

# 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

**HOUSTON**, Texas – Sunday School 10am (Nazareth Revisited); Memorial 11:10am; Study Class 1pm (Temple of Ezekiel's Prophecy); 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday 1pm (Open discussion, roundtable Bible class); Wed. 7:30pm (The Minor Prophets). Meeting Hall address: 8008 Junius Street, Houston, TX 77012.

Loving Greetings in Christ Jesus from Houston,  
It is with great pleasure that we announce two new members to the Houston ecclesia. On January 16th we extended the right hand of fellowship to Bro. David and Sis. Brenda Lauck. Bro. David has been baptized for 11 years and sis Brenda for 19 years, having spent all of that time in Central. They were united in marriage 9 years ago and have three grown sons (Christadelphians) and 9 grandchildren.

After visiting the Houston meeting and sharing the Word of Hope, they requested fellowship having realized a true fellowship in the things that we believe. We look forward to our walk together towards Zion.

Their contact info:

Bro. David and Sis. Brenda Lauck  
14792 Cedar Lane Loop  
Willis, TX 77378  
936-856-9702  
DBLauck@myexcel.com

We also have updated news on Sis. Myrtle Packer. After a multitude of tests over more than a month, the doctors have concluded she has cancer that has metastasized. All things considered, she is doing well for 85 years old. She has some pain in her hip due to the cancer and it is becoming difficult to get around. Yet her desire to be at the meetings insures her attendance as she can muster the strength. Her presence is always appreciated. She sincerely thanks all those who have corresponded with her. If anyone wishes to contact her you may do so at the following address:

Sis. Myrtle Packer  
210 East 3rd St.  
Deer Park, TX 77536  
281-479-4292 (home)

Our visitors since last writing are: Sis. Sharon Johnatty of Florida; Bro. Rusty and Sis. Susie Stephen, and Bro. Bud Banta of Lampasas; Bro. Ed and Sis. Delma Truelove of Richard, Saskatchewan. Bro. Rusty kindly offered the words of exhortation while here. We thoroughly enjoy all visitors and welcome any passing this way.

Much love to all in the bonds of the blessed hope,

On behalf of your brothers and sisters in Houston,  
Bro. Shauywn Smith

**BOSTON**, Massachusetts — S.S. 9:00 A.M. Memorial 10:15 A.M. Mid-week Study classes Thursday (South) and Friday (West). Recording Bro. James Sommerville, 34 Birch Hill Rd. Northboro. MA 01532

Dear brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus.

Since our last communication, we have had both joys and sorrows in our ecclesia. We have once again relocated to the town of Dedham Massachusetts, which is about mid-point for our membership. The Dedham Community House is smaller than we would like but is working out well.

Bro. Joshua Garvey is doing well. He thanks everyone for their encouraging cards and letters, and appreciates everyone's concerns during these trying times.

Friday evening March 25, 2005, the examining committee met with Jean Ann Dudley who has been attending our meeting for the past couple of years. She witnessed a good confession of the things concerning the Kingdom of God and The Name of Jesus Christ and was baptized later that evening. We encourage you to write and welcome her at:

Beany14C@aol.com  
Or write to her at:  
31 Rip Van Winkle Way  
Buzzards Bay, MA. 02532

Shortly before Jean's baptism brother Scott and sister Lara Ricks of North Carolina arrived for a planned weekend visit. They were able to join with most of our ecclesia in witnessing the baptism and all spent an enjoyable evening together.

On Saturday morning, March 26, 2005 the examining committee met once again, this time to interview Bro. Scott and Sis. Lara. Having recognized the errors in the Un-Amended Fellowship and having already withdrawn from them, they requested to become members of the Berean Fellowship. We are happy to report that we are all of one mind and were able to welcome them. They will be members of the Chesapeake Virginia/Rocky Mount North Carolina Ecclesia. Any wishing to communicate with them can do so at:

scottandlara@mchsi.com or:  
Scott and Lara Ricks  
112 Brumsey Landing Dr.  
Moyock, NC. 27958

We have enjoyed the fellowship of the following visitors since we last wrote: Bro. Michael and Sis. Leslie Morrell and Bro. Jonathan of Los Cruces, New Mexico; Bro. Gary Stephen of Glenn, New Hampshire; Sis. Shiloh Brown of Austin Texas.

Your brother in Christ,  
Jim Sommerville

## 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

### Aholah and Aholibah

When we consider the chapters of Ezekiel speaking on Yahweh's unfaithful wives we soon come to the realization that these chapters, 16 and 23, require very careful handling. In looking at this subject it must be remembered that God is in control of everything. This is a well known fact among Christadelphian circles, but it is not always appreciated or dwelt on during our daily lives. This can be compared to the sun overhead. We know it is there and without it our world would be a far different place, but we don't always think of all the amazing things that happen because of it. Naturally, we enjoy a warm sunny day but our thoughts are not always thinking of the sun's effects on weather patterns, in conjunction with plants it cleans the very air we breathe, and without its light we would not be able to see.

How frequently do we think about the absolute total understanding, and the control that comes with the knowledge that our Creator has. With this knowledge He has populated the Bible with examples that speak of the human condition. In other words, the Bible is filled with lessons that are taught in ways that relate to man's experience. In the example before us, Aholah or Samaria represents Israel and Aholibah or Jerusalem represents Judah. They are charged with corrupting the Mosaic Law by mixing it with the customs and principals of the heathen nations around them. In this example cities which represent nations are said to be harlots or adulteresses, because they do not follow after the commandments God has given them. Thus, Yahweh has framed this in a manner which we can effortlessly relate to.

We are all familiar with relationships. We start out by meeting somebody, enjoying their company while getting to know them. After awhile we fall in love. It is similar to what transpires when we are called to the knowledge of the 'Truth.' We start out learning the very basics about God. Then the basic

knowledge allows us to understand the beauty of being called out of the world, all the while we are getting to know our Heavenly Father. After a while we fall in love.

We know from Scripture that we are loved of God for we read, (Ezekiel 16:8) “Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine”, and (1 John 4:10) “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

But in our relationships how do we feel when our love is not reciprocated? When somebody says they care for you, but spend all their time chasing after other people! This is what God is describing when he gave the words of these two chapters to Ezekiel.

In the 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter they are described as two women, who represent two kingdoms, sister-kingdoms, Israel and Judah, daughters of one mother, having been for a long time but one people. He begins by describing their actions when they were in Egypt. We do not know a lot about the time when they lived in Egypt but different references give us a clue that they were not faithful to the God of Abraham. There were many temptations in the land of Egypt. The children of Israel would not have hesitated to chase after the pleasures of the world around them. It is interesting that they should love Egypt's idols even when they were under the control of Egypt's task masters! God says they became whores in their youth. Obviously they did not seek after those things which are most pleasing to our Heavenly Father. In simple terms, they rejected the God of their father, Abraham, and sought after the things that please the flesh. They did not reciprocate the love given them. Or, as Jesus quoting Isaiah said, (Mark 7:6) “He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.”

Aholah played the harlot, brought in the worship of Baal, mixing in pagan rites with true worship as defined by Yahweh. She doted upon her neighbors, particularly the Assyrians, who had extended their conquests near them; she admired their idols and worshipped them, admired the pomp of their courts and their military strength and courted alliances with them upon any terms, as if her own God were not sufficient to be depended upon. This is why Samaria and the kingdom of Israel were given the name of Aholah, “her own tabernacle,” because the places of worship which that kingdom had were of their own devising, their own choosing and the worship itself was their own invention. The example before us shows Aholah ‘whoring’ or not reciprocating the desire Jehovah has for them.

The world around us has mixed in the pagan religion with the simplicity, purity, and beauty that is taught in the Bible. They have taken the simple idea

of one God and turned it into one god in a multiplicity of three. They teach of a trinity god, three gods in one. How do you think Yahweh feels toward a Christadelphian that celebrates the holy days that are celebrated around us? Should we be observing Ash Wednesday, Lent, or Easter? Is Christmas satisfactory to God? Even if we are not observing pagan holidays or following after their idols we must be careful we don't make our own idols. Whatever we are crazy about, whatever we reverence, or put confidence in, we make an idol of it. Whatsoever we make an idol of we place ahead of Jehovah. It doesn't matter what it is, if we place it ahead of the Truth it is an idol. There is only one way to worship and serve God — His way. The lesson for us then, is to choose God, put Him first in all things, and to study to show thyself approved. To keep in mind, we worship the One True God of Heaven and Earth. All others are but wood, hay and stone.

In the history of Israel we find Jeroboam, setting up the golden calves, and causing Israel to sin. We find one of the kings of Israel giving a thousand talents to the king of Assyria, to engage him in his interests, (2 Kings 15:19) “And Pul the king of Assyria came against the land: and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand.” God had patience with Samaria but there does come a time when it is ended. If we choose to forget Yahweh, to take delight in the flesh pleasing pleasures of this age, there will come a time when he will forget us. And as in the example before us, use our desires as the means of destruction.

The neighboring nations, whose idolatries Aholah had conformed to and whose friendship she had confided in, are now used as the instruments of her ruin. The Assyrians, soon spied out the nakedness of the land, discovered her blind side and attacked her. The cause of the ruin of that once flourishing kingdom by the Assyrians is shown to be their forsaking the God of Israel, fearing other gods and seeking after idols. It was for this that God was very angry with them and removed them out of his sight. And that the Assyrians, whom they had been so fond of, should be employed in executing judgments upon them shows how God, in a way of righteous judgment, often makes an affliction of that which is the heart's desire.

According to The Bible as History there are some Assyrian documents, which contain some interesting and informative details that confirm the historical truth of the Bible, showing the veracity of Ezekiel's prophecy. It says, “...in the first year of my reign I besieged and conquered Samaria.” and a little later on, “People of the lands, prisoners my hand had captured, I settled there. My officials I placed over them as governors. I imposed tribute and tax upon them, as upon the Assyrians. The Old Testament describes uprooting tactics employed in the first large scale experiment of its kind in the world by the Assyrians: (2 Kings 17:24) “And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from

Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof.”

Tens of thousands of human beings were violently driven from their homeland, deported to foreign lands, and their places filled by others dragged from different areas. Samaria shared this fate. Its motley collection of inhabitants became known as “Samaritans”. “Samaritans” became a term of abuse, and expression of abhorrence. They were despised not only on religious grounds but also as individuals: (Matthew 10:5) “These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not” The people of the 10 tribes have disappeared. They were absorbed into the foreign countries to which they were taken. All investigation into what has become of the ten tribes has been fruitless.

So far the discussion has mainly been about Aholah. Much of what has been said applies to Aholibah also. But at this time let us specifically turn our attention to her. She was aptly named Aholibah, “my tabernacle is in her” because it was the place that God Himself had chosen to put His name.

Shortly after the kingdom of Judah had witnessed the destruction of Israel, during the reign of Manasseh, Aholibah became more corrupt than Israel because of their inordinate love of idols. Instead of being made better by the warning, which that destruction gave them, they became even more corrupt. In the 11th verse of the 23rd chapter of Ezekiel it is written, “And when her sister Aholibah saw this, she was more corrupt in her inordinate love than she, and in her whoredoms more than her sister in her whoredoms.” This is comparable to the 46th and 47th verses of the 16th chapter of Ezekiel where it says, “And thine elder sister is Samaria, she and her daughters that dwell at thy left hand: and thy younger sister, that dwelleth at thy right hand, is Sodom and her daughters. Yet hast thou not walked after their ways, nor done after their abominations: but, as if that were a very little thing, thou wast corrupted more than they in all thy ways.” The last part of the 23rd chapter and the first part of the 11th chapters make a combined reproof of Judah and her idolatrous ways. She is denounced for her evil ways and association with the profane nations.

Ezekiel opens the 16th chapter saying that Jerusalem is to be made to know her abominations. Yahweh had done great things for her. He had raised her from the humblest of lands and peoples. The earliest inhabitants that the Bible refers to are the Jebusites, who were a Canaanitish tribe. God lets it be known that there was a predominance of Hittites and Amorites amongst the inhabitants of early Jerusalem. As a purely Gentile city, it was regarded by Yahweh as an untended, thoroughly polluted infant. Still the Lord chose it for His purposes. And even after being chosen by the Most High, Judah went much further, corrupting herself more than her sister Samaria. It not only indulged in friendship with Assyria, which led on to idolatry as the latter had

done, but it also allowed itself to be led astray by the magnificence of Chaldea, to form alliances with them, and to idolize all things Babylonian.

Who would have thought of putting Jerusalem in the same category with Sodom. Yet, this is exactly what God declares! He said Sodom was as sister of Aholibah. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrha were destroyed by fire from heaven because of the predominance of sin. Yahweh declares, (Ezekiel 16:49) “Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.” Plenty of wealth caused Judah to reproduce the sin of Sodom on a larger scale. Literally there was no iniquity in “fulness of bread” or “abundance of idleness.” But these were the root causes of the problems in Judah. The U.S. and U.K. are very proud nations, lands of idleness, abundance, and depravity. They have no knowledge and love for the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus. The example of those around us is an example of life displeasing to our Heavenly Father. It shows life in the time of Ezekiel’s prophecy. As it is now there was no lack of religion in Jerusalem. Instead of God pleasing worship, obedience and longing after divine instruction people choose to create their own religion for man’s pleasure. It should not be alleged of us as it was said of Jerusalem, (Jeremiah 5:2) “And though they say, The LORD liveth; surely they swear falsely.”

The Lord’s mercy to them, and to us also I might add, that they had plenty. But Aholibah spent her time in search of unproductive pleasures of the flesh. Imposing self-important dreams in place of the realities set forth in the Word of God; looking toward the current, always changing, fad. Ezekiel points out that God’s people had dishonored Him by making alliances with earthly powers. Prosperity and ease, security and quietness, and leisure, are they a gift of Yahweh unto His servants that they might be able to come to a far greater understanding of the ways of Providence or are they a test that we might learn to recognize within ourselves that which we love the most, God or Mammon?

God decreed to Adam, (Genesis 3:19) “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” We are often reminded of the latter part of the verse, “dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return” but how many times do we think on the former, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread”? We are to work, not only for our livelihood but that we find honor and glory in acceptance by Jehovah when Christ and His kingdom shall appear. (James 2:20) God is much wiser than we are. It is not difficult to determine the wisdom in how His children are first poor and subjected to adversity that they may be tried and developed. We are to be content with food and raiment. (1Timothy 6:8) We have been given so much in this time of gentile ascendancy. We have the Bible where the plan and purpose of God has been revealed to us. When we are allowed leisure time, it should be spent prudently in pursuit of godliness. We must redeem the time given us wisely.

As with Aholah God's anger would not be contained forever. His displeasure with Aholibah shows forth from the reign of Hezekiah to the fall of Jerusalem under the reign of Zedekiah. After the overthrow of Sennacherib, in which 185,000 Assyrians were destroyed in Palestine, Babylon begins to appear as a new and sovereign power, paying court to the house of David. In 2 Kings 20:12, a king of Babylon named Merodach-baladan son of Baladan, is introduced as making enquiry after the health of Hezekiah, with presents. This individual threw off the yoke, and asserting his independence, made with varying success, a long and obstinate resistance. The message of well wishing to Hezekiah was, in all likelihood, accompanied with proposals for a defensive alliance against their common Assyrian enemy. The king of Judah, flattered with this honor, Hezekiah ostentatiously displayed to the ambassadors all his treasures. Jehovah, upon this, took the opportunity of revealing to him by Isaiah that he should make use of this rising power to punish Judah and Jerusalem for their sins, as he had already employed the decaying of Assyria to punish the ten tribes. The overthrow of Sennacherib had caused Hezekiah to be magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth. This made him proud of heart, and caused him to fail in gratitude to Jehovah, but he realized the error of his ways and repented. Therefore, the destruction was delayed for a few years (2 Chron. 32:21–26).

After Josiah's death and the usurpation of dominion by the Egyptians, the Babylonians were no doubt welcomed as friends (2 Kings 24:1). But the Jews were soon tired of their alliance and disgusted with their friends, and this led to the rebellion of Jehoiakim and the first captivity. Jehoiachin becomes the ruler and is deposed by Nebuchadnezzar after about three months. Zedekiah is established as the ruler of Judah. About eleven years later, BC 586, Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon sacks Jerusalem and takes the people of Judah into captivity. The temple is destroyed and Zedekiah is blinded and carried into Babylon. Jehovah had finally shattered their kingdom, scattered the people as disgraced slaves and exiles, and given the land over to darkness and desolation.

But Yahweh is a merciful God and will not remain angry forever. As Ezekiel told Aholibah, (Ezekiel 16:60) "Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant." Aholah and Sodom should be remembered as well. (Ezekiel 16:61) "Then thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger: and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant." We garnered this from the pen of our Brother Roberts who wrote it nearly 139 years ago in the second volume of *The Ambassador of the Coming Age* (page 193),

"In Ezekiel 16. the kingdom of Judah is addressed with reference to the greater magnitude of its sins as compared with those of Sodom and the ten tribes; and in allusion to God's ultimate purpose with the latter, it is stated that Samaria and her daughters (a comprehensive designation

for the ten tribes)" SHALL RETURN TO THEIR FORMER ESTATE.' In chap. 48 of Ezekiel, a re-apportionment of the territory of the holy land among the twelve tribes of Israel, is predicted. The words in which this is most specifically apparent are as follows: "This is the land which ye shall divide by lot UNTO THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL FOR INHERITANCE, and these are their portions saith the Lord God" ver.29.) There is another testimony in which the necessity for the restoration of the ten tribes is made apparent. We refer to Isaiah 8:1. "He (Christ as the manifestation of Jehovah) shall be . . . for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to BOTH THE HOUSES OF ISRAEL. This has only been fulfilled as regards one of the houses of Israel, viz., the house of Judah. The ten tribes have never been in contact with Christ, and have therefore never had an opportunity of stumbling at him from which it follows that they must be recovered from their present obscurity and ruin, and in some way brought into such a relationship with Jesus as that they will stumble at him like their brethren 1800 years ago. We can only speculate as to the form which this relationship will take. It may be that when reclaimed from captivity, and nationally organized, they will refuse to believe in the prophet like unto Moses, who having returned to superintend the restitution of all things spoken of by the prophets, will claim their allegiance; following upon which disbelief, God's judgment may go forth against them as against their fathers, with whom he was grieved in the wilderness, and whose carcasses fell because of unbelief. Thus Christ would prove a rock of offence to them as he did to Judah, though with consequences of much less severity as regards duration, and this not without justice, since Judah with far greater privileges, was guilty of refusing the law of God, killing his prophets, and finally putting to death the son of his love, in the guilt of which Israel had no part. Those consequences, however, though less severe than those which during a long night of 1800 years has crushed out the life from the kingdom of Judah, will be effectual for the chastisement of Israel, and develop the same moral results as in the case of Judah, purging out from among them the rebels, subduing them to perfect submission to the God of their fathers, and generally them for settling in the land of promise under the perfect government of their long promised Messiah."

We are in the age when the gentile power has risen and triumphed everywhere, in an age where knowledge is at an extraordinary level — both natural and scriptural. We have seen prophecy fulfilled in the restoration of Israel. We have had the Bible opened up to us as at no other time in history. With unprecedented knowledge comes unprecedented responsibility to serve God to the very best of our ability. The age of God's visible manifestation of judgment and mercy is coming. Yahweh is a God of mercy. He is love essentially; all that He does are prompted by mercy as the ultimate sentiment; but all His mercies are based on true judgment. He is jealous of his honor, all

powerful, will not reward disobedience and cannot look upon sin. His plans of mercy are strictly secondary to the recognition of His own supremacy. Jehovah demands loving obedience from those who would serve Him. He suffers long, but there is an end to his patience. And as we have seen, He then breaks forth in destroying judgments upon the heads of the ungodly. We must be prepared for that coming day.

Bro. Beryl Snyder

## Bibles in the British Museum

Our Title, implying as it does that the British Museum contains matter of interest to Bible lovers, we shall find fully justified in today's visit to the Manuscript Departments, especially in the 'Case' labeled 'G' wherein is to be seen one of the most ancient and world-renowned Greek manuscripts of the Holy Scriptures.

Entering the Museum, we turn immediately to the right into the Grenville Gallery, at the end of which we pass through the opening into the Manuscript Room.

A few paces within the Room, on the right, we come to the Case G, which has upper and lower divisions. In the upper is the priceless manuscript, known as the 'Alexandrian', or 'Codex A'. Before however we deal with that, let us, for comparison, hear something about two other and more ancient manuscripts of the Holy Scriptures, of whose pages we have in this case photographic reproductions. [NB: Definition: Codex is a manuscript volume, especially of a classic work or of the Scriptures. Codex is a variant of caudex, a wooden stump to which petty criminals were tied in ancient Rome, rather like our stocks. This was also the word for a book made of thin wooden strips coated with wax upon which one wrote. The usual modern sense of codex, 'book formed of bound leaves of paper or parchment']

First of all, look at the exhibit in the centre; it is that of a page of the 'Vatican' manuscript; it is labeled No. 104. Frequently it is referred to in Biblical and literary works as 'Codex B' and is more than 1,500 years old. It is the property of the Papacy, has been in the Vatican Library, Rome, for about 500 years, and is most scrupulously guarded night and day by two priests. Until about fifty years ago it was practically inaccessible to outsiders, however influential they might have been. Even that eminent bibliogist, Dr. Samuel Tregelles, notwithstanding his exceptional credentials, was not permitted to look at it until his pockets had been searched to make sure he had neither pen, pencil, ink, or paper about his person. Moreover, the two Papal custodians kept him continually engaged in conversation the whole time he was looking at it, evidently with the object of preventing him memorizing any portion of the manuscripts. Thanks, however, to Pope Pius IX, reproductions have been made, and facsimiles are now found in all the chief libraries or museums of the world.

The volume is about twelve inches square, and comprises about 700 leaves. Each page is divided into three columns. Certain portions are missing — namely, Genesis 1 to 46, and Psalms 90 to 137. And from Hebrews 9:14 to the end of Revelation was apparently written by a later hand.

The manuscript was very beautifully written in the first instance, judging by what can now be seen. We say now because the original lettering was all written over about the 9th century by someone who feared it would otherwise fade and disappear. The fear, however, was quite unnecessary, seeing that some of the words not so written over are quite legible, in spite of them being 1,500 years old.

The writing is all in uncial (large capital) letters, without any division between the words. At the end of some of the lines the letters are much smaller than those at the beginning, so as to complete a word. Sometimes, too, the last letter on a line has a dash (—) over it, to denote that another letter should have been on that line.

Now look at the sheet of parchment adjoining, on the right, with four columns of Greek lettering; it is a photographic reproduction — a facsimile of one of the pages of the Sinaitic Manuscript.

It is labeled No. 105 and is also known as 'Codex C'. Like the Vatican Manuscripts ('Codex B') it dates back to the 4th century, although a few years less ancient. Its discovery was due to the famous German scholar, Dr. Tischendorf, who, on one of his many expeditions in the East, seeking for old manuscripts, quite perchance — at the St Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, came across a basket filled with old parchments. It was in the year 1844. He was informed there were also two other baskets containing similar papers, which were about to be destroyed as rubbish. Upon examining them he at once saw what they really were, and realising their value he secured forty or fifty of the sheets. He feared to tarry any longer, or to enquire for more, lest his manifest anxiety or delight should arouse suspicion. Upon his return to Germany his discovery created quite a sensation among the literary savants. He carefully concealed from them the source from whence he obtained the valuable parchment sheets, as he intended to return with a view to recovering more if possible.

Meanwhile, it seems, antiquarians in England 'got to know' and sent out an agent, who, however, did not meet with much success. The monks also at Sinai had 'heard something' and their suspicions were aroused. It was, therefore, not surprising that when Dr. Tischendorf returned to Sinai, he only succeeded in finding one sheet! That, however, proved to be a page of Genesis, which convinced him that the original manuscripts comprised the whole of the Old Testament. Just prior to leaving Sinai, and when he had abandoned all hopes of a successful mission, he paid a parting visit to a friendly monk, who informed him he had a copy of the Holy Scriptures in Greek. To Dr. Tischendorf's amazement and joy, the monk produced the very

precious documents he had seen fifteen years before — and much more beside. To cut a long story short, the Doctor, with the aid of the Czar of Russia, succeeded in getting possession of the priceless and invaluable manuscripts, and it was soon safely lodged in the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg (Petrograd or Leningrad, as it has been renamed by the Revolutionaries since the Great War of 1914).

Having been fortunate enough to personally see the Vatican Manuscripts in Rome, and the Sinaitic Manuscripts in St. Petersburg, we are always interested in showing and talking about the Alexandrian Manuscripts in London, where in this, our British Museum it can be seen every day of the week without either payment or trouble. The Vatican Manuscripts too, can be seen during certain hours by visitors to Rome without much trouble under certain conditions, and without payment. Such, however, is not so with the Sinaitic Manuscript in Russia. When we were there in 1903, our courier informed us that to personally examine it was out of all question. We did not accept his verdict, and the day before leaving the Russian capital we dismissed him so as to be free to do as we liked on the last day, which, among other things, was to try and do the ‘impossible’ — that was, see the Sinaitic Manuscript. Acting on the excellent maxim, “nothing venture, nothing get,” we set out from our hotel, bound for the Imperial Library. Alas, the day was one on which the Museums were closed. But there was a tempting looking bell at the entrance, and the temptation was accepted. As neither my wife nor myself could speak or understand a word of Russian, the two Imperial uniformed officials who greeted us were to us “barbarians”, to use Paul's words (1 Cor 14:11), as we, no doubt, were to them.

It was a long story that of seeking personal contact with the Sinaitic Manuscript, but it ended in our not only seeing, but handling the famous Codex B. It was produced to us in the very identical and time-worn silk wrapping in which it was brought by Dr. Tischendorf from the Convent of St. Catherine at the foot of Mount Sinai.

The incident, with its successful issue, was another confirmation of our long ago learnt experience that “fortune favours the bold”! A few of the leaves of the manuscript are wanting, the missing ones being in the possession of the German University Library, Leipsic. The manuscript, as we can see by the specimen sheet before us (in Case G), has four columns to the page.

Now let us have a close view of the Codex A, known as The Alexandrian Manuscript. It is it labeled ‘No. 2,’ immediately below the two photographic illustrations of the Vatican, and Sinaitic Manuscript. Although the least ancient of the three veterans, it is one of the most valued of our British Museum treasures.

Formerly the property of the Patriarchal Chamber at Alexandria (Egypt), it was presented to King Charles I, in 1627, by Cyril Lucar, the Patriarch of Alexandria, hence it came to be named the Alexandrian Manuscript. It is

written in Uncial Greek letters, and has two columns on a page. Only a few leaves from the Old Testament are missing; and of the New Testament, portions of Matthew, John, and Corinthians are also wanting. The date of the manuscript is about the middle of the 5th century.

It is noteworthy that these three most ancient manuscripts of the Holy Scriptures should be in the possession of the three antagonist divisions of the Church claiming to be ‘Christian’ — the Papal, Greek, and Protestant — mutual rivals.

Before leaving this Case G, let us have a look at a few other ancient manuscripts therein, which are worthy of our consideration; for instance, there, in the left-hand lower corner of the case is The Pentateuch in Hebrew.

It is labeled ‘No.1’ by many authorities it is claimed to be the oldest manuscript in existence containing any considerable part of the Bible in Hebrew. We notice that the text is furnished with vowel points and accents; and also that it has the greater Massorah in the upper and lower margins.

Just above the foregoing there is an excellent Palimpsest manuscript. It is labeled ‘No. 3,’ and comprises the Gospel according to Luke, dating back to the 6th century. A Palimpsest manuscript is a parchment document containing writing which has been sufficiently washed out to make way for later writing. In the manuscript now before us the first writing was in Greek, while the later is in Syriac of three centuries later, and is at right-angles to the first (the Greek) writing. Probably parchment was so expensive in those days that economy demanded this re-using of the skins.

Notice, too, in the same Case G, just round the corner on the right, in the lower centre, the Syriac version of the Pentateuch known as ‘The Peshito’ is tabulated ‘No. 9.’ The word ‘Peshito’ means ‘plain’ or ‘simple.’ Neither the date nor place of the original of this version is known, but it is thought to be the work of several hands, and as early as the 2nd century. It contains the whole of the Old Testament and most of the New; the exceptions being the Second and Third Epistle of John, the Second Epistle of Peter, the Epistle of Jude, and the Book of Revelation. The copy now before us was written in the 5th century, and is one of the earliest extant of the Peshito, as it is also the earliest manuscript of the Bible in any language of which the exact date is known, being A.D. 464.

Now let us turn our attention to the contents of Case I, in the other corner of the room, where there are several Bibles known as The Latin Vulgates are labeled ‘No. 13’ and onwards. These took the place of the old Latin Version, which was the Bible of the West, following on Apostolic days, and were the outcome of many corrupt versions which existed in the 4th century. The version generally termed the ‘Latin Vulgate’ was the work of a Biblical scholar of the late 4th century and early 5th, of the name of Eusebius Hieronymus, more generally known as St. Jerome. In the course of his labours

he met with much violent opposition from bigoted and envious co-religionists, so much so that it is not to be wondered at that he was occasionally tempted to meet abuse with abuse, and to designate them 'two-legged donkeys.' Their successors, however, were ultimately compelled to accept the version of Jerome as the Authorised Version of the Eastern Church.

In the same case is a fine specimen of The Wycliffe Bible. Look at that labeled 'No. 26.' This book was the first complete Bible produced in the English language. John Wycliffe translated it from the Latin Vulgate in the years 1380–1384. Like all his predecessors who fought for an open Bible, he met with considerable and terrible opposition from his religious contemporaries — the clergy — the Scribes and the Pharisees of those days; so much so that, in order to peacefully and successfully carry out his work he had to leave England and flee to the Continent.

Among the many charges brought against Wycliffe by his traducers was that: "Worst of all he filled up the cup of his iniquity by translating the Scriptures into the English tongue, making it common and more open to laymen and to women than it was wont to be to clerks well learned and of good understanding, so that this pearl of the Gospel is trodden under foot of swine."

Even an archbishop joined in the abuse by declaring, "That pestilent wretch, John Wycliffe, the son of the old serpent, the forerunner of anti-Christ; who had completed his iniquity by inventing a new translation of the Scriptures."

But, notwithstanding Wycliffe's 'invention' of the English Bible, very few people were able to obtain a copy, or even to inspect such. Every copy had to be entirely produced by hand; hence it was the cost that was so enormous that its possession was absolutely impossible except to the fabulously rich. It was not until printing was invented that the Bible came within reach of the people.

Bro. Frank G. Jannaway

## Signs Of The Times — Arabs Past and Present

The Bible prophecies concerning the Arabs, past and present; have come true, and will continue to do so.

But first let's define what is an Arab. When, in a Scriptural sense, we refer to the Arabs, we are referring to a special race of people who are descended from the same ancestry as the Jews, and who inhabited and shared the same general land, that is, the Middle East. The Bible has different terms for this general race of people. They are called the Arabs, a word which means, to lurk, or lie in wait; to ambush. And this gives us the Jew's opinion of their neighbors.

The region which they inhabited was called Arabia from similar roots, but carrying more the impression of a desert, or dryness. Who were these peoples, and where did they come from? Well, as we said, the Arabs share a common ancestry with the Jews. The first ancestor of the Arabs was Lot, Abraham's nephew. Lot fathered two men who went on to become mighty:

"Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father. And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day. And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Benammi: the same is the father of the children of Ammon unto this day." (Gen. 19:36-38)

Now, Ammon and Moab settled the region which today we would call Jordan and became the Jew's neighbors on the east.

The next early ancestor of the Arabs was Ishmael, the son of Abraham by Hagar, Sarah's handmaid. The character of Ishmael, as prophesied in the Scriptures, has pretty well characterized the Arab race throughout their history, but more on this later. Of Ishmael God said:

"And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me? Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered. And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael." (Gen 16:11-15)

The Ishmaelites settled into the southern regions of Jordan and northern Saudi Arabia. They lived there together with the descendants of another Jewish father of Arabia, Esau, who was Isaac's son and Jacob's brother. His descendants became known as Edomites. This was due to the fact that he sold his birthright for a mess of red pottage, Edom meaning red.

"And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom." (Gen. 25:30)

Now besides these tribes, also inhabiting Arabia was Ophir, Sheba, Havilah, and Dedan. These three tribes are also close kin to the nation of Israel. Ophir, Sheba and Havilah were the children of Joktan along with nine others of lesser significance but all of which inhabited the Arabian peninsula. Now Joktan was a descendant of Shem, just like the Jews were. Joktan was technically Abraham's great-great-great uncle.

And finally, concerning those tribes of the desert, there was another line of people descended from Abraham through a later wife after Sarah, named Keturah. These tribes include Dedan and Midian, and possibly Sheba,

depending on which Sheba, the descendant of Joktan, or Sheba, a descendant of Keturah.

“Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim. And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoah, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah.” (Gen. 25:1-4)

So we see that all these peoples are in close relationship to the Jewish people. And it is for that reason we find that they have a special place in Bible prophecy.

So, from the point of view when the Bible was written, the Arab nations would consist of the modern nations of Jordan, along with all the nations of the Arabian peninsula which are Saudi Arabia, Yemen, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait.

But as we continue to define what peoples we are talking about when they say, “the Arabs” in a modern sense, we must take into consideration the most significant event in Arabian history, which of course was the rise of Mohammed the Great in 609 AD. Mohammed was a wonderful general from Medina, Saudi Arabia, who fancied himself a prophet, and caused to be written the Quran, or Book of Islam. He then embarked on a military adventure that ended with the Arabian World in control of all the Middle East, north Africa, much of Turkey, and parts of southern Europe by 900 AD.

The significance of this cannot be ignored, because the Arab race turned nations which were not Arab originally, into Arab states. Such nations would be Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq to the north, and Egypt, and Libya to the south west.

So for our purposes, we will be discussing these Arab states. We will keep them, for alliance purposes in three groups: the Northern Group, which is Syria, Iraq and Libya; the Southern Group, which is Lebanon, Jordan, Yemen, and Egypt; and the Arabian group, which is Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait.

As an aside, let me here interject something about the religion of Islam which confuses many people. All the Arabs are Islamic states, but not all Islamic States are Arabs. Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, and many of the African states like Ethiopia for instance, are of the same religion as the Arabs, they are Islamic. But they are not Arabs. Racially and scripturally, they are different peoples. So they will be generally outside the scope of our discussion. We are not ignoring them, for they are scripturally significant in their own right, but they are not Arab.

Now, what is the Scriptural position of the Arabs in Bible prophecy? It can be fairly summed up in two simple principles. The Jews, as a race, are God's chosen people. The Arabs as a race are second behind the Jews. That is the first point. The second is this: when Israel was obedient to God, and followed the commands that He had placed before him, Israel dominated her Arab neighbors. But, when Israel rebelled against God, her neighbors, the Arabs, rose up against Israel and, with God's help and direction, brought punishments upon Israel because of her iniquity.

It is upon these two principles that we can understand the position of the Arab in Bible prophecy. Now when we say that Israel is God's first love, and the Arabs are his second, we must be clear that there was a very great difference between first and second. “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated” (Rom 9:13) is the way the Apostle Paul put God's relationship between Israel and her Arab neighbors. But the word translated hated there carries the implication of simply ‘loving less’. The Jew's brothers, the Arabs are not a forgotten people in the eyes of God, though the Arabs do not know God. The time is yet ahead when the prophecy of Isaiah shall come to be:

“In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.” (Isa. 19:24-25)

And as we said, the Arabs were also used in the Scriptures as a tool in the hand of God to give Israel a barometer of their obedience. When they were obedient, such as under the rule of David, the Arabs paid tribute to Israel. But, when they rebelled against God, God set the Arabs up over Israel. Thus, we see Jesus being born into rebellious Israel who was under control of Herod the Idumean. Now ‘Idumean’ is simply the Greek name for Edomite. Esau ruled Jacob, when Herod governed Israel. And this of course, was a very wicked time for Israel, the time in which the Jews crucified their King, Jesus the Christ.

But along with being a punishing sword for Israel in her rebellion, God has also used the Arabs to punish the true and most significant enemy of Israel, the Catholic Church. This was the work of Mohammed. And we are still seeing the ramifications of that work today, in what used to be Yugoslavia. There are three sworn enemies there, the Greek Orthodox Serbs, the Roman Catholic Croats, and the Moslem Bosnians. They have been bitter enemies since the Moslems first made inroads into southern Europe, persecuting all who worshipped the Trinity.

This was the Bible's prophecy of what was to happen.

“And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great

furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.” (Rev. 9:1-11)

Now, we haven't the time this afternoon to give a full explanation of the meaning of this prophecy. But let us simply say that the star falling from heaven refers to the stunning and brilliant rise of Mohammed onto the world's scene. He was a brilliant light into the world's heavens, or political arena. And he arose from the bottomless pit, more properly translated, 'an abyss' or a deep spot, and this is the region of the Arabs. It is so called because the area of the Dead Sea is the lowest spot on the face of the inhabited earth, being over 1300 feet below sea level.

Now the armies which stream forth from the Abyss are called a smoking furnace of locusts. Why were the armies of Mahomet symbolized by the locust? First, Arabia is the native country of the locust; so armies issuing from Arabia would be fitly styled 'Locusts'. Secondly, the Hebrew word for 'locust' when spelled out is the same word for Arab. The vowel points, when added change the word slightly, but 'locust' in Hebrew is 'Arbeh', and in Arabic, is 'Arbi'. Thirdly, parts of Arabian literature introduce the locust as the heraldic symbol of the Saracens, and fourthly, the Moslems believe that in the course of his revelations, locusts dropped into the hands of Mohammed, bearing an inscription on their wings which described Mohammed's armies as "the Army of the Great God".

Now, the destruction that was to fall on the world by this shooting star and his armies was not to be indiscriminate; but highly specific. "It was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads" verse 4).

The command of God to the Mahometan locust, to confine their depredations within certain and specific rules was well marked in the form it actually took. An address given to the Saracen troops after Mohammed's death, by Abu Beker, Mahomet's successor, gave his purpose to prosecute the war against the Roman Catholics whom he styled "the infidels". He said:

“Let not your victory be stained with the blood of women or children. Destroy no palm trees nor burn any fields of corn; cut down no fruit trees, nor do any mischief to cattle... You will find another sort of people that belong to the synagogue of Satan, who have shaven crowns: be sure you cleave their skulls and give them no quarter till they either turn Mohammedan's, or pay tribute.”

And the locust cloud carried a weapon which stung as a scorpion. This is another feature unique to the Arab invasions. The Arabs carried what probably was the first effective artillery division in the world's history. They were great missiles previously unknown to the world's warfare. But because of their size, and crude methods for transporting them, they were always the last part of the military expedition. Hence, like a Scorpion, the sting of these clouds of locust was in their tail. The Moslems themselves referred to these weapons as 'Scorpions'. An Arab writer in 1249 writes thus:

“The Scorpions surrounded and lighted by nitrated powder, glide along like serpents with a humming noise, and when exploded, they blaze brightly and burn. Now to behold the matter expelled was as a cloud extended through the air, which gave forth a dreadful crash like thunder, vomiting fire on every side, and breaking down, burning, and reducing all things to ashes.”

Also identifying the Arab with this prophecy was the Saracen troop himself. History tells us that he wore a yellow turban, a beard, and had uncut hair. The prophecy said he wore a crown of gold, had the face of a man, and the hair of the woman.

Now God was using the Arab to persecute the Roman Catholics. How did it come to pass that the Arabs developed such a hatred for the Catholics? It comes directly from the Koran. In the section called "The Table" we find this written in the Koran:

v. 76 "They are unbelievers who say, 'God is the Messiah, Mary's son.' For the Messiah said, 'Children of Israel, serve God, my Lord and your Lord. Verily whoso associates God with anything, God shall prohibit him entrance to Paradise, and his refuge shall be the Fire; and wrongdoers shall have no helpers.'

v. 77. They are unbelievers who say, 'God is the Third of Three.' There is no God but One God.

v. 78. If they refrain not from what they say, there shall afflict those of them that disbelieve a painful chastisement. Will they not turn to

God and pray His forgiveness? God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate.

v. 79. The Messiah, son of Mary, was only a Messenger; Messengers before him passed away; his mother was a just woman; they both ate food. Behold, how We make clear the signs to them; then behold, how perverted they are!

In this portion of the Koran, Mohammed is clearly teaching against the Trinity. He really disliked the belief that Jesus was a God. He disliked it so much, that he deals with this subject over and over again. At another point in the Koran, God and Jesus are said to have this discussion:

The Table, v. 115. "And when God said, O Jesus son of Mary, didn't thou say unto men, Take me and my mother as gods, apart from God? He (Jesus) said, To Thee be glory! It is not mine to say what I have no right to. If I indeed said it, Thou knowest it, knowing what is within my soul, and I know not what is within Thy soul; Thou knowest the things unseen. I only said to them what Thou didst command me; Serve God, my Lord and your Lord."

And every time Jesus is referred to in the Koran, and he is referred to one way or another 93 different times; it is always in some way, directly or indirectly, set apart from Trinity. Even in the story of Jesus' virgin birth, which is taught in the Koran, Mohammed concludes:

The House of Imran, v. 56: "Say: People of the Book! Come now to a work common between us and you, that we serve none but God, and that we associate nothing with him, and do not take some others as Lords, apart from God. And if they turn their backs, say: Bear witness that we are Muslims."

When the Muslims say "we associate nothing with God", they mean that they do not associate Jesus as an associate with God, or a 'Co-God'.

So this anti-Trinitarian flavor found all through the Koran led to a hatred and a common battle cry to the destruction of the Roman Catholics who deified Jesus and his mother Mary.

So clearly, God used the Arab to do his bidding in punishing the enemy of God's people. And so He will again. Now let's stop at this point and focus our attention, not on what God has done in the past with the Arab, but what future lies before them.

The Christadelphians believe Jesus will return to the earth and again set up the Kingdom of Israel, on the mountains of Israel. The Arabs will be both a help and a hindrance in the work of Jesus. Remember the three groups we earlier divided the Arabs up into: the northern group, of Syria, and Iraq; the southern group of Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan; and the Arabian group of

those states in the Arabian Peninsula? These groups are the Bible's division as to the events of the latter day.

At the latter day, two great powers will be pitched against each other in a great battle for control of the wealth of the Middle East, that wealth, of course, being oil. The two powers are Russia, leading a northern confederacy which includes all of continental Europe, and the northern Islamic states like Turkey and Iran, along with the Arab states of Iraq and Syria: And the southern power is the United States with the support of Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, Afghanistan, and the southern Arabian states of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and the western portion of Saudi Arabia.

While these two mighty nations vie for the economic control of the world, a third power arises in their midst. Jesus, the son of God returns to the earth in the desert of Sinai, for the purpose of the Judgment of the quick and the dead to determine who is worthy to proceed with him to establish His Father's glory throughout all the earth. As Jesus himself prophesied, his Kingdom will start out very small, like the seed of a mustard tree, and then grow into a huge tree. The Arabs of the desert, those of the Arabian Peninsula, become Jesus' tool for the growth of the mustard seed.

The prophet Habakkuk wrote:

"God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting. I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction: and the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble." (Hab. 3:3-7)

Now this song is called "The song of Moses" and the way it is translated led people to believe that this is the song that Moses sang when he entered into the Holy Land, and certainly there are similarities. But it is not the song of Moses, for it is a prophecy. Instead of saying 'God came in from Teman', it should be translated, 'Ail shall come in from Teman and the Holy One from Mt Paran'. You see, it's a future event, not a past history. The confusion comes from the fact that when Jesus leads his army into the Holy Land, he will do so following the same path as Moses did when he came up out of Egypt.

Now, the prophet says that he saw the tents of Cushan in affliction: and the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble. The Midianites, as we have already shown were the inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula. Cushan is ancient area of the Garden of Eden. It is the northern tip of the Persian Gulf. So when the prophet sees the Holy One coming in from Teman, literally from the South, he already sees the Arabian Peninsula in subjection to the Holy One.

This agrees with and explains many of the testimonies relevant to the latter days. While the great powers of our world, Russia and the United States with their respective allies play out their role, Christ and the Saints occupy their time in the Arabian Peninsula.

“Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise. But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel.” (Isa. 43:18-22)

Now in order for Jesus to make a way in the wilderness and create rivers in the desert and for the beasts of the desert, which is a symbolical reference to the Arabs inhabiting the region, to honor the chosen one, that is Christ; they must come under his control. And again of this time Isaiah prophesied:

“The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing.” (Isa. 35:1)

And again:

“I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together: That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the LORD hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.” (Isa. 41:18-20)

And finally for now:

“Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory unto the LORD, and declare his praise in the islands. The LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies.” (Isa. 42:11-13)

Now it must be evident that before the dwellers of the desert, the rocks and the wilderness give glory to God, they must themselves be first subject to the conquering force of Jesus and the Saints. So prior to involving himself as a mighty man in the battles taking place between the Northern and Southern Powers, Jesus conquers the Arabian Peninsula for himself, rallying the Arabs to obey him, and become a part of his army who will conquer the world.

And to this end, there is a remarkable feature in the religion of Islam. Islam teaches that Jesus was taken by God to heaven and that at the “last hour” as they call it, Jesus will return to the earth to fight the antichrist and conquer Jerusalem. Observe this from a writing called “The Criticism of Hadith”.

“The whole body of Muslims throughout the centuries have held that at the end of the age a man of the family of the prophet must appear who will strengthen religion and make justice manifest. The Muslims will follow him, and he will gain possession of the Muslim kingdoms, and be called Al Madhi. Al-Dajjal (the Antichrist) will come and afterwards the signs of the (last) hour indicated in the Sahih. Then Jesus will descend from heaven and kill Al Dajjal; or, as some say, will descend with him (Al Madhi) and help him to kill Al Dajjal, and will have the Mahdi as Imam in prayer”.

And again, from the same book:

“The ahlu-l-kalam assert that the two following hadith are contradictory and mutually exclusive, namely:

(a) There will be no prophet after me, and no religion after my religion. The lawful and the unlawful will be what God has permitted and forbidden according to my words until the last day.

(b) The Messiah will descend and slay swine, break the cross, and add to the lawful. And from Aisha: Say of the Apostle of God, ‘The seal of the prophets’: do not say, ‘There will be no prophet after him.’”

Now we maintain that there is no contradiction whatever in these statements; for the Messiah was an earlier prophet whom God took up (to Himself) and will send him down again at the end of the age as a sign of the hour. As God has said: “Verily he shall be a sign of the hour...”

Now then, we see from the Koran that the Muslims are looking for Jesus to return to the earth at the last hour and battle Al Dajjal or the Antichrist. Jesus, with Al Madhi, is believed to descend and gain possession of all Muslim kingdoms and all this according to the superstition of the Koran.

Will it then seem unusual to the Arabians in the desert when Jesus of Nazareth enters the Arabian Peninsula and begins to conquer the Muslim kingdoms of Oman, the Emirates, Bahrain, and Kuwait with the eastern half of Saudi Arabia? Not at all. To many living there, it will appear to be what has been prophesied in the Koran all along. And in this matter, isn't it interesting that the Catholic superstition says that at the time of the end, a Jew will return to the Holy Land, surrounded by Jews, who will conquer the region and set himself up as God. They believe this is ‘antichrist’, and they tell their followers to oppose him with all their might; which is exactly what the Bible says the Catholic nations will do to Jesus Christ. On the other hand, the Muslim superstition says the same thing about Jesus Christ, and tells its

adherents to follow him; which is also what the Bible says the Arabs will do for Jesus Christ. It is truly marvelous how God goes about causing His plan to come to pass.

But back to the Arabs: if the Arabs of the Peninsula are willing to follow Jesus and the Saints after he has conquered the region; why won't Arabs from all regions follow Jesus? The answer is quite simple. Just as there are many forms of the Christian religion, like Catholic, Methodist, Baptist etc, there are many similar branches of the Moslem religion, like the Ba'athis, Sunni, and Shi'ite. These groups have different understandings of the Koran, which shapes their views of its teachings and its prophecy.

There is more than enough discussion about what it is that Jesus will do, to cause the religious leaders in the northern group, and southern group to oppose the position of their Arab brethren in the peninsula. For instance, we read this in one Muslim criticism concerning the return of Jesus:

“And when the Messiah descends he will not abrogate anything that Muhammad the apostle of God commanded, nor will the Imam from his religion be first, but he will set Muhammad first and pray behind him.”

Well, when Jesus returns that simply will not happen. Though Muhammad claimed that the Jewish Old Testament along with the Gospel as delivered by the Apostles were the inspired work of God; and even though Muhammad appears to have had a better understanding of those works than his Christian counterparts; there is still so much objectionable in his faith and writings that they can be called nothing more than superstition. For instance, the Koran denies the sinlessness of Jesus, which is the cornerstone of all Christian belief.

Now the Arabs who align themselves with the north or the south will find enough reasons in the Koran to oppose the new power in Arabia, Christ and the Saints.

The Arabs in the Southern group will have a much less fortunate future.

“For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.” (Isa. 43:3)

During the course of the war we typically call Armageddon; the Russians will gain the upper hand over the US and her allies. Russia will be victorious over the southern countries, including the Apple of God's eye, Jerusalem.

“Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.” (Zech. 14:1-2)

And though the destruction of Jerusalem is terrible, still God gives Egypt to Russia as a ransom for Israel. In other words, Jerusalem though taken

captive and subject to devastation, that devastation is not as bad as it would have been, had God not caused Russia's attention to be focused upon Egypt.

“And the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts. And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up. And they shall turn the rivers far away; and the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither. The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, and be no more. The fishers also shall mourn, and all they that cast angle into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish. Moreover they that work in fine flax, and they that weave networks, shall be confounded. And they shall be broken in the purposes thereof, all that make sluices and ponds for fish. Surely the princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish: how say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?” (Isa. 19:4-12)

Where are they? Where are thy wise men? And let them tell thee now, and such is the hope for Egypt. And the northern group, they too will fall, though not at the hands of the Russians or Americans, but at the hands of Christ when he defeats Russia on the mountains of Israel, as is prophesied in the 38th chapter of Ezekiel.

“And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes. Thus saith the Lord GOD; Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them? And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, that my fury shall come up in my face. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; So that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: every man's sword shall be against his brother. And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.” (Ezek. 38:16) [Koran quotes from an internet translation. Translations vary due to which manuscript they were translated from into English. Verse numbers also vary by a few verses.]

## Hymn 79

**Lord we wait the time of blessing,  
Resting on Thy promise now.**

The promise given to Abraham is the basis of the one given as our Lord ascended in Acts 4:11 by the angels to those assembled.

**Hear our prayer, the throne addressing,  
Lord, How long? Why tarriest thou?**

This has been the cry of the believers for generations. For the ones who lack faith it has been their downfall. We are told to be patient as in James 1:3, “the trying of your faith worketh patience.”

**Come upon the wings of spirit,  
Come, redeem Thy mourning bride,  
Give the kingdom to inherit,  
Give her glory at thy side.**

Four lines which contain a whole world of instruction. The Savior will come with the power of the spirit, of which we can only glimpse in part with our mortal minds. Why is the bride mourning? Her Prince is away and she is sad as there is much need for a healer and a leader in this wicked world which she cannot change by might, only by proclaiming the gospel and holding to its teaching. Only at His coming will she realize the joy and the reward of the promise.

**Many days of toil and sadness,  
Many wrestling's for the prize,  
Have prepared her for the gladness,  
Of that day of sweet surprise.**

Many that sleep in the dust and of those who struggle on have tasted even unto death to wrestle with the enemy, not only our own desires but also the opposition of those who pervert the word with zeal, even with sword and imprisonment. In these latter times we can be drawn away by lack of interest and time away for earning a living (at whatever level that means to us).

**Long hath sin and death enslav'd us,  
Long in dust hath faith remained;  
Come, O Lord, with might uplift us,  
Give thy saints the victory gained.**

To us it is long but to the Lord a thousand years is but a day. His plan is continuing all the time. It will be a sweet reward to have power to right the wrongs now perpetrated.

**Lord, our hope and consolation,  
Bring Thine Israel quick release;  
O, Refresh us with salvation,  
Be our strength, our joy, our peace.**

Compare the times of refreshing to the world in its present state. Man is clever but he is not wise in many ways. It is only with the guidance of the Divine Hand can this change take place for the world be it physical or spiritual. Even so come Lord Jesus.

## The Death of Brother Roberts

He sailed across the briny deep  
From far Australia's shore; –  
He hoped to see his native land –  
Fair England yet once more;  
And as the stern Almada stopped  
In San Francisco Bay,  
The floating clouds like rugged cliffs  
Sent back a sparkling ray.

And as each passenger stepped forth  
And each his way he trends,  
He grasped the hands to him upheld, –  
The loving hands of friends!  
Each gave his hand a friendly grasp,  
Alike old age and youth;  
For each one knew this man to be  
A champion of the Truth!

“You must remain,” to him they say.  
As they the story tell,  
“From fall of man to future bliss –  
Of him thou lovest well!”  
So one day passed; another came, –  
He took the servant's part,  
And tributes grand to God on high  
Proceeded from his heart.

He told of Israel's glorious Hope –  
The Gospel pure and blest,  
Then sought his room; for tired he felt  
And longed for sleep and rest!  
The night had come, the starlit sky,  
Alike o'er sea and land,  
Perhaps called forth the thought: “How like  
When shepherds wondering stand!”  
When they in wonder stood and heard,  
A message grand, sublime:  
“Glory to God on earth, good will  
To men” – for endless time.  
This was his hope, The Gospel Hope,

The saints redeemed and blest,  
 With Christ as King on David's throne,  
 The earth in beauty dressed!  
 For this perhaps he breathed a prayer,  
 Upturning gentle eyes  
 To God; while all the twinkling stars  
 Looked downward from the skies!  
 For truly their life's evening hour  
 Soft fading did descend  
 That told although he knew it not  
 His life was at an end!  
 Ah! Could it be so far from home?  
 From wife and household kin?  
 Ay, yes! The mist from the "mystic sea,"  
 Came gently stealing in!  
 He was alone – no loved ones near  
 To grasp his pale white hand!  
 So think at once the shadows fall: –  
 Gone to the Silent Land.  
 There to remain till Christ shall come  
 To wake the sleeping dead  
 Then with the saints of God come forth,  
 To life eternal led!  
 Then let us cease to weep and mourn  
 For him in deep repose; –  
 The good he wrought, like a gentle stream  
 Far in the future flows!

Bro. L. J. Passmore, 1898

## Bread And Wine

Let us view sacrifice in its true and attractive light — a continually — repeated process of giving up one thing for the sake of a better one—a gradual advancement toward the most glorious of all blessings and most intense of all pleasures, a full living sacrifice to the perfect will of God.

When a man, according to the law, took the best of his possessions and laid it on God's altar, what did it signify? It was an intelligent, worshipful recognition that what God had yet to give was vastly greater and more glorious than that He had already given, that everything a man had, including his own life, he would gladly and eagerly lay upon the altar of his faith in God's plans for his future eternal blessing.

Sacrifice is the joyful recognition that the future is full of promise and that the best is yet to come. Sacrifice frees a man from the petty limitation of the poor little present, and relates him to the boundless scope of eternity.

All this shines through the letter of the Law as we read the many divine ordinances which Moses penned so long ago. All this is still but a small

fraction of what the Mosaic sacrifices signify to the discerning heart. Sacrifice, with all its little details deep with meaning, taught in picture-story the whole glorious message of the prophets and apostles — the whole history of the divine purpose.

And overshadowing the whole picture is the one great sacrifice for sin, the crowning sacrifice, not a separate feature, but a gathering together of all others in one perfect representation of everything that was embodied in all the rest.

To what extent could the faithful Israelite discern significance in the flour and wine and oil, which in certain prescribed amounts were associated with the sacrifice? We cannot tell; but for us they set in motion many trains of thought. Nor is each item restricted to a single meaning. An interplay of many meanings gives depth to the picture. These common objects which the Spirit uses to construct its symbol-pictures gradually increase in interest as we study their varied significances.

We can neither strive after, nor be satisfied with, a flat, mathematical interpretation — this means this, and that means that. The spirit is always fuller than the letter by which it is expressed. A certain amount of inexpressible feeling must be communicated by, though not actually contained in, the letter. A mathematical interpretation is final and complete, so it ceases to hold the interest.

"Then shall he that offereth his offering unto the Lord bring a meat offering of a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of oil. And the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink offering shalt thou prepare with the burnt offering or sacrifice, for one lamb." (Num 15:4-5). Bread is the symbol of strength, both natural and spiritual. Bread is also the symbol of the body of Christ — many individual grains of seed in the act of baptism — springing up to newness of life — gathered in the Lord's harvest — threshed to remove the chaff — ground in the mill to a smooth, fine consistency in which each seed merges with countless others to form one body.

Bread again is that one individual body, which is offered for us — the bread which came down from heaven — the Purpose manifested in flesh. Flour is a certain step in the process of making bread. So we discover that the sacrificial ordinances include a chronological presentation of the Truth — an unfolding of the purpose: the seed; the sheaf; the flour; the baken bread.

Bread again is the fruit of labor; in the joint partaking of it, it is fellowship and covenant relation; it is protection and security; it is the final basic necessities of life; it is the ministration of charity.

Then, the oil with which the flour must be mingled. Even the idea that something must be mingled with the flour is a lesson in itself. It shows that exactly the same thing might be acceptable or not acceptable — according to that which accompanies it. Oil is a symbol of spirit. Things must be done in the right spirit. Just the bare doing is not enough. The purpose and motive must be right.

In the act of anointing we see the spirit-oil poured out upon a believer, sanctifying and consecrating him — setting him apart — devoting him to a purpose. In the lamp the spirit-oil is guidance and enlightenment and comfort and encouragement.

Mingled with the flour, the spirit-oil transforms a loose, powdery mixture, which a slight wind would scatter, into one homogenous mass that can be

shaped to a desired form. When passed through the fire it will hold that shape and its natural heavy doughiness will be transformed into palatableness and flavor. Oil again is gladness and joy.

Wine, in the figures of Isaiah, is the gospel message, offered freely without price. Christ uses it in the same way, and he also employs the contrast between new and old wine to illustrate the relation of his teaching to the Law. It was a new vintage of the same thing. The time had come for the new. Wine can also be a mocker and deceiver, false as well as true. As such, it is the cup of false doctrine in the hand of the Apostasy.

Again, wine is the blood shed for sin, the life obediently poured out unto death — the life is in the blood. And wine is well-being, prosperity, a celebration of good. Wine is grapes trodden in wrath; bitter judgment poured out that the condemned must drink.

Bread and wine are body and soul; they are the necessities and pleasures of life; they are the physical and mental aspects of life. Wine and oil are a soothing and healing ointment. David says (Psa. 104:15), that God gives:

“Wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart.”

— the gladdening gospel wine, the enlightening spirit oil and the strengthening bread of life.

And behind the wine is the multitudinous imagery that surrounds the vine and its branches:

“I am the true vine and ye are the branches . . . without me ye can do nothing” (John 15:5).

Without him, what are we? What incentive would there be to carry on day after day in meaningless plodding toward oblivion? One long struggle with its inevitable bitter twilight and final extinction. But the bread and the wine are here before us. Here is a point of contact with the eternal. The bread and the wine, each with the wide meaning and association which it has acquired through the long period of the Spirit's teaching and revelation.

There is a strange sense of familiarity when the mysterious figure of Melchizedek brings forth bread and wine in the presence of Abraham. In this gift of long ago by the King of Righteousness to the Father of the Faithful, all the history of God's loving purpose is condensed. The Jew today, as his fathers have done for ages, still brings forth his bread and wine at the solemn Passover feast. But the veil is still over their face.

“Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.”

“Take, eat, this is my body.”

“This is the new covenant in my blood.”

Each thread we pick up in Scripture leads us to this point. Each thread is intended to lead us to this point and fails in its purpose if we do not follow it through. Let us not read these things with a veil of blindness or habit or preoccupation upon our minds, so that we, like the Israelites, “cannot look to the end of what is signified.” Let us not permit the Law to fail in its purpose through the weakness of the flesh. The Law must lead us to Christ. He is the priest, the altar, the sacrifice, the bread, the wine, the oil. All things point to the redeeming love of him whom we have assembled to remember.

Bro. G.V. Growcott

## What Does That Mean?

“And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” (Matt 24:3)

Why did the Apostles ask for a sign of his coming? Jesus was already there with them and they had no idea he would die and ascend to heaven.

It is true that they did not expect Jesus to go away; for they firmly believed that the kingdom was to “immediately appear”. They refused to accept the idea of his death and a delay in the establishment of the kingdom, and rebuked him when he attempted to explain this aspect of God's plan to them. Therefore, when they asked for a “sign of his coming” they were not asking for the time when he would return from heaven.

This third verse of Matt. 24 is a response to the two preceding verses. In verse one the disciples showed Jesus the temple and he responded in verse two by explaining that, not one stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down. This brings up the three questions that are asked in the above quoted verse; “Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?”

The disciples expected Jesus to throw off the Roman control and take over to establish himself as king. They, therefore, considered these three questions as one event and wanted to know when they could expect to see the destruction of Jerusalem, Christ coming as king, and the end of the world (Greek ‘aion’: age) the current constitution of things. They had faith that these events would all occur in a short time frame in their very near future.

Bro. Thomas explains this in, *The Last Days of Judah's Commonwealth* where he says on page 34: “The aion referred to was that current order, or course of things — anything constituted or arranged by what the moderns call ‘a constitution’ — as a kingdom, empire, state, or what is called ‘world’. Each of these — has its course or aion; so that when the end of the course is arrived at, the destruction of the particular state necessity ensues.”

The Disciples could accept the fact that the current aion had to be overthrown to establish Christ's kingdom. They were ready to die is the process of helping him establish it. If the temple had to be destroyed in the process then that was OK with them; they were anxious to know “When do we get started?”

Is the day of his “coming” as real and as earnestly desired with us as it was with the disciples? We can clearly see the events that they failed to understand. However, has the lapse of time caused us to feel that our Lord has delayed his coming, and so we become tied up with the everyday concerns? If so, that day will overtake us as a thief. Let us be among those that are not sleeping, but with those who are ready and watching for his coming.