

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

Hengoad, Wales, Breaking of Bread – 10.45am; Sunday School – 12.45pm; Lecture – 2.30pm; Bible Class and Elpis Israel Class - held in the homes of the bre. and sis. Youth Evening – held every 2 weeks on Friday at the Aberdare Country Park at 6.30pm

Beloved Bre. and Sis. in the bonds of the Abrahamic Covenant,

The weeks and months have once again rolled by since the last time ecclesial news was submitted from this part of the world, reminding us that the days are moving swiftly towards the Return of our Lord and Master.

During the last twelve months we have been really grateful to receive visits from a number of brethren and sisters, thus strengthening our hands in the work of the Truth. We were pleased to receive the company of Bro. Ted and Sis. Marguerite Mingham on their way to the Hye Gathering in July 2004. The sharing of thoughts and words of comfort during the Daily Readings was as a refreshing stream in a parched land. A sweetness that cannot be comprehended by the ignorant masses who grovel in the world's cess pits. Bro. Ted also provided us with encouraging words of exhortation to help in the development of our characters and prepare our minds for the partaking of the emblems. We appreciated the particularly long journey Bro. Ted and Sis. Marguerite made to be with like precious faith.

In September 2004, Sis. Annetta Jones, of the Richard ecclesia, spent some time with the ecclesia on her return from visiting Sis. Lori Gustavsson in Sweden. It was nice to hear that Sis. Lori and family were doing well, and again the Daily Readings became the focal point of the evening, as the spiritual batteries received the daily charge, so imperative to keep us in the way of life, and cleanse the impurities of the day's battle with the world of the ungodly.

Our usual autumn Study Weekend took place in November 2004 and we listened to addresses on the Epistle of James. We were edified, uplifted and reproved by the various exhortations we received assisting us in the great warfare of faith. Bro. Seth Brown of Lampasas, Texas and Bro. Aleksey Matvejev of Estonia helped us in delivering this exposition and we were grateful for their efforts in travelling long distances to be with us. We also enjoyed the company and fellowship of Sis. Lori who was able to be with us during the weekend.

In December 2004, we had the company of Bro. Ed Truelove, Bro. Darren Truelove, and Sis. Jeanne Humphreys, all of the Richard ecclesia, on their return journey from Kenya. It was unfortunately only a short stay, but the time spent together was uplifting. The activities during the Kenyan visit were outlined with fervour and excitement. Again, the Daily Readings

were engaged in with the exchange of thoughts and comments to build the spiritual mind. A trip was taken around the area where the Gathering was held in March 2004 and to the Mumbles, where Bro. Thomas and Bro. Roberts once stayed.

Our Spring Study Weekend (2005) came round really quickly, and we spent the time around the subjects of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. We were strengthened in the bonds of the Covenant by considering the messages of each book and we were again pleased to have the company of Bro. Aleksey and Sis. Lori. Bro. Aleksey exhorted us from the prophecy of Haggai.

We look forward to hosting the Wales Gathering in 2006 if the Master has not returned by then. Further details of the Gathering will be provided shortly. If anyone is able to visit in time for the Autumn Study Weekend (or indeed at any other time) we would certainly be pleased to receive them.

Before concluding, it is worth mentioning that Sis. Jennifer de Beer has been in contact with the Hengoed ecclesia. Some from other ecclesias have been in contact with Sis. Jennifer too. Sadly, we have been unable to move forward with regards to Sis. Jennifer coming into fellowship with us.

We send our love to the brotherhood in the hope of the speedy return of the Master.

With love in Elpis Israel and on behalf of the Bre. and Sis. of Hengoed,
Bro. Phillip Hughes

Boston, Massachusetts—SS 9AM; Memorial 10:15AM; Mid-week Study classes Thursday (South) and Friday (West); Recording Bro. James Sommerville, 34 Birch Hill Rd., Northboro, MA 01532

Dear Brothers and Sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ,

On April 29, 2005 we had the joy of witnessing the marriage of Brother Jon Garvey and Sister Jean Dudley in Hyannis, MA, on Cape Cod. We wish them well in their life together and pray that they may encourage one another as they walk along that straight and narrow path set before us.

We have had Sisters Norma Rankin, Jessie Prentice and Amanda Patterson visit us for breaking of bread during the month of May. It is always a pleasure to welcome visitors around the table of the Lord. We are saddened by the fact that Sister Jessie has since fallen and broken her hip, but are pleased that she is recovering well and is now home from the hospital. Brother Michael, Sister Leslie and Brother Jonathan Morrell

were up for a visit, but unfortunately could not stay for Sunday meeting. They had to return earlier than expected upon receiving the sad news of Leslie's mother's death. It is especially sad when loved ones have not accepted the offer held out to us by Christ, but we can be thankful that her illnesses are over. We are pleased that Brother Gary Stephen has been able to attend our meeting on a regular basis now that he has gotten a job in Mass.

The weekend of June 11 and 12 turned out to be a very profitable and enjoyable weekend. Brothers Wayne Johnson, Len Naglieri, Beryl Snyder, and Jim Sommerville and Sisters Becky Snyder and Kathy Sommerville drove to the home of Gilles and Lynn Robineau in Sturgeon Falls, Ontario, Canada. We spent the afternoon in discussion on the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ. Gilles and Lynn have been reading and studying their Bibles for many years. They had come to the conclusion that Christendom was astray from God's Word, and cut themselves off from all local churches after being unable to reconcile their creeds with what they were learning in the Bible. They then set about to determine what the Bible said for themselves. Through prayer and study they obviously did an excellent job, for when they came across the Berean Christadelphian web site they said that they were truly amazed to find others who believed as they did. We encouraged them to go through the key lessons before conducting an interview with them. Their statement that they had completed the lessons and wished to be immersed into Christ's saving name prompted our visit. After the interview we agreed that we were of one mind on all first principle doctrines.

That evening we had the pleasure of baptizing Gilles and Lynn Robineau into Christ at the nearby home of Gilles' parents. Their home contained a large indoor hot tub which his parents made available to us.

Sunday morning we returned to Bro. Gilles and Sis. Lynn's home where we were able to enjoy memorial service with them, following the exhortation and right hand of fellowship. We were all sad to leave this newly lit light stand, but could only echo the words of Paul as he left his associates: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." (Acts 20:32)

You can communicate with Bro. Gilles and Sis. Lynn in one of the following ways:

E-mail at: robineau@onlink.net

Phone at: 705-753-5839

Write at: Mr. and Mrs. Gilles and Lynn Robineau

5 Third St. Sturgeon Falls,
Ontario, Canada P2B-3E6

Their love and zeal for the things of God were clearly visible upon meeting and speaking with them. It is their hope that God will call others through their endeavours. I would like to organize a return trip this fall, God willing, to support them in their labours.

On behalf of the Boston Ecclesia,
Your brother in the One Hope,
Bro. Jim Sommerville

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

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

HENGOED FRATERNAL GATHERING.....Mar 17-20, 2006

Bro. Stephen Male, 63 Ty Llwyd Parc, Quakers Yard, Treharris, South Wales,

United Kingdom, CF46 5LB; Phone: 011 441 44381 3828

I Do Rejoice, Yea, and Will Rejoice!

"Rejoice in the Lord ALWAYS: and AGAIN I say, Rejoice!"—
Philippians 4:4.

This is the most intimate and personal of Paul's ecclesial epistles. The ecclesia at Philippi was the first established by Paul in Europe—in response to the vision of the Man of Macedonia. It was there that Paul went on the Sabbath day to the place of prayer by the riverside, and found Lydia, whose heart the Lord touched. This was the beginning of the Philippian ecclesia, which held such a prominent place in the apostle's affections.

The spirit of the epistle to the Philippians is joy, contentment, fraternal affection, and holiness. Its background is loneliness, imprisonment, and the hovering shadow of condemnation and a cruel death, but its keynote is peace and rejoicing. "I do rejoice, and WILL rejoice!" the apostle triumphantly exclaims (1:18); and to them he writes—

"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, REJOICE!" (4:4). **197**

Our minds turn again to that unforgettable scene at midnight in this same city of Philippi years before (Acts 16:23-25)—

"And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison . . . thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks . . . And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and SANG PRAISES UNTO GOD."

What glorious secret was it that these men had? Surely no circumstance could be more physically and mentally miserable and depressing—cast roughly into an inner dungeon to be reserved for more abuse on the morrow—distressingly fastened by the feet in stocks, and racked with the pain of the "many stripes" they had unjustly received.

But they "sang praises unto God." WHAT for? This epistle gives the answer—

"Be careful for nothing"—let nothing depress you—"but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, SHALL keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (4:6-7).

Nothing could dim or obscure for Paul the ever present and overwhelming ecstasy of the love of Christ. He gloried in tribulation (Rom. 5:3), for the bitterest of tribulation only impressed him more intensely with the all-sufficiency of the consolation of Christ—

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay! In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us!" (Rom. 8:35-37).

All these things were everyday experiences with Paul, and he gloried when they flooded down upon him, for each visitation but thrillingly revealed anew their utter powerlessness to pierce the all-protecting armor of the love of Christ in his heart.

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you," he tells them as he begins his letter (1:3). That must be our feeling concerning all our brethren and sisters who are striving toward the mark of the perfection of Christ. Our minds, like Paul's, must be constantly filled with loving thoughts and thankful prayers concerning them.

Verse 4—"Always making request with joy."

This is an unusual and striking expression—"making request with joy"—but it well illustrates the spirit of the epistle. Paul was in prison, writing to dear friends far away whom he longed achingly to see, but still there is not even a hint of any restraint upon his buoyant rejoicing. These are the **198** circumstances in which the wisdom of the Spirit has placed him; these

then are the circumstances in which God sees that he can do the most good, or receive the most benefit.

Therefore, though he earnestly desires the freedom and opportunity to enjoy their company and fellowship, he does not let the enforced separation lessen his present joy. He and they rejoice in mutual, understanding love, knowing that "ALL THINGS work together for good to those that love God," content to wait out the sorrows of the brief present in the cheerful confidence of the eternal, cloudless future.

He was confident, he said (verse 6), that God, Who had begun a good work in them, would perform it until the day of Christ. If we are watching for them, we shall find many thrilling references to this glorious Divine mystery which is expressed so boldly later in the epistle—

"It is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of HIS good pleasure."

It is God which worketh in us—if we will let Him—if we will yield and submit, putting aside our own desires, our own plans and hopes and ambitions, and seeking to follow the guiding light of Scripture and Providence from day to day.

"The things which have happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel" (verse 12).

Paul's life was wrapped up in the furtherance of the Gospel of his beloved Master. What did bonds and imprisonment mean to him if they contributed to that end? He turned it all into a powerful and glorious advertisement for Christ (verse 13)—

"My bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places."

And the result went further still (verse 14)—

"Many of the brethren, waxing confident in my bonds, are much more"—note the emphasis—"much more bold to speak the Word without fear."

Thus he turned a crippling handicap into a stirring inspiration. Such is the power of a fearless example—not only of courage, but more—of inextinguishable rejoicing. He not only endured with patience, but in his very enduring he radiated a confidence and peace that inspired others to fearlessness and joy.

"And I therein do rejoice, yea, and WILL rejoice!" (verse 18). Why?—

"For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" (verse 19).

See how he binds up his salvation with the power of their prayers and Christ's indwelling Spirit. There was no self-sufficiency about Paul. "No man liveth unto himself." Again and again we are impressed with the mutual interdependence of the body of Christ, for so it is ordained in the love and wisdom of God. "The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee."

Paul was humbly conscious that, in the strange and marvelous working of the Divine purpose, the prayer of the least of God's saints could have a bearing upon the issues of his salvation. What a wonderful bond of unity a perception of this truth creates!

Verse 21—"To me, to live is Christ."

Here again Paul briefly and beautifully expresses our walk in the world—"To me, to live is Christ." All his life was bound up in Christ—all his activities centered in him.

Outside of Christ there is no life—he is the Way of Life—all else is death. How dimly we seem to perceive what was so living and vivid to Paul! "To me, to live is Christ."

Verse 27—"Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel."

This epistle contains no criticism or rebuke. But if there was one thing in which Paul thought it advisable to exhort them, this would be it. The thought appears again at the beginning of ch. 2, and again beginning ch. 3. "With one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel."

The brotherhood today is going through a crucial period of purging and tribulation. It must drive those that are left closer together—there could be no greater tragedy than to suffer the tribulation without reaping the joys and benefits that the tribulation is Divinely designed to effect. To the apostle, this was the deciding index of success or failure—of sorrow or joy. He pleads (and who could ignore such pleading)—

"If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort in love, if any fellowship in the Spirit—if you have any affection and sympathy—fulfill ye my joy by being of one mind, united in mutual love" (2:1-2).

What relationship is more tender and beautiful than the fellowship of the Truth? Jesus said, "Behold, my mother and my brethren!" But it requires much patience and gentle understanding—

"Let each esteem other better than themselves" (verse 3).

Paul advances this as the basis of mutual love and communion and forbearance. The worth of any individual in the sight of God depends upon **200** his degree of overcoming. "Where much is given, much is expected."

We cannot judge. Our own record may prove to be the poorest when abilities and opportunities are in the last Great Day weighed against accomplishments. How can we evaluate the efforts and struggles of others? Only God can gauge the bitterness and stress of each heart's secret conflicts.

Paul, in his pleading, expresses the mind of Christ. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God" is still the most touching and powerful of entreaties. The future of the Berean fellowship may well hinge upon the degree to which we are moved by this entreaty to enlarge our hearts one to another in the bonds of a love that suffers long and is kind—hoping all things, bearing all things, and enduring all things.

Paul emphasizes his entreaty by the example of Christ—

"Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus—he humbled himself, and made himself of no reputation" (verses 5-8).

Christ, the Great Example, was big enough to yield lovingly and cheerfully in everything that concerned his own desires and honor and self-gratification—always seeking peace and putting the pleasure and welfare of others before his own—realizing the utter unimportance of the present, and the immensity of the eternal issues—the great work of God in him.

This leads the apostle to that glorious paradox (verses 12-13)—

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

"Work ... for God worketh in you." The mighty, rushing wind of the Spirit is upon you—set your sails to catch every ounce of it, for this is your day of opportunity.

Verses 14-15—"Do all things without murmurings and disputings . . . that ye may be the children of God."

Without murmurings and disputings. "Forbearing one another in love" is the thought—recognizing in others a fellowship of effort, a unity of objective—and overlooking in love the weaknesses and shortcomings, which they are perhaps more conscious of, and secretly grieved by, than we are.

BUT—there must be a sincere unity of objective, and it can only be the objective the Scriptures hold forth—the perfection of Christ. Without this basic agreement there can be no hope of the fellowship of the Spirit. That is the real issue today.

Verse 15—"Among whom ye shine as lights in the world." **201**

Here indeed our walk in the world is brought into sharp focus. Jesus said likewise, "Ye are the light of the world." The picture we are given by these words is one of a spectacular radiance in the midst of a boundless darkness. Our walk in the world must be such that men will be impressed that we are motivated by a strange, unearthly power. Jesus said (John 13:35)—

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples—if ye have love one to another."

To what extent do we conform to this essential requirement of discipleship? Love does not plead the excuse of unloveliness in others—rather in such it finds an opportunity to demonstrate its own unselfishness and power. Paul desired this heavenly fruit in his converts that (verse 16) he might rejoice in the day of Christ that he had not run in vain, for truly unless their spiritual growth in Christ reaches the full ripeness of unselfish, uncomplaining love, his efforts on them had been completely wasted, as on a barren tree.

He planned (verse 19) to send Timothy to them soon, as his messenger of consolation, he said. And then comes a revealing note which, though infinitely tragic, has an aspect of comfort for us in this dark day (verses 20-21)—

"I have no one else to send—for all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's."

All were wrapped up in their own quite legitimate, but quite temporal, interests. How meaningless it will all seem in retrospect when the day of golden opportunity is passed, and the only reality left is the judgment seat of Christ! Can we measure our own lives and activities by this unsparing yardstick, and be content?

The comfort of the picture lies in the fact that even the apostolic times were "a day of small things." It was a very restricted and family affair. "My son Timothy . . . I have no one else to send . . ."

But still the apostle is not discouraged or cast down—

"Finally, my brethren (3:1), rejoice in the Lord."

Again he returns to his basic theme of rejoicing, which nothing can quench. The aged and forsaken prisoner is encouraging those who are younger, at liberty, and have the advantage of ecclesial companionship. But it was fitting, for he possessed in much fuller measure than they the one real, never-failing source of joy—the vivid awareness of the power of the love of Christ.

The word translated "Finally" literally means "remainder," and the sense is, "This, then, remains . . ." He uses the same word again in ch. 4, "Finally, **202** whatsoever things are true, etc." This word is translated "Henceforth"

in the expression, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." This remains, in spite of all passing sorrow—"Rejoice in the Lord."

Verse 3—"We worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

Worship God, and rejoice in Christ. The closer we come to that as our fixed and habitual frame of mind, the closer we are to the mind of the Spirit, which is life and peace.

"Have no confidence in the flesh." This is infinitely far-reaching. Jesus said: "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Paul had done just that, as he goes on to say, and he had done it gladly—even eagerly.

All that had made up his former life of satisfaction and pride, he had cast aside. He saw the emptiness and falseness and unsoundness of it all. The mind of the flesh seeks self-expression and self-gratification in a thousand different, subtle ways—many of them apparently righteous, noble and good, but pride is at the bottom of them all. We must see through it. We must abhor every ugly impulse of self-assertion and self-esteem. We must empty ourselves of self, and be overwhelmed with our utter insignificance.

"What is man, that Thou, O God, art mindful of him?"—pitiful specks of briefly animated dust in the immeasurable vastness of eternity. Who are we to even think we have a thought worth thinking? Worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh.

"I count all things but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him; that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings—if by any means I might attain!"

Surely we can but sadly smile when some speak disparagingly of "extremists" in the race for life. How pale the most extreme would appear before the intensity of the apostle's fervent strivings and desire!

"In stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft . . . beaten with rods, stoned, scourged with whips . . . weariness, painfulness, watchings, hunger, thirst, cold, nakedness . . ."

And yet he says (verses 13-17)—

"I count not myself to have attained . . . I strive that if by any means I might attain . . . I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus . . . Brethren, be followers of me."

And then he goes on in sadness (verses 18-19) to speak of those who walked as the enemies of the cross of Christ . . . whose end is destruction . . . whose glory is their shame . . . who mind earthly things.

Is it so terrible to "mind earthly things"? Does it call for such extreme condemnation? Houses, lawns, furniture, automobiles, business, what shall we eat? what shall we wear?—all must be attended to in their time and season—but where is our heart? What fills our interests? Where does our mind naturally love to turn?—patterns, recipes, needlework, hobbies, workshops, gardens, photographs, recreation, sport? . . . or the eternal things of God?

"Set your affections on things above, not on things on earth."

I count all things but loss . . . I press—I strive—I strain toward the mark . . . if by any means I might attain to the transcendent, eternal glory of oneness with Christ.

"Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed-for, my joy and my crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved" (4:1).

Does this overflowing manifestation of affection seem to us extreme and overdone? Are we, like the Corinthians, afraid to open our hearts to one another? Are we cold, and reserved, and self-contained? Peter exhorts (1:4:8)—

"ABOVE ALL THINGS, have fervent love among yourselves."

That will solve most problems.

There is nothing ordinary or commonplace about the glorious Gospel of Christ. It means a complete and revolutionary transformation of the heart. It is all or nothing.

Then once more (verse 4) comes that exultant refrain—

"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice!"

How eager and anxious he was that they should enjoy the full glory and power of their holy calling—that they should share with him the transporting joy and peace of life in Christ!

Verse 5—"Let your moderation"—the word really means 'gentleness' and is so translated in other places—"Let your gentleness be known unto all men."

Christ's true brethren will be universally known for their unflinching gentleness in all relationships and circumstances. Gentleness is the manifestation of a calm and spiritual mind—"Be careful for nothing" (verse 6)—let nothing make you anxious or upset—take every problem to God in thanksgiving and prayer.

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding (verse 7), **204** *SHALL keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*"

He speaks in terms of unshakable assurance. He has no doubts of the unfailling efficacy of his Divine prescription.

"Finally, my brethren, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report—think on these things."

The practical wisdom of this counsel, even from a natural point of view, is surely obvious. The folly of the opposite course is surely manifest. To keep the mind occupied with thoughts of things that are lovely and pure is not only beneficial and spiritually upbuilding—it is also self-evidently the course of peace and happiness. But, above all, the crowning promise of this way is (verse 9)—

"The God of peace shall be with you."

He finds occasion, in conclusion, to rejoice in them again (verse 10)—that their care of him in his affliction had flourished. In the intimacy of his special affection for them, he reminds them (verse 15) that when he was establishing the ecclesias, they alone of all the churches had been concerned to contribute to his daily needs. Philippi was in Macedonia. To the rich Corinthians he said—

"The deep poverty of the ecclesias of Macedonia abounded unto the riches of their liberality . . . beyond their power they were willing . . . praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift."

And later, in ch. 11, he tells the Corinthians that he had accepted nothing from them, relying rather on the hard-earned assistance of the Macedonian brethren. He refused the help of the rich, and accepted that of the struggling poor. He refused the help of the Corinthians, he said (2 Cor. 11:12), that he might cut off occasion from them that desired occasion—that he might not give them cause to glory that they had supported him.

How much this tells us of the confidence of his intimacy with the brethren and sisters of Philippi—that he did not hesitate to share the meager resources of their poverty with them! There were no puffing-up, pride-gratifying riches. Here—no danger that the well-to-do would glory over him that of their abundance they had patronizingly supported this indigent wanderer, among their various charitable hobbies. Rich Philippians—powerful in their poverty! Poor Corinthians—impotent in their opulence!

Arising out of this consideration, he beautifully reveals to them the secret of his divine peace of mind (verses 11-13)—

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"I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all

things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and suffer need."

"I have learned . . . I am instructed." It was a state of mind that had to come by a process of learning. Jesus said: "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." And of the Son of God himself it is recorded, "He learned obedience by the things that he suffered."

This word "instructed" in verse 12 means to be initiated into divine mysteries. It is the only place it occurs in the Scriptures.

"I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me" (verse 13).

That was the glorious secret into which he had been initiated, and it must be ours. "When I am weak, then am I strong." When I most fully realize and am impressed with my utter helplessness, then am I most strong through the transforming power of Christ.

Verse 20—"Unto God be glory for ever and ever."

This dare not be just a form of words, or an occasional remembrance. "Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are, and were created" (Rev. 4:11). Let us keep that before us as a continual perspective of the purpose of our life and walk in the world. Our part in the glorious, unbounded future depends upon whether our lives and characters contribute to the glory and pleasure of God.

Verse 21—"Salute every saint in Christ Jesus."

Not just "all saints," but "every saint"—each one separately and individually. A beautiful concluding thought—"Salute every saint in Christ." Consider them all, over and over, one by one, in loving and prayerful remembrance, after the wonderful example of the aged apostle, that the whole body, fitly joined together according to the effectual working of every part, may grow up in Christ unto the edifying of itself in love.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

Bro. G.V. Growcott

Luke 24

This morning we read from Luke the 24th chapter. Jesus' great ordeal of suffering, persecution and the unfair trial is now past, it's gone, but we remember it. We remember it each and every Sunday. He is risen, having cast off the shackles of the grave and is soon to appear in person in great glory and honor and power to us all and to the world around us, eventually.

Brother Roberts in his books of travels and voyages to Australia, used **206** this phrase many times, "How sweet is the calm of the bright and

tranquil morning that comes after a night of tempest and suffering.” Referring to, not only his own sicknesses, but also to his trip. He was a land lubber on a steam ship going around the world. Many nights he would lie sleeplessly, tossing and turning in the rough waters off the coast. Yes, he would wake up in the morning aboard this ship way out in the middle of the ocean to a bright sunrise or a smooth glassy sea. He constantly wrote about it in his memoirs. He constantly compared his mortal days as the hours of tempest and suffering, in looking forward to Jesus return as the calm and tranquil morning that we all yearn for and look for. It seems as though the times and the trials and the severe persecutions and hate go on even worse today in our day than it did in his day, as we look around to see the troubles in the world. They are becoming more severe and the pressure is on each and every one of us to remain steadfast until the master returns.

This Jesus, whom we gather here this morning to remember surely did suffer. Nevertheless, he patiently endured the cross, looking forward steadfastly to the joy set before him.

As Paul says in Hebrews 12:2, “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.”

The words, despising the shame—that is looking upon it as a light thing, disregarding or paying no heed to the shame he had endured. That is also our job today. The bright and tranquil morning of resurrection will soon be experienced by the Saints who have lived before us when they arise from the dust of the ground. They will be raised to honor and glory after a night of tempest and suffering and death which ended their problems. The long period of gentle night full of sorrow, sighing and suffering for the righteous in the sight of God will then be passed as it is recorded, the former things are passed away.

Let us consider a moment the circumstances surrounding Jesus’ resurrection. Now upon the first day of the week very early in the morning they came unto the sepulchre bringing the spices which they had prepared and certain others with them. Yet this was a small company of women, you find them making their way towards the tomb. These women were special. These women were peculiar. There are not too many exhortations about women which are given from the platform. Because these women were very different. They were very different from all other women around them in the world at the time. They look the same. They might have acted a little differently, but they felt the same hurt and the same **207** pain when their Master was taken from them. They were faithful to Jesus the Christ

in his lifetime as we read about them. They were eager and attentive to hear every word which dropped from the Master’s lips whenever they could. They followed Jesus wherever he went before his death and resurrection. Remember the words; ye are a peculiar people, a chosen generation. This should be applicable to us, too, brothers and sisters, but just how many people are meeting around the table such as this with these emblems in remembrance of our Lord out of the many millions in the world around us? Just think about how fortunate, how lucky we are to be here this morning because of an action taken by God to call us out of the world. Not many there be that do it. And this is why we are peculiar in the world today. We have a different lifestyle patterned after Jesus the Christ whom we meet here this morning to remember as we see in these emblems and call it to memory. To put aside those things which are wrong and displeasing in the sight of God.

But among this little company with Mary Magdalene and Joanna ,the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward, Luke 8:3, and Mary, the mother of James, Mark 16:1, it also makes mention of Salome being with the number, she being the mother of James and John, Zebadee’s children. We also have also have seen that there were more that were unnamed. And the account states, and certain others with them. And in verse 10 we read, “It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and the other women that were with them which, told these things unto the apostles.” Proof that there were more than just those that went in.

But this little group of women came prepared with spices and ointments to anoint this hated body of Christ by the rulers. They had come to anoint him. They loved him even as he loved them. Never did they suspect what has happened—what they would find, this early morning. So they were bewildered. They were astonished to find the stone removed and the body of Jesus the Christ absent from the sepulcher. They could’ve all fallen down and fainted, but they didn’t. Their fear was increased when two men stood before them in shining garments. We can imagine how startled they were, if we put ourselves in that position. And they were afraid. They bowed down their faces to the earth. These men said unto them, why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but he is risen. Remember how he spake unto you when he was in Galilee? The dead Master is now risen. And this was the way that Jesus had spoken to them when in Galilee. Matthew 16:21. “From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and the chief priests and of the scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.”

208 In turning back to chapter 24 of Luke and in the 8th verse, “And they remembered his words.” Yes, just like you and me here this morning,

remembering his words—they remembered his words. Keeping him in the forefront of our minds, comparing our lives to his. Once again he is our example. So these few women return to inform the apostles of what they had witnessed. In hearing these words Peter and John had to see for themselves and hastened to the sepulcher. John 20:4, “So they ran both together; and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulcher.” Here we catch a picture in our minds, because we have no real picture, no video to look at, of the difference physically between these two men. John may have been a little younger, maybe a lot thinner, maybe a little quicker and more agile, maybe more timid, but he stopped at the mouth of the tomb. He put the brakes on and stopped suddenly and he peered in. That's probably how I would've reacted. I don't like empty sepulchers. I don't like full sepulchers. This man John stopped and he peered in while Peter arriving a little after didn't stop. Like a fullback on a football team he burst right through right into the sepulcher. We see the difference here in personalities. And it's the same today right here in this room. All different personalities. All coming together around this table to worship our Master. All coming to remember Jesus the Christ, whom we meet here this morning in worship to our heavenly Father.

It's going to be very interesting to talk to both of these two apostles and to the sisters who originally went to the sepulcher in the kingdom age. This will be possible for us to sit around a table speaking of these things, because they will be in the kingdom. The only thing that we don't know right now is, will we be in the kingdom? And this is why we are here this morning to up build ourselves and to strengthen ourselves to see if these characters stand out strongly in our minds because they were real people. These are not make-believe stories. This is something to look forward to in the future.

At this point Luke tells us in verse 13 that two of them were walking to Emmaus. Emmaus is about seven or eight walking miles from Jerusalem. And now Jesus joins them as they walk along. We know from reading this occasion that their eyes were withheld—they were blinded. They could see, but they couldn't see that this was Jesus they were talking to. Their eyes were held so that they should not know him. We can just imagine the delightful feeling of Jesus listening in on the conversation and knowing that they were talking of him and prepared to make himself known to them at just the right time. So Jesus asked them, “why are ye so sad—why do you talk this way.” So two of these disciples ask Jesus if he was a stranger in these parts? He was by no means a stranger yet they were not aware of this, so they told Jesus the story of what had taken place. Then he said unto them “O fools, slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have **209** *spoken.*” We notice they used the words “all that the prophets have

spoken.” Many of the people in the world we see walking around with small Bibles of the New Testament or a few chapters out of the Psalms. We say to ourselves, how much of the Truth are they missing when they don't want to read the rest of the Bible. But throughout Jesus' teachings he always referred back to the Old Testament—the Scriptures that were spoken of, written at that time. He says, “Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory, and beginning at Moses, and where did Moses write? Right in the beginning of the Bible. And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. Here Jesus is chiding the disciples for being slow of heart to believe. Not very quick to grasp or understand or accept what was written about him throughout the whole Bible.

Deuteronomy, in the 18th chapter, in the 15th verse, the part of the Bible they had access to has Moses writing concerning the Messiah, “The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken;”. Israel was told this. They were warned of this. This was part of their life—part of their Old Testament. Israel as a whole had refused to hearken unto Moses, neither would they listen to the greater Prophet, Jesus the Christ, when he came on the scene. But they shall do so in the very near future when the Master returns.

During such a pleasant journey and conversation with the disciples and Jesus. They almost reach their destination where upon Jesus begged to take leave of them in verse 28 as we read about in Luke. And as he would not hear of it and as it is approaching evening he consented unto them. We find that a meal is prepared and all sit down together. So comes this joyful occasion and the most pleasant surprise of them all. Verses 31 and 32: “And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?” This is all of the Scriptures—the Old Testament and the New Testament. We note the words, “Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us”. Yes, they knew he talked in a different strain than the ordinary man. For the Bible says never man spake like this man. He knew the Scriptures inside and out and spoke of them often. Still they were held from recognizing him until he was ready to open their minds.

Brothers and sisters when we gather around this table, do our hearts burn within us as we meet here together to talk of these past episodes of the apostles and all of the lives of the faithful? To totally remember him as he commanded in this bread and this wine. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we **210** could hear him speak to us today as he spoke to the apostles? Some day soon we pray.

We find from Emmaus, the disciples returned to Jerusalem and were in the company of the apostles and others who are talking of the things that had transpired in the last few days, when Jesus suddenly appeared standing in their midst. They were startled. As you can picture from the words in verse 38 and 39, “And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts?” for he could read their hearts. “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have”. This at once destroys the theory among the Christians that the redeemed are bodiless spirits.

And Philippians 3 and 21 confirms that Jesus shall change our vile bodies that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body in the future. Yet this is not enough to calm down the disciples, verse 41, Jesus saying to them, “Have ye here any meat?” And it is recorded he proceeds to partake of food before them, showing them that a spiritual body can eat though not of course requiring it for food for their lives. Jesus went on to explain to them that all these things must be fulfilled concerning him, that were written in the law of Moses, which was a type and a shadow of better things to come. A pattern of the heavenly things and in the prophets—the complete Old Testament was what they had to work with. It would take a very long exhortation to make reference to all the Prophets, but Isaiah alone, when I was writing this exhortation, stood out. It’s full of prophecies relating to Jesus the Christ and it devotes all of the 53rd chapter to his great offering for sin, to happen in the future and it did happen. And also Jeremiah as in the 23rd chapter and the fifth verse. “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.” We know that hasn’t happened yet. Justice and judgment are still not in the earth, but they will be. What outstanding words—judgment and justice. Something that cannot be found in the earth today around us with all of its ways and all of its oppressions, all of the corruptions, all of the political wrangling, yet soon it will be different. When in the glorious words of another prophet, Malachi, (4:2) once again in the Old Testament. “But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings.” Surely there will be great and sorely mixed feelings, both to the saints of God and to the troubled world around us.

The Psalms also, once again the Old Testament, the Psalms are full of Jesus, both in suffering and in his glory. They are repeatedly so often quoted in the New Testament, Jesus the Christ himself proving that he was a true student of the Old Testament. And the Apostles, whom he is instructing here in Luke at this time of meeting them. Psalms 45 and 7, “Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy **211** God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” Then

in Luke the 24th chapter at verse 45, we see Jesus preparing them for their future work. “Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures,” wholly, completely, and teach it. Let us fervently pray and study that he may likewise open our eyes, that we will not go astray. We will remain on that road which leads to life eternal.

We will continue around this table, “Until he comes.” “And he said unto them, Thus it is written and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. “And ye are witnesses of these things.”

Many in the world today claim to the title of witnesses. Yet they are not. For they do not proclaim the Truth of the Gospel as Jesus spoke it – as the Scriptures contain it. It is quite obvious from these verses who his true witnesses are. “From this time forward Jesus instructed them,” in verse 49 “but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”

Now sadness would be their lot as the heavens parted as verse 51 says, “And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.” Nevertheless they were not left comfortless. They were assured of his return.

The same as we are assured of his return. The only problem is with us. It is not with his return. He will return. Will we be ready? Will our attention be directed in that way?

Our attention is directed to Acts the 1st chapter verses 9-11. “And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into the heaven.” The same Jesus shall return in the same manner as he ascended.

This is the day, brothers and sisters, that we are waiting for. We shall be glad. We shall rejoice in it. This is the Lord’s doing and it is marvelous in our eyes, as we read from the Scriptures. We, too, brothers and sisters, hold this hope firmly within us and now every sign is that it is very near to us. We look forward to the soon return of our great redeemer to deliver us from ungodliness and corruption that is fast increasing and coming in on all sides.

Finally at verse 52 and verse 53 in closing, “And they worshipped him, **212** and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; And were continually in the

temple, praising and blessing God, Amen.” Paul exhorts: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God.” If such a case be true, then we, too, like the apostles, like the prophets, like all of the faithful of old, must continually be in that temple. Our every thought, our words, our actions, praising and blessing God, even unto the end.

So now we prepare to partake of these emblems here before us, to remember our Lord and Saviour until he come. We pray for that soon return of the Master to this earth, but this time he will come in power and great glory. Amen.

Bro. Jim Coye

Prayer

HOW TO PRAY. — The objection to brethren sitting when prayer is being offered, made by Brother Robertson in his report of his visit to America, [Christadelphian December 1881] shows that the true sense of order and propriety is wanting among some of us. This might not be unexpected from those who have not seen a more excellent way. When we are met at ecclesias, and the time for worship has come, we are not in each others presence only; we are in the presence of the Father and of the Lord Jesus also; thus it becomes us, in offering our petitions, to be as courteous in form, and much more so in heart, than we should be were we to receive a visit from the highest of the present age, and show our worshipfulness by standing when we make requests by which we alone are to benefit. Even if we kneel we have abundant precedents in such as Solomon, Daniel, and Ezra, under the Old Covenant; while under the New Covenant we shall have many more, with the Lord Jesus himself as their chief. Perhaps the standing or the kneeling is not a matter to be dictated; but the proprieties of the act may be determined by us if we offer our petitions in such position of homage as is acceptable, by its being complete. The act of sitting places the sitters upon an equality with equals when gifts are sought, though no stretch of courtesy can make it polite even to them. While to sit in the presence of him of whom we are at that moment asking the highest favours, is the one position of all others to be avoided by those who “come to ask and receive, that their joy may be full.” It is a democratic age; we are not democrats, we are candidates for rule under a despotic King.

Upon the lines by which we are to be guided in making our petitions, we have been already instructed, for we have seen those laid down by our Master. We have other model prayers from his lips in the Gospel; in this connection, as in others, “he spake as never man spake.” He teaches us the perseverance which is needful in our prayers (Luke 18:1). “Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.” Prayerless brethren, if there are **213** such, must live under the persuasion that they need nothing; such are poor

indeed, with that true poverty which will keep their lamps in darkness when the Bridegroom comes. They, with us, and even more than we, require to understand the words of the Lord Jesus (Luke 21:36), “But watch ye always, making supplication, that ye may prevail to escape these things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

Having noticed the duty of prayer, its modes and its Scriptural, therefore true, structure, we are in a position to deal with its objects. In our study of these, we are guided by the true infallibility, that of the Lord Jesus. When praying for his disciples, he prefaces his prayer by the testimony, (John 17:9) that “they believed thou didst send me,” and, he continues, “I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me; for they are thine; and all things that are thine are mine.” In verses 14 to 17, his prayer is thus continued: “I have given them thy word; and the world hated them, because they are not of the world; I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil; they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by thy truth, thy word is truth.” These, then, are the objects to attain by our prayers; the truth is the one great element by which we are to work out our redemption, and knowledge is the basis of truth, while wisdom is its practical application. Nothing is of worth to us unless it is “sanctified by the word of God and prayer.” Paul sums up this duty in Eph. 6:18, “Praying at all times in the spirit with all prayer and supplication, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.”

We are supplied with abundant apostolic examples for our study as to structure, and also, as to the matter of our prayers. These examples, rightly worked out, will save us from forms of vain words. With the Scriptures open before us, we require but two things. These are the necessary knowledge of our wants. The rest is easy for the persevering. It is the power for apt imitation we need also, and the transfer thereby of the very modes of expression used by the apostles; while to these must be added the true spirit of trustful faith. Here is a prayer of Paul’s. 2 Thess. 1:11: “To which end we pray always for you, that our God may count you worthy of your calling, and may fulfill (in you) all the good pleasure of goodness, and work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the favour of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.” What end does the apostle seek by this prayer? That his brethren may have the rest that remaineth for the people of God when the Lord Jesus shall have attained his kingdom and glory, as in verse 7, “and to you who are afflicted, rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power.” The virtues necessary to the called are contained in the words “all good pleasure of goodness, and the work of **214** *faith.*” Those who are animated by active faith will

prosecute the search after goodness, and by the help of the Father and the Son, they will not fail to obtain that which is the burden of their prayer. A passive faith merely, is unknown to the Word of God.

Another model prayer is contained in Col. 1:8 to 12. It not only testifies to the loving spirit of the apostle, and his joy at the progress made by the brethren in Colosse, but it also unfolds for our imitation a form of words, perfect in expression, and full of the spirit of his and our Master: "For this cause we also (I, and Timothy my son) since the day we heard of it (your love) do not cease praying for you, and making request that ye may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, so as to walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, bringing forth fruit in every good work, and growing by the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all strength, according to the might of His glory, and unto all patience and long suffering with joy; giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet for the portion of the inheritance of the saints in light." After teaching that we are to "abstain from every appearance of evil" (what a blessing it would be to us all if we would always remember this! What scandals, what sufferings it would save us) he adds, 1 Thes. 5:23; "But may the God of peace sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit, and soul, and body be preserved wholly without blame at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

The obligation which we owe to each other is an important factor in this question: in this direction the examples from the Lord Jesus already quoted, are given to us, not only as a record of his love, but also to guide us in the ordering and in the progress of our spiritual life. Paul, too, unceasingly manifests this care and anxiety for the well-being of the churches. Thus, in 2 Cor. 13:7, he says: "I pray ye do no evil:" the circumstances and surroundings of pagan Corinth being grossly impure ones, evil was called good, and good evil, in that sink of iniquity. To the Ephesians, he testifies (Chap. 1:15 to end): "After I heard of your faith and love to all the saints, I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom, and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."

Enough is here given for instruction: the daily readings of the Word of God in the order of that priceless manual, "The Bible Companion," will familiarize the patient student with many examples. It is not only from the Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles that our minds will be informed, but we shall gather from the Old Testament the pure and glowing and **215**

chastened language of inspiration, which will become part and parcel of our literary wealth; and herein the least educated amongst us in other things may become the equals of the most cultivated, by assiduity, and the patient digest of the Word of Life. There is no royal road to knowledge, and the wayfaring man, though he may be unwise about many things which may be estimable in themselves, and therefore desirable to know, need not err therein, if he apply himself with patient diligence, and a resolution informed by faith in the doctrine of the gospel of the Kingdom of God.

Let our brethren inform themselves from the living oracles; let them avoid the "vain repetitions" of Gentile custom; let them study to be silent when they have nothing new to offer; let them avoid the ambition which is anxious to be heard for its much speaking, and let them remember that it is infinitely wiser "to be more ready to hear than to offer the sacrifice of fools." These things are the characteristics of the apostacy, as well of the Prayer Book, as of the spinner of the vapid and blasphemous prayers of the sects volunteered by those who have what is called "the gift of prayer." If the wholesome words of Holy Spirit inspiration are used by the pure-hearted, then we shall offer as we are thus taught (Psalms 141:2). "Let my prayer be directed before Thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice;" and, again (Rev. 13:3, 4), "And another angel came and stood at the altar having a golden censer; and there was given to him much incense, that he should mingle it with the prayers of the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense ascended up with the prayers of the saints out of the angel's hands before God." The priests—the brethren of the Lord Jesus, our high priest—are "called" to offer upon this the altar of the Most High and their offering, therefore, must be pure.

1882 Christadelphian

Signs Of The Times

"And the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown" (Dan. 11:40, 41).

Once again Russia has increased her influence over the Middle East by agreeing to ship nuclear fuel to Iran. She has also promised to complete Iran's first functioning nuclear reactor by the end of the year. There had already been earlier reports that the Russian Pres. **216** Vladimir Putin had agreed to sell the advanced SA-10 air

defense system and shoulder held SA-18 anti-air missiles to Israel's northern neighbor Syria.

The SA-10 ("Grumble") is an advanced surface-to-air missiles system capable of seriously limiting Israel's aerial activity over Syria and Lebanon. It can engage more than one target and counter low and high-flying aircraft, cruise missiles and ballistic missiles.) "Grumble" can outperform the US Patriot anti-missile missile system supplied to Israel and counter the aircraft and most of the missiles in the Israel Air Force arsenal (DEBKAFfile Exclusive Military Report 12/01/05).

The SA-18 is a highly effective shoulder-held missile, which if it falls into the hands of the Iraqi guerrillas, will constitute a huge threat to US troops. It is so lightweight it can even be smuggled in a suitcase. Apparently Syria has also purchased the updated Scud Iskender, with a range of 180 miles, which could hit targets anywhere in Israel.

All of this has been a great concern to the US who considers Israel a pivotal Middle East ally, and sees Iran and Syria as a great threat to Israel. President Bush was quoted as saying that Syria was out of step with its neighbors and should withdraw its 15,000 troops from Lebanon. In response Syria and Iran have formed a joint united front, and Russia is literally fueling the fire. Russia has agreed to supply the nuclear fuel for the next ten years, and Iran is supposed to return spent fuel to Siberian storage units. However, Washington fears that Iran will use it to obtain weapons materials. Russia has already agreed to send a number of their experts to equip the nuclear power station in Iran. Imagine the wealth and influence Russia will gain from these deals.

When asked if President Bush was concerned what Israel might do first in their defense against Iran, he said that he would use diplomacy to try and persuade Iran not to develop a nuclear weapon, but that if he was the leader in Israel he would be very concerned by statements of the Iranians about Israel's security. Iran has always failed to acknowledge Israel's right to exist. Pres. Bush continued to say "And in that Israel is our ally, in that we've made a very strong commitment to support Israel, we will support Israel if their security is threatened" (Times 15/2/05).

Russia now sells weapons to 59 other countries. When nations engage in arms sales to this extent they are preparing for major conflict. The Kings of the North and South are almost prepared for Armageddon. Are you? (See 1 Thess. 5:1-10)

Bro. Stephen Male 217

The Truth in Wales – 1882

SWANSEA

On March 13, we had the pleasure of receiving into fellowship THOMAS DAVIES, son of Brother and Sister Davies, of Cwmamman, near Aberdare, who had been immersed after a satisfactory examination in the one faith, on the previous evening. The brethren have withdrawn from Brother Jenkins for disorderly walk.

Lectures.-March 26, "Where are the dead?" (Brother S. Davies); April 2, "The recent persecution of the Jews, and their emigration to Palestine-Signs of yet more startling events" (Brother Ashcroft); April 9, "The examination of a few important things believed in by the Christadelphians" (Brother R. Goldie); April 16, "The millennial age" (Brother J. T. Jones); April 23, "The future life: who are to enjoy it?" (Brother Gale); April 30, "Christ's coming, in relation to the present movement among the Jews, and the future destiny of the nations" (Brother S. Davies).

On Thursday, May 4, a lecture was given by Brother Roberts, of Birmingham, in the large room of the Agricultural Hall, on the meaning of Christ's appearance among men 1,800 years ago, as interpreted by friends and enemies. On the succeeding Sunday, he lectured in the same place on the same subject, with special reference to a controversy which has recently taken place in the Swansea newspapers on the subject. The lectures were well attended, particularly the second, at which the audience was the largest seen in Swansea for a long time. At the lecture delivered by Brother Ashcroft, there was a large and attentive audience. In the morning of the same day, the brethren made a contribution on behalf of the poor Jews in Russia. The brethren have been much cheered by these visits, and the good results they have already seen from them. On Friday, the 5th, a number of brethren took tea together, at the Mumbles, and were afterwards addressed by Brother Roberts and others. On Tuesday, the 9th, Brother Roberts lectured in Neath, and on the 11th at Aberdare, in both cases to large audiences, especially at Aberdare, where the truth was publicly presented for the first time.- Bro. THOMAS RANGLES.

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HYMN 105

Imagine it! Visualize it!

LO! HE COMES, THE KING OF GLORY,

The King of kings and Lord of lords, returning to the earth at last.

SEE THE ROYAL VICTOR'S BROW,

For he comes the second time as the victorious Son of God;

ONCE FOR SINNERS MARR'D AND GORY—

We remember him each first day of the week as he gave himself for us, the Lamb slain.

JESUS IS EXALTED NOW

And sits on the right hand of God, a High Priest for us, to return in glory;

**WHILE BEFORE HIM, WHILE BEFORE HIM,
ALL HIS RANSOMED BRETHREN BOW.**

What joy! To be among this accounting of his brethren. Imagine being there!

BLESSED MORNING,

Joyous morning!

LONG EXPECTED,

Long awaited,

LOUD RESOUNDS THE PEOPLED AIR

With the resurrected and immortalized of all peoples and nations and tongues,

MOURNERS, ONCE BY MAN REJECTED,

In this world but not of this world,

THEY WITH HIM, EXALTED THERE;

Imagine it!

SING HIS PRAISES, SING HIS PRAISES

In jubilant hymns,

AND HIS THRONE OF GLORY SHARE

To rule with him as kings and priests.

JUDAH! LO THY ROYAL LION—

The Lion of the tribe of Judah

REIGNS ON EARTH, A CONQUERING KING

And transforms the kingdoms of this world into the Kingdom of God;

COME, YE RANSOMED TRIBES

Of Israel, TO ZION, the new capitol of the earth,

LOVE'S ABUNDANT OFFERINGS BRING,

As all peoples will bring their love-offerings to him;

THERE BEHOLD HIM, THERE BEHOLD HIM;

Imagine being able to see him!

AND HIS CEASELESS PRAISES SING

With songs of admiration and adoration.

KING OF KINGS! LET EARTH ADORE HIM,

Each year they will come to worship him,

HIGH ON HIS EXALTED THRONE—

The House of Prayer for all Nations;

FALL, YE NATIONS, FALL BEFORE HIM,

AND HIS RIGHTEOUS SCEPTRE OWN:

Imagine! One who rules with righteousness and perfect justice!

**ALL THE GLORY, ALL THE GLORY
BE TO HIM, AND HIM ALONE!**

Can you imagine it? Can you really see yourself there?

DO YOU REALLY SEE YOURSELF THERE!

The Origin Of Elpis Israel

Dr. Thomas thus writes in narrative of his visit to Britain, in 1848:-

"On Friday night, Oct. 12th, 1848, 'the Grand Soiree,' as it was advertised, was held in commemoration of our visit to Glasgow. Mr. Turner, one of the city magistrates, was in the chair. This gentleman is an octogenarian of the radical, and Cameronian, schools. He was incarcerated in 'good old Tory times,' as some call them, for permitting a meeting for 'Radical Reform' to be held on the lawn before his house. He was just the right sort of a man to preside at a soiree 'in honor of' Ishmael among the parsons.

"The 'Rev.' Mr. Anderson, relief minister, was invited to attend and make a speech on the occasion, which he did, and a very excellent one it was. He is a man of learning and high standing in Glasgow; although by pietists of mystical opinions, accounted 'daft.' But that matters not; it is their way of olden time to impute idiotcy or insanity to those who have more discernment, honesty of purpose, and scriptural information than themselves. Mr. Anderson told the meeting that he was once as blind and ignorant as they, knowing nothing of the prophets, though professedly a teacher of the truth. He was indebted to the late Mr. Cunningham, a notable writer on prophecy, for a knowledge of his ignorance which was the first step to his comprehension of the truth. Mr. C. made him ashamed of himself; so little did he know of the great things God had revealed in His word. This he determined to study, and to blot out his reproach in the understanding of the matter. His investigation of the prophetic writings had led him to see that the purpose of God was to establish a kingdom in the land of Israel under Jesus Christ which should have rule over the whole earth. He then traced the idea of Theocracy from Eden through subsequent developments of the divine will; and concluded by a glance at what God had promised should come to pass hereafter. Mr. Anderson seems to have been the only preacher in Glasgow that believed that Jesus Christ would reign upon David's throne a thousand years over the nations of the earth, and that feared not to avow his faith. It was no small encouragement therefore to him, for us to visit the city, and boldly to publish the doctrine with such cheering effect.

220 J. B. Rollo, Esq., also addressed the meeting on the subject before it.

We had likewise as a matter of course to make a speech, which, on such an occasion, we find much more difficult than to expound the sounding of the Seventh Apocalyptic Trumpet. The meeting, which consisted of some 250 persons, was edified and strengthened in its good purposes by the late Mr. Richardson the Scotch Baptist church's preacher at Paisley. Altogether, what with the addresses, the music, singing, and good cheer, the evening, till 11 p.m., was spent in a very agreeable manner. At this hour, the soiree was pronounced at an end; but before they arose to depart, a gentleman remarked that 'he did not think that Dr. Thomas had treated, or rather was about to treat, them well. He had announced that he was to leave Glasgow in the morning, and that it was uncertain if he should ever visit them again. Now what he thought the Doctor's friends had a right to complain of was, that he had come among them and roused their minds to an interest in subjects of more magnitude and importance than all others, and was now about to leave them with no other memorials than treacherous and fading memory could afford. Was it not possible for him to defer his return to America, and to publish the matter of his lectures in a book, that his friends and the public might possess it in a tangible and permanent form? He hoped he would find it possible, and give them a favourable reply.' This seemed to be responded to by many present. Though not famed for what pious sinners call 'charity,' our phrenology, say cranioscopists, is illustrated by 'Benevolence, 6 on a scale of 7.' We thought it a pity to leave the demand for knowledge of the truth unsatisfied, seeing that a craving after it by men and women is so rare a thing. We replied therefore to the meeting that 'when we left the United States, our intention was to return in the autumn. We had made no provision for a longer stay, and the probability was that our affairs would suffer in consequence. That, however, was a matter of secondary importance when it became apparent that the truth could be subserved by the sacrifice. We were glad to witness so great and abiding an interest in our labours, and could not therefore find it in our heart to refuse their request. For their gratification then we would prolong our stay in Britain. When we had got through our appointments at Edinburgh and Lincoln, we would return to London; and, if they would busy themselves in obtaining subscribers for the work, we would employ our time during the winter in preparing it.' This seemed to meet the approbation of the meeting, and with this understanding, we parted. Thus was originated, ELPIS ISRAEL, An Exposition of the Kingdom, and Age to Come.

Patriotism And The Profession Of The Truth

Writing of a visit to Good Hope, in August, 1861, during the Civil War, Dr. Thomas says: "We were gratified to see them once more, though not so much on hearing that the war fever had disturbed the temperature of some of them. From what we had heard we judged that it would be wholesome to 'put them in remembrance' of the necessity of walking in the truth, as well as of getting into Christ, if they would attain to his kingdom and glory. If they were possessed with the spirit of war, and made war speeches to ignorant multitudes, to stir up their ungodly lusts to hate their enemies and take vengeance on them, what difference was there between their spirit and that of the world? As brethren, we must not mingle in the strife, but be quiet come what will; and if the contending parties will not let us alone, then clear out from under their dominion. The saints had nothing to do with patriotism or zeal for the country of one's birth or adoption. Christ, who is the Elder Brother and the First Born of the Divine Family, "left them an example that they should walk in his steps"—1 Pet. 2:21. He was no patriot, nor did he inculcate patriotism, according to the flesh. He wept over the faithlessness and disobedience of Jerusalem, the future throne of his dominion; but he neither fought for it, nor exhorted his countrymen to do so, in view of the invasion of Judea, and the destruction of the city and temple by the Romans. On the contrary, he sent his armies against it, and told his friends in Judea to flee to the mountains, and those in the midst of it to emigrate, and those in the countries of the Gentiles not to enter it; for that those who neglected his warning should fall by the sword, and be led away into slavery among all nations. The saints, who are really such, have no zeal nor enthusiasm for anything but the truth and its interests. Their country is the land promised to Abraham and his seed; and the commonwealth of their adoption, Israel's, in the Day of Christ. Instead of the Star Spangled Banner or the Confederate Flag, their's is the ensign of Judah's Lion to be planted on Zion when the dominion shall come to her. Isa. 5:26; 11:10, 12; 18:3; 49:22; 59:19; 62:10; Mic. 4:7, 8. This is the banner that exhausts all our patriotism—the Royal Standard of the kingdom, whose ample folds will be unfurled by the Majesty of the Heavens, when he shall invade the peoples with his troops. Hab. 3:3–16."

Understanding The Truth

Some are "ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth;" while others, with someone or something to guide them, come to the understanding and belief of it in a week! There must be a reason for this. **222** What is it? Whence comes this diversity? Hear what Jesus saith:

“I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.” Then addressing certain Jews, he continued, “Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them dispensational life, and they shall by no means perish in the age, and no one shall wrest them out of my hands. My Father, who gave them to me, is greater than all; and no one is able to wrest out of my Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.”—John 10.

And again, “Thou givest to the Son dominion over all flesh, that all which thou has given to him, to them he should give dispensational life.” “I have given to them the words which thou gavest to me, and they received them.” And, “For this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness of the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice.”

Speaking of the truth in relation to Israel, Paul says, “The election has obtained it, and the rest were blinded (according as it is written in Isaiah, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear), until this day;” and there has been no change for the better in their moral sense since Paul’s day.

Now hear what is testified of the “ever learning.” And Jesus said, “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things (he preached the gospel of the kingdom) from the wise and prudent (that is, in their own conceit) and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good to thee.”

And Paul, also speaking of the same “heady high-minded” class in the “last days” of the Mosaic dispensation, in which he ministered the gospel of the kingdom, says, that men, lovers of themselves, and covetous, having a form of godliness, but denying the power of it, and having great influence over silly women would, like Jannes and Jambres, who withstood Moses, themselves also resist the truth. He was much harassed by them, who spoiled much of the work he had done, and styles them “men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.” Men love themselves, and are covetous when they will not risk their present interests and social position for the naked truth. The minds of such are in a corrupt state, deceived by the deceitfulness of sin, and so long as this influence reigns they are reprobate, and cannot see the truth. Minds so unhappily beclouded will ever resist it. The study of the Bible for a lifetime will be of little benefit to them; while to those of an opposite or different mind, who become as little children, the Christianity of the Bible may be learned in a week, for it is therein “revealed unto babes.”—DR. THOMAS, in the Herald of the Kingdom.

What Does That Mean?

“It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.” (Isaiah 13:20)

In many ways, the history of Babylon adds more weight to the validity of Bible prophecy than any other historical testimony. The subject is too extensive to be dealt with in any depth in this article. A few prophetic references explained in relation to recent developments will suffice to show that more than 2000 years of human activity is insufficient to alter the veracity of God’s Word.

It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.” (Isa. 13:20) Isaiah is very clear in what we should expect to see in the area of Babylon today.

An archaeologist digging in the area in the 19th century commented on the total absence of human activity:

“The eye wanders over a barren desert in which the ruins are nearly the only indication that it ever had been inhabited...Babylon is spurned alike by the heel of the Ottomans, the Israelites and the sons of Ishmael...it is a tenantless and desolate metropolis.

“Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.”(Isa. 13:20)

Rawlinson, the author of Seven Great Monarchies experienced the superstitious approach of the Arabs to the area of Babylon:

“On the actual ruins of Babylon, the Arabian neither pitches his tent nor pastures his flocks — in the first place, because the nitrous soil produces no pasture to tempt him; and secondly, because an evil reputation attaches to the entire site, which is thought to be the haunt of evil spirits.”

“They shall not take of thee a stone for a corner nor a stone for foundations.” (Jer. 51:26)

Like Isaiah, Jeremiah is very clear that none of the materials used to construct ancient Babylon would be directly used in any construction. Rasan, an archaeological excavator indicates the absolute accuracy of this prophecy:

“There is one fact connected with the destruction of Babylon and the marvellous fulfillment of prophecy which struck me more than anything else...the non existence...of any sign of stone which had been dug up from the ancient ruins. It seems that in digging for old materials the Arabs used the bricks for building purposes, but always burnt the stones thus discovered for lime.

Interestingly, the efforts of Saddam Hussein have only served to remind us of how God’s “counsel shall stand” (Isa. 46:10). He rebuilt several parts of ancient Babylon — the palace, some of the walls and a smaller version of the Ishtar Gate. Yet, the construction process was accomplished using materials manufactured in Iraq. He did not “take of thee a stone for a corner”. Not only so, but he never succeeded to re-establish a substantial population there. It remains “wholly desolate”. To maintain Babylon’s desolation in accordance with Bible prophecy, several U.S. missiles ‘went astray’ in Operation TELIC (Iraqi Freedom), resulting in severe damage to some of Saddam Hussein’s efforts, and the already devastated ancient city.