; any parent can relate to this immediately. It is one thing to sacrifice yourself for others as Jesus has asked us to do, however, it is another thing altogether to sacrifice your child for others! God was willing to allow His obedient and sinless son to die for sinners. That is true love in its purest form. It was the love that Abraham showed to God in his willingness to sacrifice Isaac. Jesus has simply asked us to love each other more than ourselves. Yet, while asking us such a demanding thing, God has not asked us to do more than He Himself is willing to do. God was willing to do more. Much, much more!

As we contemplate God's love and the love He has asked that we show to each other, let us not shrink back as if God is asking something unreasonable. Let us each give a little more of ourselves to each other for the sake of God and for the sake of Jesus. (1John 4:11)

“Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.”