

# THE BEREAN CHRISTADELPHIAN ECCLESIAL NEWS

*A monthly magazine devoted wholly to the Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial welfare, with the object of providing Ecclesial news, exhortations, articles and information of fraternal interest to the Brotherhood. Defending the original, foundation principles upon which the Truth was uncovered from darkness, and upon which the Christadelphian movement was developed. Opposed to the dogmas of papal and protestant christendom. Upholding the Truth as Bereans since 1923.*

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

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

## Ecclesial News

GAINESVILLE, Florida

Dear Brothers & Sisters, Greetings in Christ,

I will no longer be at my current address in Gainesville Florida as of April 12th. God willing I will be moving to Australia on April 12th.

I can be contacted by regular mail and email at: 14 Gregory Ct., Cleveland 4163, Queensland, Australia email: [sjohnatty@yahoo.com](mailto:sjohnatty@yahoo.com)

I will still be able to receive email at [sjohnatty@aol.com](mailto:sjohnatty@aol.com) but will be terminating that account within the next couple of months.

True fellowship with the Father and the love of Christ transcends time and space. May this principle of oneness of heart and mind reign among us at all times and keep us close in the spirit of unity and love, despite the distance between us.

With much love in the Bonds of the Truth,  
Sis. Sharon Johnatty

**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.

Greetings to our brothers and sisters in Christ,

Since our last correspondence from this part of the vineyard a few events have occurred that we are happy to report. Sis. Beth Lorquet has asked to return to fellowship and after a brief review was welcomed back on the 15th of January. In addition, Ted Maier (son of Sis. Brenda Lauck) was interviewed and baptized on Saturday the 15<sup>th</sup> of April. The following day at meeting he was given the “right hand of fellowship”. Please welcome Bro. Ted into the Berean Fellowship. He can be reached at (936) 856-7141. His address is 14792 Cedar Lane Loop, Willis Tx. 77378. We are also pleased to report that we have been visited recently by Bro. Ed and Sis. Delma Truelove, Sis. Juanita Hurst, Sis. Shiloh Brown, Sis. Sharon Johnatty, and Bro. Mark and Sis. Naomi Braune.

On behalf of the Houston Ecclesia,  
Bro. Michael Kramer

## FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

NORTH CAROLINA-VIRGINIA STUDY WEEKEND.....May 27-28, 2006  
Bro. Dale Lee at [dleecpa2@mindspring.com](mailto:dleecpa2@mindspring.com)

LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING..... Jun 9-11, 2006  
Bro. Curtis Hurst, Rt.1, Box 40, Mullin, TX 76864, USA. 1-325-985-3868

HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING..... Jul 24-30, 2006  
Bro. Curtis Hurst, Rt.1, Box 40, Mullin, TX 76864, USA. 1-325-985-3868  
Study Class Topic: 1Thessalonians; Daily Bible Readings; Discussion on Zech. 1-7

NE FRATERNAL GATHERING – BOSTON.....Sep 30-Oct 1, 2006  
Bro. Len Naglieri, [romans6@mac.com](mailto:romans6@mac.com), USA. 1-603-598-1745

## This Is My Friend

“It is more blessed to give than to receive”—Acts 20:35

### SONG OF SONGS 5; ACTS 20

THE Song of Songs is perhaps the most unique book of the Bible. As in Esther, there is no mention of God, but God is throughout it all, more intimately than in any other part of Scripture—its chief character is God manifest in the flesh, intimately described and detailed.

What is the value of this so strange book of love? It is to create and develop a frame of mind—a sweetening and softening of character—a disposition of gentleness and kindness and affection and care.

The spiritual is taught by means of the natural. We are led from something we know to something we need to know. It is spiritual food for the mind.

It is to develop and intensify our affection for Christ, which is the power and secret of all overcoming.

It is to counterbalance present things. By putting the things of the Spirit in the language of the natural, it impresses us vividly with the reality of the former, and their infinite superiority over the latter.

For the eternal spiritual reality must always be immeasurably more intense and meaningful than the mere passing fleshly shadow that represents it.

The book portrays the relationship of Christ and the Ecclesia. It is meant to express, and by its study to strengthen, the bonds between them, and to portray the manifested beauties of Christ, and the required beauties of the Ecclesia, that the contemplation of the one may generate the development of the other.

Generally, a progression can be traced, through acquaintance, interest, deepening of the relationship, espousal, separation, delay, waiting, seeking, finding, ultimate reunion.

While these aspects can be traced, and in general, in this order, still the progression of the narrative cannot, in its very nature, be too mechanically forced, because there are aspects of weaving together, repetition, anticipation, retrospection, to give depth and meaning and interest.

The term used by the Ecclesia for Christ is the same throughout—“Beloved,” except at the climax in today's chapter, where the much fuller term “Friend” is added.

But the terms used by Christ for the Ecclesia show a steady development, and this is one of the factors by which the narrative can be traced. His first address to her is 1:8—“O thou fairest among women!” This appears to stand apart as a general introduction comprehending the whole. Then in ch. 1 and in the beginning of ch 2 it is “My love”—more correctly as in the margin, “fellow” or “companion.”

Later in ch. 2 it is “My love, my fair one.” There are none in ch. 3.

In ch. 4 it is first: “Thou art fair, my love.” Then: “Thou art all fair, there is no spot in thee.”

Then 6 times: “My spouse,” or even more comprehensively, “My sister, my spouse.”

There is one occurrence in each of chs. 5 and 6 of a combination of earlier titles.

Then twice at the end of ch. 6 the proper name “Shulamite” is introduced, indicating that she now permanently bears the new Name, the name of the Beloved, Solomon, the Prince of Peace.

The last title, ch. 7, is “Prince's daughter.” Here the aspect of royalty, majesty and rulership appears.

IN the latter part of today's chapter—in answer to the question, “What is thy Beloved more than another beloved?”—the Bride, the True Ecclesia, gives a description of Christ's beauty and excellence:

“My Beloved is white and ruddy”—v. 10.

Whiteness—purity—righteousness, is the first characteristic. Without it, all the rest would be meaningless. There must be this foundation; nothing else will endure.

The word for white also carries the idea of shining brightness, of brilliance, like Moses' face, or Jesus' at the Transfiguration.

“Ruddy” means “rosy.” It was used of David when Samuel first saw him. It indicates strength, health and radiant beauty. Strangely, the root word is Adam—red—the word indicating sin and the flesh. But perhaps, it is fitting that we should be reminded that this is the root background of the word, though in the particular form used here it means glowing health.

“The chiefest among 10,000.”

“Chiefest” is literally, as in the margin, “a standard-bearer, an ensign, a bannered one”—the one who leads, and around whom all rally for the conquest.

“10,000” is not a specific figure, but means an innumerable multitude. It is translated elsewhere (Genesis 24:60—of Rebekah's seed) by “millions.” So the true, and obviously much more fitting and significant meaning is—“A standard-bearer for an innumerable multitude”—even the great multitude of the Redeemed, “which no man can number”—for they are known only to God.

“His head is most fine gold”—v. 11.

Gold is Faith—specially “fine” or refined gold. This picture of the Beloved, while it is primarily Christ as distinct from and viewed by the Ecclesia, inevitably introduces the inseparable aspects of the multitudinous Christ of which he is especially the head of gold, as the Mercy-Seat, the Ark's coverlid, was pure gold.

Gold is also preciousness, royal splendor and glory. Here is the true and eternal divine Head of Gold—Ruler of the nations—as Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon were the false, presumptuous human head of gold.

“His locks are bushy.”

The word “bushy,” occurring only once in the Bible, is taken by most lexicons to mean “waving palm branches,” symbol of victory, peace and joy.

The abundant flowing hair is also the multitudinous unity of the Son of Man (Rev. 1), for the hairs of his head (v. 14) are the many sons he has brought to glory.

“And black as a raven.”

Black normally indicates sorrow and affliction, as of the Bride in 1:5. But here we have not black as such, but black hair. The basis of the symbolism is the natural, and in the natural black hair speaks of youth and strength and vigor and health, as white hair is age and infirmity. Black hair was a welcome sign of health after leprosy (Lev. 13:37).

“His eyes are as doves.”

The eye is perception, intelligence, discernment—the mental viewpoint and outlook. The dove symbol is clear in Scripture. Its highest representation is when the Spirit of God appeared as a dove. From this all other meanings must flow. The dove is humility, guilelessness, gentleness, harmlessness, and peace.

With the eagle symbol, which also represents the Spirit of God, it shares the aspect of free, heavenly flight, of outspread wings; of freedom from earthly bondage. There is an eagle aspect to the operation of the Spirit, but the basic, permanent manifestation is the dove of gentleness and peace. God is a consuming fire as need may require, but God is Love ALWAYS and essentially.

“By the rivers of waters.”

Water is life and fruitfulness: cleansing: refreshing.

Water also can be affliction and tears (Psa. 69:14-15)—“Deliver me out of the deep waters: let not the waterfloods overflow me.”—not contradictory meanings, but all parts of one great whole. All things work together for good. Tribulation worketh patience (Rom. 8:20)—“He subjected the creation to vanity in hope.”

All things in life are interrelated, and sorrow and tears will at last bring forth life and joy (Psa. 126:6). The water that destroyed the wicked world saved the righteous Noah; and the water that destroyed the oppressor Pharaoh saved the people of God.

“Washed with milk.”

Again there are many shades of meaning. Milk is primarily the abundance of divine blessing—

“A land flowing with milk and honey.”

In Isa. 55 milk and wine are the free Gospel of salvation, the words of eternal life. To be able to digest milk only is a sign of sad infantile immaturity (1 Cor. 3:2). But though we must grow unto strong meat, still we must never advance beyond the point where we earnestly “desire the sincere milk of the Word” (1 Pt. 2:2) as our sound guidance and safe foundation.

Eyes washed with milk means pure and godly vision, a cleansed and enlightened outlook, viewing all things—understanding all things—by the light of the Gospel of Truth.

“And fitly set.”

Literally, as in the margin, “sitting in fullness,” a strange expression, but surely intended to direct our minds to the final consummation of the “fullness of Him that filleth all in all.”

Sitting is completion of work. The dove aspect “sitting in fullness,” is peace, end of labor, perfection—“It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell” (Col. 1:19).

*“His cheeks are as a bed of spices: as sweet flowers.”*

The flower-bloom of eternal youth and beauty. All things, except Christ, grow old and die. Nothing in this life is lasting, but of him it is said—

“Thou hast the dew of thy youth” (Psa. 110:3).

“They shall perish, but thou remainest: Thou art the same: thy years shall not fail.”

The greatest of present joys must so quickly pass into sorrow, and loss, and final loneliness. But Christ is ever young and ever new.

It is hard to really enjoy anything we know must at last and before long pass away. We have all experienced intense pleasures which in their very enjoyment have been sadness from knowing that in a short time they would be over and would never return. On only a slightly larger scale, this is life itself.

But there is more to “cheek” than this. “Cheek” or “cheeks” occurs 11 times in Scripture, other than in this Song. In all but two (and even one of these is related) there is a reference to submission to smiting and affliction—

“They smote the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek” (Mic. 5:1).

“If any man smite thee on one cheek, turn to him the other also” (Mt. 5:39).

Cheek, therefore, inescapably turns our minds to patient submission to abuse and loss and suffering for righteousness' sake.

It is this that gave Christ all his value and his beauty, and his present never-ending bloom of youth.

“His lips are like lilies.”

Most of the scriptural references to lilies are in the Song (8 times). All the others but one are either in the description of the ornamentation of Solomon's

temple, or in Christ's comparison of Solomon's glory to the greater glory of the lily.

The lily as a symbol of purity does not appear to be a scriptural idea, nor do the Bible lilies appear to have been white. The Bible lily appears to be a magnificent flower whose color ranged from pink to purple, and whose scriptural significance was God-bestowed, inherent glory, as contrasted with human, superficial glory.

“His lips like lilies” refer to the divine beauty of all that he said—the “words of grace” at which his hearers marveled—

“Never man spake like this man!”

“Dropping sweet smelling myrrh:”

The name myrrh is from the same root as Marah or Mary, meaning bitter, and refers to its bitter taste. The combination of bitter taste and a sweet odor make it a perfect type of the sacrificial affliction that beautifies the character and is a sweet incense unto God.

“His hands are as gold rings”—v. 14.

Rings are a symbol of sonship, royalty and authority. Nearly every reference to rings in Scripture, from Pharaoh's ring given to Joseph, to the father's ring given to the Prodigal Son, carries this meaning.

An inseparable part of the beauty of Christ is his relationship to God and his universal majesty and authority based on his faithfulness—a ring of gold: “This is My beloved Son.” “All power is given to me in heaven and in earth.”

“His belly is bright ivory overlaid with sapphires”

This word “belly”, which occurs 30 times, is in all cases except four translated “bowels.” It means internal organs. Its use is literal and physical. A Hebrew lexicon sums it up as “inward parts,” and that best conveys the meaning to us, as in Psa. 51 (though not the same word)—

“Thou desirest Truth in the inward parts.”

The word for “bright” literally means “elaborately worked so as to shine.” The type is clear and beautiful both as to the being worked or wrought, and the resultant shining. Heb. 10:5 contains the same thought: “A body hast Thou prepared me.”

The point is in the preparing—the inward working, developing, perfecting. Anything in this life that contributes to this process is good and a blessing from God. That is why “sorrow is better than laughter” (Ecc. 7).

“Finely wrought ivory overlaid with sapphires.” Ivory was always a symbol of splendor—here, of course, of the true inward splendor of a pure and perfect character—“inward parts.”

Besides general references of this nature in connection with the kings and wealthy classes of Israel, the most significant reference to ivory is in connection with Solomon's Temple where it would necessarily have a spiritual meaning.

“Overlaid with sapphires” intensifies the splendor of the representation, as though the pure white perfection of the ivory itself though precious, was not sufficient to represent the character of Christ.

Here again the type is clear and striking. All was of God, symbolized both by the fine working of the ivory and the overlaying with the heavenly sapphire blue. There must be the divine element throughout.

“His legs are pillars of marble”—v. 15.

We have had the “sitting in fullness”; here is the standing in strength—faithful, determined and enduring. “Stand fast” is a frequent scriptural exhortation.

To stand is also to have dominion, to have conquered and overcome, as to “stand upon the sea of glass” (Rev. 15:2).

And it is to pass triumphant through judgment—

“Who shall stand when he appeareth?” (Mal. 3:2).

Pillars and marble turn our minds to the Temple, both literal and spiritual—“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the Temple of my God” (Rev. 3:12)—an upholder and supporter of the edifice of God's presence.

The most precious marble is pure white. It is crystalline in structure, and its special luster and beauty is due to the fact that light penetrates the surface and is reflected from the multitude of crystals beneath. There is an obvious typical fittingness in this penetration of the light and its reflection from within.

“His countenance (that is, general appearance) is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.”

The figure of the mountain—(eminence and power and majesty—the mountain that fills the whole earth)—is combined with the royal, unperishing glory of the cedar. A mountain of cedar trees—a living, flourishing, fruitful mountain—each tree an individual part of the glorious multitudinous unity of power that will at last fill the earth with God's glory.

“His mouth is most sweet.”

This is not the common word for mouth, but rather, as the margin shows, “palate.” The idea involved is taste, rather than speech, as the consistent use of the word elsewhere makes clear. It is sometimes translated “taste” as in the Song itself (2:3), and in its first use, Job 6:30—

“Cannot my taste (marg: palate) discern perverse things?”

The idea of the heavenly beauty of his speech is covered in the earlier reference to the lips. Here the reference is to the unerring and unhesitating discernment and choice of that which is wholesome and good, and the rejection of everything that is in the slightest way fleshly or evil or impure. It is summed up in a similar figure in Isa. 7—

“Butter and honey shall he eat that he may know (that is, learn) to refuse the evil and choose the good.”

The lesson is that taste, appeal, desire, is not a blind, unchanging force to be catered to, but a delicate capacity and potentiality to be trained and developed and shaped to spiritual ends and satisfactions.

A child's untrained, undiscerning taste rejects the wide range and variety of taste experiences which the providence of God has provided in that which is good for food, and desires only sweets. The adult learns that bitterness mixed with the sweetness is a much richer and more satisfying experience.

In our present imperfect, incomplete, mortal condition, unalloyed sweetness soon becomes monotonous and sickening. We are not constituted to be able to stand it for long at a time.

The immortal state will be a perpetual intensity of joy without surfeit.

“Yea, he is altogether lovely”—v. 16.

Rather, literally, and much more impressively and vividly—

“The whole of him is loveliness.”

The power and beauty of Christ is his perfection. Nothing out of harmony; nothing to detract; no danger of later discovered flaws to disappoint and disillusion. Nothing to fear from the cruel, unsparing microscope of intimate familiarity.

The more minutely we examine him, the more beautiful he is revealed to be. This is an unflinching characteristic of all of God's handiwork, but never of anything of man's.

This is the pattern God has set before us—the ideal to which He would have us ceaselessly strive—the ultimate to which He will finally elevate the faithful.

“This is my Beloved; and this is my Friend.”

Why add “This is my Friend”? It would appear to be an anticlimax, but it is not. It is actually a deepening and enlarging of the picture. The figure is taken from natural things. “Beloved” expresses only a narrow and restricted and passing aspect of the broad range of personal relationships.

Upon reflection, we shall perceive that “Friend” is the fuller and the richer and the more inclusive and enduring, less self-centered, term—

“Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

IN Acts 20, Paul is on his last journey not knowing what would befall him, except that bonds and imprisonment awaited him. The chapter begins at the time of the uproar in Ephesus that brought his preaching to an end there. He had been there two years. It was the principal city of Asia Minor, and a logical center for him to operate from, not only for the increasingly numerous ecclesias of Asia Minor itself, but also of Macedonia and Greece.

Naturally speaking, this would have been the reasonable place for him to stay and work, for the most effective propagation of the Truth. But God's thoughts and ways are not man's. God had a greater and more glorious work for Paul—a work that required abuse and affliction, and a long bondage and imprisonment.

Paul was without comparison the most effective and fruitful instrument for the proclamation of the Gospel to the world, but God chose that he spend at least two years in confinement in Caesarea, awaiting trial, many months on a perilous voyage, and at least two more years in chains at Rome.

The first few verses of today's chapter briefly outline his farewell visits to all the ecclesias of Macedonia and Greece. The detailed story begins with his arrival back at Troas, on the northwest coast of Asia Minor. He has now set his face toward Jerusalem.

IN verse 7 we get the clearest indication and example we have of the custom of breaking bread on the first day of the week.

The Passover was over, and Paul was anxious to get to Jerusalem by Pentecost, 50 days later. This is why he did not visit Ephesus, but called the elders down to the coast to meet the ship.

But here (verse 6) he waited seven days at Troas. It would appear he had missed the assembly of the disciples by one day, and waited till the next first day, when they would all be together again.

As Bro. Roberts points out, the command to assemble and break bread is clear and unmistakable. To fail to do so is disobedience. Therefore, to have any meaning, the required frequency must have been indicated—if not as an unbreakable rule, certainly as the normal, desirable and expected thing.

The first day of the week was clearly not chosen for any particular convenience, because the 7th day was then, among the Jews (who were the first believers), the day of rest and freedom from work. So the first day must have been appointed for its significance—the day of the resurrection they were commemorating. That it might not just rest on this one incident at Troas (which could be just a local arrangement), we find a passing but quite strong allusion to it in 1 Cor. 16:2, which confirms the general practice.

There Paul tells the Corinthians to lay a portion aside each first day of the week, that there be no last minute scurry of collections when he should come to get the gift for the poor in Jerusalem. If he meant just for each to lay by privately, there would be no point in specifying a particular day, nor would it serve the purpose he mentions—of avoiding hurried collections when he came.

WE wonder what the lesson and significance is in the incident of Eutychus. It was, like many sad things turn out, to be a blessing in disguise. The occasion, of itself, would be one of great sorrow and intensity of feeling.

Paul would tell them as he told the Ephesians a few days later, that they would see his face no more, and that he was leaving them to face foretold but

unidentified perils and sufferings. Paul spoke to them until midnight. The brethren would be enjoying, for the last precious time, the pleasure of Paul's inspiration, and deep understanding, and godly example.

The sudden tragedy of Eutychus at this point would be a terrible blow of grief and shock, added to the general sadness of the occasion. And the equally sudden, glorious resurrection, dramatically effected by Paul after the manner of Elijah (verse 10) would be an even greater shock to their keyed-up emotions.

In view of this manifestation of the supreme divine power of life and death, the whole atmosphere of the assembly would be changed. Though saddened to lose Paul, they could hardly continue to be sorrowful or despondent.

They would see so much more vividly that all things—even the sleep of death itself—were harmonious parts of a triumphant divine plan—all in God's hands—and that Paul's labors and trials were a necessary part of that plan.

The sudden, dramatic death and resurrection of Eutychus at the midnight hour was a direct divine commentary and confirmation of Paul's teaching.

After this experience, few could have been tired, few could have slept. Paul continued the discussion many more hours until daybreak.

At daybreak, Paul took off alone to walk the seven miles across the peninsula to the port of Assos on the other side, while all the rest of his company went the longer way around by ship.

Why did he choose—after an active, sleepless night—to walk, and to go alone? We are not told why, but we are told that he did so, and so there must be some lesson in it for us.

Though he had many close companions from time to time—brave, devoted, pure-hearted men, like the disciples of Christ—Paul was still in reality, like Christ, very much alone.

In fact, everyone is, in the ultimate, very much alone. Communication, even at its most intimate, is very imperfect and limited, and leaves 9/10ths of the inner soul unreached.

But with Paul this was more than ever true. He was a special man, with special revelations, a special mission and a special burden. He had communications and revelations of which he could speak to no one.

On this final journey, via Jerusalem to Rome, all his companions endeavored to dissuade him, though he knew by the Spirit that he must go. It does not seem that anyone was close enough to him to understand.

After the experiences of the night—the many long hours of intense and active communication, of which he was the continual focus and source of power—after the emotionally and physically exhausting experience of the death and raising again of Eutychus, he would have to be alone to think and to recuperate, for the trials that lay ahead.

THE next stop of which we have detail was Miletus, the seaport for Ephesus, to where he called the Ephesian elders to meet him. Verse 18 to the end is his farewell address to them, in which, like Moses, and Joshua, and Samuel, he reviews to them his ministry and his way of life among them.

It is a very moving and instructive address, as he reminds them of his many trials, of his faithful, ceaseless proclamation of the “whole counsel” of God, of his emphasis on their responsibility, of his charge to carry on after he is gone, of his solemn warning and prophecy that of their own selves misguided men would arise whose teaching would rend the Body and lead many astray, of his earnest commendation of the all-powerful Word of God's grace which was able to supply all the strength and wisdom needed to overcome every obstacle and deliver from every error, and finally, of how—though with a great burden of teaching—he had not only supported himself but labored so as to be able to support others also.

He closes his exhortation with the one direct precept of Christ that does not occur in any of the records of Christ's own teaching, and yet which sums up all his life and teaching—

“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

It is not necessarily material things. That's a very small part of the picture. And the amount is quite unimportant. The widow's two mites were more than all the rich men's combined abundance. It does not have to be much at all. It just has to be EVERYTHING we have, to mean anything.

Nor does it mean that, in any particular instance, the giver is more blessed than the receiver.

Everyone can always be givers. Sometimes we give best by receiving. Sometimes it is the only way open to us.

It is giving of ourselves—giving as a way of life, rather than wanting, and getting, and hoarding.

It is living outwards instead of inwards.

It is more blessed; it is more happy; it is more exciting and satisfying; it is more constructive and unifying; it is more Christlike and more Godlike.

That is the main point—it is more Godlike. God Himself is the Great Giver—

“He that spared not His Own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with him also freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8:32).

What could God, Who has everything in limitless abundance—what could He give and make it a meaningful sacrifice?

He gave His only beloved Son: His greatest treasure.

“IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE.”

It is the precious privilege of partnership with God. These were Paul's last words to them. Kneeling down, he prayed with them, and then bade them

farewell and returned to the ship.  
G.V.Growcott

Bro.

## Red Sea Deliverance

The Red Sea is about 1,350 miles long and about 250 miles wide at the midsection gradually diminishing toward the Suez Canal. If we were to go there today we would discover that it has been turned into a huge resort area. Complete with tours, cruises, and high-priced hotels.

There is some discussion about the true name of the Red Sea. Strong's Concordance says, "Probably of Egyptian origin; a reed, especially the papyrus: - flag. Red [sea], weed." Looking at the King James concordance we see that it was translated red 24 times, although each time in conjunction with the word sea, flags 3 times, and 1 time weeds. However, in the New Testament where it speaks of the Red Sea it uses a Greek word which means red. Also the Septuagint uses the same word throughout. The land of Esau or Edom has the Red Sea as a border and it may have acquired the name from there. Irregardless of which you prefer red or reed, the name has the same spiritual significance. The red signifying sin and the weed the sinful dross of humanity destroyed at Christ's return.

While we are speaking of symbols of sin and darkness, we can't help but turn our minds toward the land of Egypt. The Black Land was ancient Egypt's name for itself. And the Black Land it was, full of darkness with no knowledge or understanding of God.

At the time of the Red Sea deliverance Egypt was at the peak of her power. It was the superpower of its time. At its height, the Egyptian Empire was without peer in the ancient world. Egypt had never before attained such wealth and influence, and it would never again reach that level. Not only was Egypt brought low by this remarkable event, but it is said that History herself was born on the night that Moses led Israel out of Egypt. Before that time most records were nonexistent and clouded in legend. But from the time Israel departed from Egypt and developed into a nation, history becomes much clearer.

I believe that Amenhotep II was probably the pharaoh of the Exodus. By the way, Pharaoh means great house. There are several good reasons for believing Amenhotep II, who ruled during the 18th Dynasty, was the pharaoh of the Exodus. We learn from the Dream Stela of Thutmose IV, son of Amenhotep II, that he was not the legitimate successor to the throne (J.B. Pritchard (ed.), *Ancient Near-Eastern Texts*, p. 449). This means that Thutmose IV was not the firstborn son, who would have been the legitimate heir. The firstborn son of Amenhotep II had evidently died prior to taking the throne of Egypt. We know from Exodus 12:29 the pharaoh's first-born son was killed during the Passover. After 158 years of empire-building, the 18th Dynasty entered a sixty-year period of implosion slow at first, but speeding

onward toward ultimate collapse. After the death of Thutmose IV, who ruled only about eight to ten years, the next two kings, Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten), could not stop the Egyptian Dynasty from slipping away. The Bible provides the perfect explanation for the demise of the 18th Dynasty and the downfall of the boys from Thebes. The biblical account of the Exodus explains the events that wreaked havoc in Lower Egypt. First there are the plagues. Followed by the spoiling of Egypt (Exodus 12:35,36). Then there were the vast labor losses when the mixed multitude left (Exodus 12:38). Finally the huge military losses when God destroyed the army in the Red Sea. Irregardless of its power and wealth Egypt, or any other country for that matter, could not survive the devastation God had delivered on them. Is it not on record that which was told pharaoh after the plague of locusts, (Exodus 10:7) "knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?" In our age of the world's history, we have reached a time when the results of the Egyptian destruction with its signs and wonders are thought of as mere fables and bedtime stories. The natural man with his proud and haughty heart esteems this event unworthy of belief, unwilling to see the lessons God has provided.

One of the things we know of Amenhotep II is that he was a very proud warrior. Historians have found commemorative artifacts of a time when he drove a chariot with a full complement of horses at full speed and with his bow, shot an arrow through an 8 in. bronze disk. He was a man who was hard, willful, with a violent temper, and no fear of God in his heart. Here is a man raised to power with a perfect disposition to fulfill God's purpose. Here was a military man who upon hearing the route taken by the Israelites and of their current location by the Red Sea was able to say (Exodus 14:3) "They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in." Militarily they were in an indefensible position which was a temptation to the mighty pharaoh. The natural pride of the human heart was enticed into pursuit, capture, and re-enslavement of the escaping multitude. So we see it did not take much for God to harden Pharaoh's heart, that he and his advisers might say (Exodus 14:5) "Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" This record of Pharaoh is a beautiful example of how God judgeth (Ezekiel 18:30) "every one according to his ways".

Israel in its indefensible position, an enormous multitude of men, women, and children encumbered with sheep, cattle, and the chattel removed from Egypt, felt themselves to be in a desperate position. They knew very well the strength and rage of the Egyptians, and their own weakness, though they were numerous, they were all on foot, unarmed, undisciplined. Panic would grab their heart when they saw the army of Pharaoh approaching. In their great fear (Exodus 14:10) "the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD." These were not the prayers of the meek in faith and trust requesting deliverance. Even after witnessing all the miracles and it got them this far they could not show forth the love and faith God requires of his children. They were as the teeming masses around us, allowing the natural man to burst forth in bitterness and

savagery. (Exodus 14:11-12) “And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.” It's all your fault Moses. You are going to get us all killed. Of course, we are not at all like these people. When something goes wrong we would never say it was your fault, you did it, and we never get mad because things are not going the way we think they should. Do we say, “I don't care what that brother said?” If “that brother” spoke faithfully, pointing to Scriptures then the remark really means I don't care what the Bible says. And that is the fatal mistake. It is the same reasoning, the cause for the first century brethren to go astray in such basic principles as immersion, the God Head, and the promises.

The Egyptians knew the Sons of Jacob as a race of bondmen, and bondmen they expected them to remain. A small group of people in Egypt were looking at that time in Egypt very differently. How large or small of an assembly we do not know. We are told that Moses was one of them, because when he was 40, he thought his brethren should understand how God would deliver them by his hand (Acts 7:25). His father and mother were included because they were the teachers of Moses, of whom it is confirmed that by faith he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. It is said of them that by faith they were not afraid of the king's commandment. They must have cherished the words spoken by Joseph before he died, as we should treasure the word of Truth which has been left for us.

The apostles indicated that these things were shadows and figures. (Colossians 2:17) (Hebrews 8:5; 10:1). God never does anything without a reason. In the Prophets He often asks Israel to consider His reasons. Sometimes, it is our responsibility to submit and obey when we do not understand what is planned or why we should obey. We must take the time to think and ponder, if our actions centered on pleasing “self” or God. Do we consider ourselves right when all around us say nay. Nevertheless, understanding is at the basis of all His appointments, as it is at the basis of all His works in Nature. As Solomon has shown, the lessons abound for the discerning mind. We need to fill ourselves with the things of God. Leaving no room for the “flesh pots of Egypt.” It would not be out of place to apply, to our own time, what we see of Israel's time in Egypt. We could see much suffering before our Master's return and deliverance from Egypt. Joseph “made himself strange” to his brethren, even to the point of orchestrating severe suffering for them before making himself known. Israel's affliction in Egypt grew more bitter as the time of release drew near. The whole nation was placed in dire straits just before Pharaoh's overthrow in the Red Sea. The darkest moment of the disciples' experience was just before the resurrection of Christ. So it may be Christ's brethren may be put into severe trials immediately prior to His return.

Regardless of how fearful Israel felt or how we feel, our heavenly Father has a plan and purpose in place, whether we see how it is working in our case or not. We are required to have the meek and humble faith of Moses, knowing all things are working toward our benefit no matter how distressing our current situation is. Think of poor Moses, every man's hand against him. Pharaoh's army approaching with a vengeance and his people Israel afraid for their lives blaming him for the situation they are in. In these dreadful circumstances he held on to the only support that could provide comfort, the Word of the Lord. He tried to share what he himself possessed. He said to Israel (Exodus 14:13) “Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will show to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever.” Moses met their unbelief and fear with the energy and courage provided by strong faith, and promised them such help from the Lord, that they would never see again the Egyptians, whom they had seen that day. With the knowledge of God that His word provides, we should be able to exercise faith in our own times of trouble.

We are all aware of the Divine judgment that came upon the army of Pharaoh but did we ever considered the mercy that Yahweh manifested toward him. He was not struck dead when he first resisted Gods purpose. Actually, when we give it a little thought, we realize he was preserved and protected. He was not destroyed by the plagues that swept Egypt. God through Moses had given Pharaoh many opportunities to change. But being spiritually blind with no knowledge, love, or understanding he could not see that he owed any thing to God. He let the natural man be in control, therefore his evil, obstinate heart blinded him to the mighty stretched out arm of God. In this case God made the “wrath of man” to praise him. As a result, the staff or rod of the meek and lowly shepherd from Sinai's desert became more powerful in Egypt than the scepter of a proud and arrogant King.

Even as God showed mercy unto Pharaoh, he showed mercy unto a, stiff-necked people Israel that he might glorify His Name (Deuteronomy9:6). He showed them many signs and wonders that they might know the one true God. He had His angels with them in their journey. We see from Exodus 14:19 “And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them:” God made manifest what was hidden to Israel. He lit the path so Israel would see the True path of righteousness, the way of true happiness and service to our Lord. And in his mercy he kept those who would not serve Him shrouded in darkness so that they might not see the glory of Divine deliverance promised to Israel. (Luke 8:10) “that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.” the majesty and beauty of Divine redemption. (Proverbs 4:18-19) “But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.” We have the light of scriptures before us so we might know the true path and not walk in darkness.

The nation of Israel was under Divine protection. We have the same protection when we surrender ourselves wholly to God. Angels of God were with them and gave aid as God commanded them. When the army of Egypt was approaching Israel God had the chariot wheels removed. Whether you believe the wheels were bogged and mired down or physically removed, it was still an element of Divine protection. And it produced the desired affects. It gave Israel the protection that was needed and showed the glory and power of the Almighty God. The Egyptians then knew “the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians.”

The experiences that Israel had are a lesson for us. The route that Israel took was not the direct and easy route. Israel's deliverance was not accomplished without trouble and anguish to all concerned. When a person comes to a knowledge of the Truth they rejoice at the freedom that opens out before them. But difficulties, hardships, and problems soon appear. Then the choice must be made. Sometimes the difficulties seem impossible to overcome. The pressure of the problem or problems keep mounting and weigh heavily upon us. We can see the things of this world, the leeks and good things of Egypt, while our problems are bearing down upon us. Are we sometimes disposed to turn back? Such an action is fatal. We think this will relieve us of all the problems of life but it will not. It will only add to them and make them worse. We can always pray for help, guidance, and the strength to overcome them. But if we leave the Truth, forsake the assembling of brethren, and put ourselves outside of Christ there is no hope. Israel saw the practical difficulties in the way of their deliverance. This caused them to rebel against Moses, Aaron, and most importantly God. The song of Moses (Deut. 32) testifies against them. They are the children in whom there is no faith. They cast off the only thing in life worth having.

We will always have difficulties. Problems are put in the way for our learning. God has decreed that (Acts 14:22) “we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” The tribulation we go through is never the same from one person to the next, from one family to another, or from one ecclesia to the next. When we read of the first century brethren we see their trials. We see they were beaten and given to abusive treatment by those around them and the authorities. They often suffered the loss of property, were frequently jailed, and sometimes lost their lives. We live in a different era. God has deemed that our trials and suffering be of a different nature, although that is not always the case. The apostle Paul wrote that if we are without chastisement (Hebrews 12:8) “whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.” The true sons and daughters will have a sense of worry when they perceive they are living a life of ease and can observe none of the difficulties which shape our character into one that is pleasing and acceptable to our heavenly Father. What these difficulties are to produce in us, are changes in our thinking and attitude, which cannot be appreciated by the flesh. They will however, if we put God first in all things, produce a character acceptable and pleasing in the eyes of God.

It was quite natural for Israel to desire the easy way and the pleasant things that were in Egypt. They lusted after the flesh that pleasing toys that catch the eye of the natural man. If they could look at things with the spiritual eye, the eye of discernment, they would have seen things differently. The Egypt they wanted so badly was a land of death. They were on a road, a path, full of life and promise. If only they had an eye to see the miracles and divine blessings before them. Viewed in the proper perspective what are the pleasures of Egypt, the pleasures of sin for a season, worth? What is it that we hold dear in this life? What is the most important thing in our lives? It is very easy to let the garlic and leeks of Egypt monopolize our lives, to let the animal pleasures of the natural man dominate our lives. On what subjects do we hold our conversations and thoughts, our Egyptian toys or the Things of the Kingdom? Do we forsake spiritual food for the sake of the natural earthy things? When we realize that we have the spectacle before us of Israel, concerning whom the promises were made, and who having seen the miracles done for their benefit looked at what was done with perverse and carnal eyes, crying to go back to Egypt, we observe how powerful the draw of our fleshly tendencies is.

But the easy way, seeking our consolations from Egypt, is not the proper way of deliverance from evils. Brother Roberts once wrote, “Never having in reality accepted the divine teaching that ‘whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth,’ he fails to be reasonably exercised by the chastening when it comes, and in the words of Christ, ‘is offended,’ or stumbles, and driven by it to be discouraged in all divine directions. He loses his interest in the truth: he ceases to find any pleasure in the duties associated with it: he returns to ways he had abandoned, and seeks to soothe the asperities of this sin-stricken state of existence in the exercises, occupations, and pursuits of the old man, in pleasure, business, or worldly association.” (The Christadelphian, Volume 22, 1885, Page 104) We are given an entirely different way to look at the rough road that stands before us in our time of trouble. The apostle Peter wrote (1 Peter 5:6), “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:” Paul gave this instruction to the Hebrews (Hebrews 12:5), “My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:” And again from Peter we read, 1 Peter 4:12-13) “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.”

We also have many examples of the saints of God in dreadful trials in the Old Testament. We easily bring to mind Job as an example, but our brother Growcott produced an exhortation entitled “I Will Return To My First Husband;” from which this stimulating quote is taken, denoting additional trials endured by the prophets of old (Be Ye Transformed, page 305). “To Jeremiah, God said, in Judah's last days ‘Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place. For I have taken away My peace from this people, saith the Lord, even loving kindness and mercies’

(Jer. 16:1-5). Ezekiel's prophetic burden was more terrible than this. God said to him 'Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shalt thy tears run down. . .forbear to cry; make no mourning for the dead.' And Ezekiel says 'At even my wife died, and I did in the morning as I was commanded' (Eze. 24:16-18). But Hosea's task was yet more difficult, more personal, and more prolonged. He was commanded as a testimony of God's great, unmerited goodness and love to Israel; to love, marry, nourish and protect, a faithless and licentious woman, who would abandon him, but who in due course, after prolonged patience and kindness be reconciled to him in faithfulness and truth."

As we have been informed, Ezekiel was also told how to live and what his living conditions would-be, (Ezekiel 2:6) "And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house." From Pharaoh, Moses, Israel, and all the examples given it is plainly shown that our attitude is not a matter of indifference. When we go through a trial it is our mental faculties that are being shaped and it is our behavior as a matter of great importance.

The lesson then, for us to remember, is that much is required of them to whom much is given. We cannot waste time seeking after or playing with the mundane things of Egypt. We must make the most of our opportunities to act as faithful servants. We have the blessings peaceful meetings, freedom of speech, ease of travel, easily acquired bibles, and volumes of exposition material written by our pioneer brethren. Blessings which undoubtedly are divinely arranged in order that the preaching of the truth be not suppressed and the proclamation of the gospel of the kingdom may go forth so that the people may be made ready for the coming of the Lord.

Israel was told to go forward. (Exodus 14:15-16) "And the LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea." And as Israel was told to go forward we in like manner have the same responsibility. It is our responsibility to show forth the true gospel. To make sure that knowledge of the one true God is going forward as completely as possible in these cloudy and dark times. In Search Me Oh God (page 71) Bro. Growcott wrote, "Living is GROWTH. Where there is no growth there is stagnation, and—at last—death. And it must be growth in real, permanent, lasting things—things connected with God and eternity. How can marking time and wasting time on death row, playing tiddledywinks, be called 'living'? And that's all the present natural life is: filling up the time with some mind-dulling distraction, until it comes our turn to die. That was not the destiny God planned for man, but it is the one most choose." Israel consistently refused to go forward. Consistently refusing the

opportunities presented to them by God. When they arrived on the borders of the land of promise they sent 12 men to spy the land. When they received their report the whole congregation revolted against Moses and Aaron refusing to go forward. They wanted to stone Moses and return to the land of Egypt. The LORD rescued Moses and sentenced the whole congregation to a 40 year sojourn in the wilderness. Israel wanted to choose the easier flesh pleasing way of life rather than do the difficult non-flesh-pleasing work of service to God. How many times have we said or heard I don't want to "read on the Truth, study the bible, write an exhortation, prepare for Bible class," because it's too difficult, or I don't enjoy doing that. There must not be inactivity in the Truth; we must go forward or perish as Israel did in the wilderness.

In Egypt Israel was under bondage to Pharaoh. They partook of a life that was limited to sin and death. Consider what the crossing of the Red Sea meant for Israel. Rising up out of the figurative death they left darkness, began a new life, began a new fellowship, and began a new service. They changed masters, from Pharaoh and to God. Between the two masters there was a barrier, the Red Sea. The crossing of the Red Sea illustrated the separation between Egypt and Israel. This also illustrates the clear and distinct barrier between those who put on the Saving Name and those who place themselves in the perilous position, for whatever reason, of being unable to solidify their position through the waters of baptism.

The complete crossing of the Red Sea was the national baptism of a whole nation. (1 Corinthians 10:1-2) "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;" in one day the nation of Israel was born of water by passing through the sea in the night and morning. The baptism unto Moses was part of a shadow whose substance is in Christ. Like circumcision, the sprinkling of the Passover Lamb, the washing of the priests, and other Mosaic ceremonies it was a type of things to come. It was a typical justification from the defilement committed by them during their Egyptian bondage. It depended on their subsequent conduct whether they would obtain the anti-typical justification provided in Christ. As all who are familiar with the history of Israel are aware it did not take long for their conduct to show forth their true desires. This is one of the lessons that we are to learn from their example.

There is no difference between them and us in our faith. Their faith was to be on Him who should come into the world and ours is to be on Him who has come into the world, Christ. This is simply a point of time, there is no difference in principle, for Paul testifies that they all ate and drank of the same, that is Christ. (1 Corinthians 10:3-4) "And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." As it was with Israel, so with ourselves, much is dependent on our subsequent conduct upon passing through the waters of baptism. Crossing of the Red Sea illustrates separation between the people of the world and the people of God. We came

out and became separate. There are several reasons why this is a wise policy. It will strengthen us to remain faithful to the gospel despite the dissatisfaction of friends and the slander and condemnation of those that speak evil of the things they understand not. We are encouraged to pursue a course which is not popular with the world in following a narrow way denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts. We have on record the exhortation of the apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:17 “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.” We are to be separate, physically and mentally, from all that is worldly, that which is unclean and defiling. We are to be devoted to God. We must follow in the example of Moses who did as he was commanded.

Moses was commanded to lift up the rod. But what rod is this that was to be lifted up? It was the rod that was present during the miracles done before Egypt. Either Aaron or Moses had the rod with them when they pronounced the judgments against Egypt. When we look at the first plague we see the importance of this Rod. It was straight and upright but when Aaron did as the Lord commanded and threw it to the ground, it became a serpent. It is recorded in Ecclesiastes 7:29 “Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright” Man rejected the upright state, and so he became the seed of the serpent. Yet it is God's plan and purpose that man should return to an upright state. Throughout the Scripture and in history the rod is used as a symbol of rulership. And of all the rulers who ever were and who ever shall be; who was more worthy to be held on high than the “Rod out of the Stem of Jesse”? (Isa. 11:1). When Luke recorded the transfiguration in chapter 9:31 he wrote, “Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.” It's interesting to note that the word translated decease is in reality the word Exodus. All who look to Christ, following after Him with a sincere heart, unwavering desire and determination, will be led along the path that leads to the upright state.

Moses held up his hand, the water separated, and the path was before Israel. God's Law is life and love. God's Law is the law of the Spirit of Life, the shining light leading from death to life. “He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake.” The Psalmist knew and rejoiced that God's Law was lovingly designed to restore the soul from the selfish ways of sadness and death, and to lead through the path of peace and righteousness to everlasting life.

Our Bro. Thomas wrote of this moment, (Eureka, Vol. 3, page 453) “They had just put on Moses, having been all baptized into him in the cloud and in the sea (1 Cor. 10:2). They now constituted the One Body of Moses, and the Firstborn Son of Yahweh (Exod. 4:22; Zech. 3:2; Jude 9): and when they arrived at Sinai, fifty days after the institution of the Passover, they became the kingdom of the Deity (Exod. 19:5, 6, 8). These events signalize the katabole tou kosmou, or “foundation of the world;” to which frequent reference is made in the New Testament, in connection with the prepositions pro, before, and apo, from, since, etc. (Matt. 25:34; 13:35; Luke 11:50; Jhn.

17:24). They also signalize the beginning of the Aion, or Olahm, or Course of Time, the duration of which was hidden from all but the Father, who reserved the precise year of its termination as a secret with Himself (Mark 13:32; Matt. 24:36). The Mosaic Aion was a Course of Time identical with the continuance of the Mosaic Kosmos, or Order of Things. The beginning of the one was the beginning of the other, and synchronical with the singing of this beautiful prophetic ode.”

The ode he referred to was the Song of Moses and his translation was too beautiful and sublime not to include. It is a song of Yahweh as a Man of War which shall be sung by the saints at the fall of the Roman Catholic beast at the end of the last seven plagues (Rev. 15:3 – 4).

Bro. Thomas writes, “The following is the song of Moses, which was sung by Moses and the Israelites, standing by the Red Sea, through which they had just passed; and which they now surveyed with feelings of triumph, as the tomb of Pharaoh's host. It is a memorial of the nation's deliverance from the Egyptians, and prophetic of its future salvation under the lead of the prophet like unto Moses, and the Saints.

The translation of King James' bishops, I have “diligently compared” with the original, and “revised;” it will be found, I think, an improvement upon the Common Version. I have transferred the titles of the ETERNAL POWER; and translated them in the bracketed spaces following.

Thus they sang, saying:

1. ‘I will sing to YAHWEH, (He who shall be) for He is greatly exalted: The horse and His rider he hath cast into the sea.
2. YAH (an abbreviated form of Yahweh) is my strength and my song And He hath become my salvation! He is my AIL (Strength, or Power), and Him will I extol; My fathers' ELOHIM (MIGHTY ONES), and Him will I exalt.
3. YAHWEH is a Man of war; YAHWEH is His name.
4. Pharaoh's chariots and hosts He cast into the sea; His chosen captains also He drowned in the Red Sea.
5. The roaring billows covered them; They went down to the bottom as a stone.
6. Thy right hand, O YAHWEH, is glorious in power; Thy right hand, O YAHWEH, hath crushed the foe.
7. And in the greatness of Thine excellency, Thou hast overthrown Thine adversaries! Thou sentest forth Thy burning anger, It shall consume them as stubble.
8. And by the blast of Thy nostrils the waters were heaped up The floods stood erect as a heap; The depths congealed in the midst of the sea.
9. The enemy said, I will pursue; I will overtake; I will divide the spoil;

My lust shall be satisfied upon them:  
 I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy them.  
 10. Thou didst blow with Thy spirit, the sea covered them;  
 They sank like lead in the mighty waters.  
 11. Who is like unto Thee among the mighty ones (Ailim), YAHWEH!  
 Who like Thee glorious in holiness,  
 Terrible, worthy of praises, doing wonders?  
 12. Thou stretchedst out Thy right hand,  
 The earth swallowed them up.  
 13. Thou hast led forth in Thy goodness the people whom Thou  
 hast redeemed;  
 Thou hast conducted in Thy might to the habitation of Thy holiness.  
 14. Peoples shall hear; and they shall tremble;  
 Terror seized the inhabitants of Palestina.  
 15. Then the Dukes of Edom shall be affrighted;  
 Trembling shall seize the mighty ones of Moab;  
 All the inhabitants of Canaan shall be dissolved.  
 16. There shall fall upon them terror and dread;  
 By the greatness of Thy power they shall be still as a stone;  
 Until, O YAHWEH, Thy people pass over;  
 Until the people whom Thou hast purchased pass over.  
 17. Thou wilt bring them in, and plant them,  
 In the mountain of Thy inheritance; The place, O YAHWEH, Thou hast  
 made for thee to dwell in;  
 The holy place, O ADONAI (noun plural, Lords) Thy hands have  
 established.  
 18. YAHWEH shall reign for the Olahm (the Hidden Period) and beyond.  
 And Miriam the Prophetess, Aaron's sister with a chorus of  
 women, answered Moses and the Israelites, saying,  
 21. 'Sing ye to YAHWEH, for He is grandly exalted;  
 The horse and his rider He hath cast into the sea' (Exodus 15:1-8,21)."

If we are truly walking down the path of righteousness we appreciate the absolute control that God has over our lives. It is part of our calling at the present time that we are not to begrudge our position in life. It is difficult for us as we unconsciously tend to absorb dangerous tendencies from those around us. It is our portion at the present time that we should be passive like Christ. Not vindictive, but to suffer wrong, taking it patiently with our trust in God. Jesus did not come to destroy men's lives but he came to save them. This expresses our present relation to fellowman. We are not at liberty to do harm. We must overcome the old man of the flesh and be in practice a cut above the ordinary man. We cannot be angry and vent our frustration upon the object of our dislike. How can we become children of the Highest if we say and do malicious things, or if we are spiteful and hurtful to others? We cannot be mean to those who would cause us to suffer but quite to the contrary we must help them in their hour of need and not rejoice at their misfortune. It is the will

of our heavenly Father that we should so suffer. Not because it is right for us to suffer wrong but it is good for us to endure. God is angry at wrong being done, but for our sakes that He might prepare a people fit for the purposes He has prepared for them, He permits it for now. There was one safe path for the children of Israel to follow to be delivered from the darkness of Egypt by way of the Red Sea. The same is true for us we have only one path to follow, Christ first, last, and always. "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenants and his testimonies" (Psa. 25:10).

Our Bro. Thomas believed that certain prophecies, including the Song of Moses, required Christ to go down into Egypt and bring out the Jews that are there, asserting that the whole nation might be brought again through the Red Sea and into a covenant relationship. In our day Russia, the Arabs, and the Papacy denounce the nation of Israel as thieves who stole Arab lands. It is clear that as soon as they can they will destroy or deport them. This puts them in agreement with the prophecies of Zechariah (13:8 & 14:2). At that time they will suffer that they also may be prepared for the use God has arranged. This last time of Jacob's trouble will be the most evil Israel has endured; worse than the oppression in Egypt; more dreadful, more horrific than any thing done by the Assyrians, Babylonians, Romans, or even that which was done in our modern age by Hitler.

Some may ask, how can God do this? How can He let Israel His chosen people suffer? It is because they forgot His name and His praise, casting away the law of the Lord, and despised the Word of the Holy One of Israel. We learn from the prophets that while in Egypt they worshipped the idols, they brought the institutions of Egypt into the wilderness with them, and for 40 years carried their idolatrous gods with them. Why did God afflict Egypt with great plagues and drown the army of Pharaoh in the Red Sea? Obviously it was not because of favoritism towards the children of Israel. The children of Israel were ceaseless in their rebellion against Moses and had not God been with him the people would have destroyed him and Aaron. Egypt was afflicted and Israel delivered, "that His name might be declared in all the earth." (Exodus 9:16) "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." It was also declared in Deuteronomy chapter 4 verses 32 – 35, "For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it? Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live? Or hath God attempted to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? Unto thee it was showed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he is God; there is none else beside him."

God could have decimated the Egyptians in a single night. But it would not have served His purpose, which was to make his existence and power known to all manner of men. He did this in the only way the self-absorbed natural fleshly **152—Berean 2006** man could understand by the intelligently directed power for the achievement of a specific objective. (Joshua 4:24) “That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the LORD your God forever.” The completeness of this result can be noted in the tenacious faith the Jewish race has maintained in Moses throughout all their generations. The Jews today are witness to the effectiveness of what God did because it is impossible to remove from their mind the belief in the God of Israel. The job was done successfully and will be done again on a greater scale. God has returned the Jews to Israel for a purpose. He tells them (Ezekiel 36:32), “Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.” (Ezekiel 36: 22). God will continue with His work and he will write a name for himself in the minds of the self absorbed, idol worshiping millions; that all mankind may know that they are guilty before Him; that He may be glorified in the manifestation of Divine favor and that no flesh may glory in His presence. Bro. Beryl Snyder

## Bible Readings Notes - May

It has been well said that the best way of attaining a thorough conviction of the authenticity and genuineness of the Scriptures, and of the divine character of their origin, is to read them constantly. Infidelity is largely due to ignorance of their contents. The apostle Paul says, “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Cor. 2:14). This spiritual discernment is not acquired all at once. “Precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little” (Isa. 28:10). Hence the need for regular, daily, systematic reading of the Word, to assist in which the tables of the “Bible Companion” for May are printed herewith, in conjunction with these notes. According to this plan, the daily readings in the Old Testament are Deuteronomy, chapters 18 to 34; Joshua, chapters 1 to 17; the Song of Solomon; and Isaiah, chapters 1 to 23.

### DEUTERONOMY

In chapter 18, verse 20, there is a reference to the coming of “a prophet like unto Moses.” The apostle Peter applies these words to Christ in Acts 3:22. Moses was a prophet, a mediator, a law-giver, and a ruler, and in each of these aspects he typified Christ, whose mission will not be completed until he rules the world (Acts 17:31). Chapters 19 to 26 contain a catalogue of laws for the regulation of Israel, nationally. Their high moral code is universally recognized, and a faithful observance of them would have assured Israel of a full measure of happiness, prosperity, and contentment. Moses foretold the

apostasy of Israel, and the consequent evil which would befall them in the latter days (chap. 31:29). He foretold, in minute detail, the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans, and the subsequent dispersion of the Jews (chap. 28). As an example of fulfilled prophecy, this chapter furnishes the strongest evidence for the Truth of the Bible. Notice the reference in chapter 30 to the conditional nature of Israel's tenure of the Promised Land, thus showing that it was not a fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham (Gen. 13:15). Chapter 32 contains the Song of Moses, commemoration of the mighty works of God in the past, and prophetic of His manifest power in the future, when His servants will triumph over His enemies, and subdue all nations (Rev. 15:3). Chapter 33 describes Moses' blessing of the twelve tribes before his death. His utterances are prophetic of the time when the twelve tribes will be regathered to their own land, and ruled by Christ and his twelve apostles (Matt. 19:28).

### JOSHUA

This book narrates the conquest and occupation of the Promised Land by the Israelites under Joshua. Chapter 1 records the Lord's charge to Joshua: “Be thou strong and very courageous.” Further, “this book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night.” Herein lay the secret of Joshua's outstanding faith. The apostle Paul sets forth the same principle in writing to the Romans (chap. 10:17): “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Chapters 6 to 11 describe the conquest of Jericho, Ai, and other cities of Canaan. Unbelievers have pointed derisively to the appalling slaughters recorded in these chapters, but it must be remembered that “for the wickedness of those nations” they were driven out before Israel and destroyed. They were steeped in iniquity and debauchery. Moreover, they were the unlawful occupants of the land long since covenanted by the Proprietor to the seed of Abraham. Their harmful influence is well illustrated in the evil wrought among Israel by the scattered remnants of the Canaanitish nations who were not destroyed. Chapter 12 recapitulates the names of the kings smitten by Moses and Joshua. It is interesting because it is typical of the future conquest of the land by Jesus, when he goes forth as a Man of war to fight against the Gentile nations. Moses proceeded northward from the Sinaitic Peninsula and subdued the nations on the east side of Jordan. Joshua crossed over Jordan at the north end of the Dead Sea, and conquered the thirty-one kings who reigned west of Jordan. Notice the reference to the king of Jerusalem (verse 10) and of Megiddo (verse 21). Jesus will take the same route when he proceeds from Sinai northward to Bozrah in Edom (Isa. 63:1), and encounters the confederacy of nations (Ezra 38:4) whom he destroys at Armageddon (Rev. 16:16). After Joshua's conquests “the land had rest from war.” The same peaceful condition will succeed the subjugation of the world by Christ (Isa. 9:7).

### THE SONG OF SOLOMON

This book describes in beautiful imagery the mutual affection between a bridegroom and his espoused wife. It is a prefigurement of the union of Christ

and his immortalized friends in the Kingdom of God. Frequent reference is made to the figure in the New Testament (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:23; Rev. 19:7). **154—Berean 2006** Notice the allusions to the spotless character of Christ. “My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand” (chap. 5:10); “the altogether lovely” (chap. 5:16). Observe also the various characteristics of the bride, which depict the distinctive features of the followers of Christ. In chapter 1:4 there is a reference to the call, “Draw me, we will run after thee.” Jesus said, “No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him.” Verse 6 depicts her sin-stricken nature, and her evil experiences. “I am black . . . my mother's children were angry with me.” Her love for her Lord is unbounded (chap. 1:13; 8:1). Chapter 2:2 describes the persecutions of Christ's followers. “As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.” Verse 4 speaks of Christ's love for his friends: “His banner over me was love.” Chapter 4:1 describes the dove-like innocence of his disciples, and chapter 7:10-13 their unswerving fidelity. The reference to the immature sister (chap. 8:8) probably applies to the calling of the Gentiles, who in Solomon's day were outside the covenants of promise. The poetic description of the beautified earth (chap. 2:12) refers to the blessings attending the future reign of Christ and the saints. The earnest entreaty of the bride in the closing verse of the book, “Make haste, my beloved,” is another way of saying, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22:20).

## ISAIAH

Isaiah prophesied about 700 years B.C., during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. He witnessed the captivity of the northern kingdom of Israel, and warned Judah that they would suffer similarly unless they returned to God. The love and condescension of God towards repentant sinners is beautifully illustrated in chapter 1:18: “Come, let us reason together. . . though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.” Notice the sins of Judah described in the first twenty-three chapters of the prophecy. They were hypocritical (chap. 1:13), mercenary (chap. 3:15), vain (chap. 3:16), covetous, impure, proud, and unjust (chap. 5:8-23), unbelieving (chap. 6:10), superstitious (chap. 8:19), idolatrous (chap. 17:8), ignorant of God's law (chap. 8:20). Isaiah foretold their dispersion (chap. 8:22; 17:4 and 14). He also foretold in glowing terms the coming of Christ, firstly as a Savior (chap. 7:14), and secondly as a Deliverer (chap. 9:6). The prophecy of Isaiah teems with references to the Gospel (good news) of the coming Kingdom of God. Chapter 2 describes the peace, prosperity and enlightenment of that kingdom; chapter 11 the attributes of the king. It alludes to Christ as the seed of David and describes the beneficence of his reign in all departments of creation. Chapter 25 foretells the victory of Christ's followers over death, and chapter 26:19 their glorious resurrection and deliverance from every curse. The guarantee of the certainty of these promises is seen in fulfilled prophecy, of which Isaiah contains much. Let the reader peruse history in the light of God's threatened judgments upon Babylon

(chap. 13), Assyria (chap. 14), Moab (chap. 15), Egypt (chap. 19), Tyre (chap. 23). The apostle Peter alludes to the evidence of prophecy as the foundation of faith in 2 Peter 1:19: “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place.”

The New Testament readings for May are Acts 9 to 28, and the epistles of Paul to the Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus and Philemon.

## ACTS

Notice how often baptism is taught in the Acts. Paul was baptized (chap. 9:18), as was Cornelius (chap. 10:47), the Philippian jailor (chap. 16:33), and the Corinthians were likewise (chap. 18:8). Paul's case proves that even the most ardent opponent of Christ is not without hope if he repents (see 1 Tim. 1:13). The case of Cornelius proves that devoutness, benevolence, prayerfulness, are insufficient without right doctrine, but they are virtues which commend a man to the Almighty, who will show him what he “ought to do” (chap. 10:6). The reference in chapter 19:3 to the intimacy of John's baptism shows that the act must follow an intelligent belief of the Truth before it is of any avail. Observe the uniform teaching in the Acts to the resurrection of Christ, and his second coming. Paul preached about it at Antioch (chap. 13:30), at Thessalonica (chap. 17:3), at Athens (chap. 17:31), at Jerusalem (chap. 22:15). It was the basis of his defence before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa, and it was the theme of his preaching when a prisoner in Rome (chap. 28:23 and 31). The reader is particularly reminded of the godly virtue of the Bereans. “They received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily” (chap. 17:11). Attention is also drawn to Paul's charge to the elders of Ephesus, wherein he foretold a vast declension from the Truth (chap. 20:29). The apostle's words have been fulfilled in the existing state of Christendom, which is sadly astray from the teaching of the Bible. Paul told the Ephesian elders of the only safeguard: “I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified” (chap. 20:32).

## COLOSSIANS

Paul wrote this epistle to warn the believers against worldly philosophy and intellectual pride. He demonstrates the supremacy of Christ, “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (chap. 2:3). He shows that the only knowledge worth acquiring is “the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding” (chap. 1:9). This will find expression in a desire to be like Christ, involving a putting on of “the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him” (chap. 3:10). This change is effected at the outset by baptism (chap. 2:12), and is sustained by holiness and purity of life (chap. 3). Those who endeavor to be like Christ in character will be made like him in nature at his coming. “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory” (chap. 3:4).

## THESSALONIANS

The cardinal doctrine of these two epistles is the second coming of Christ. **156—Berean 2006** There is at least one distinct reference to it in every chapter. Paul speaks of it as the great hope of all believers (1 Thess. 1:10), as the day of reward (1 Thess. 2:19), as the epoch of resurrection (1 Thess. 4:16), as the era of judgment (2 Thess. 1:8). He exhorts all believers to patiently wait for it (2 Thess. 3:5), and to watch the signs which herald its approach (1 Thess. 5:6).

#### TIMOTHY, TITUS

These epistles contain an abundance of precepts for the observance of godly men and women. They must be readers of the Word (1 Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 3:16), and pure in heart and mind (Titus 2:11); in short, followers of Paul (1 Tim. 1:16) and of Christ (2 Tim. 2:11). For such “there awaits a crown of righteousness at his appearing and his kingdom” (2 Tim. 4:1-8).

#### PHILEMON

This epistle illustrates the spirit that should animate true believers in their dealings one with another. It is a spirit of love, sacrifice, and humility. Paul's courtesy, sympathy, and kindness exhibited in this beautiful letter is a model for all who would be Paul-like, even as he was Christ-like.

#### Tobacco

Smoking and chewing tobacco are unclean habits, tending to choke the new man by the soporific action of narcotism on the nerves. They therefore ought to be avoided by men who are commanded to be “holy in all manner of behaviour,” and to lay aside every weight. Unholiness will be fatal to a man's acceptance with the Lord: it is so revealed (Heb. 12:14), and we shall find at the last that we cannot alter the Lord's appointments. The fact that a man sickens at the first attempt to smoke and makes himself an offence to the healthy susceptibilities of those who do not smoke, is a proof that he is at war with God in nature in the indulgence of the habit. The universality of the habit is no argument in its favour from a divine point of view. The whole world lieth in wickedness. Its popularity with a world that is the enemy of God is rather against than for its countenance by a man of God.

Bro. Robert Roberts—1898

### Analecta Apocalypticae (1)

#### *The Apocalypse of Jesus Anointed*

*“A revelation of Jesus Anointed which the Deity committed to him to exhibit to his servants things which must be speedily accomplished.”*  
— Apoc. 1:1

#### *The Scriptural Title*

*Apokalupsis*, is the first word of the last book of the New Testament in Greek. The book is, therefore, in that language styled, Apokalupsis. But this name is not restricted to the original. It is very often employed in speaking and writing as the title, or name, of the book in the English; although it is not so designated in the Common Version. It is styled in this “The Revelation;” which, indeed, expresses the truth; for the book is a revelation, and one specially imparted: but still, the name is

objectionable, inasmuch as it is only a very small part of revelation; nevertheless small as it is, a most important, and highly interesting, portion thereof. To distinguish it, therefore, from revelation in general, many are accustomed to anglicize the Greek name, and to style it The Apocalypse. For this reason, which appears sufficient, I have concluded to adopt it also; so that the reader will understand, that when “the Apocalypse” is named, that book of scripture is meant, which in the English Version is called “The Revelation of St. John the Divine.”

#### Titles the Apostasy Confers Compared with Scriptural Teaching

Though published by “special command of the Most High and Mighty Prince, James, by the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland; and Defender of the Faith;” and “appointed to be read in Churches” — the reader must not suppose that the words “The Revelation of Saint John the Divine,” are the divinely authorized inscription. The Holy Spirit does not speak in this style, even of an apostle. It is only The Apostasy, so conspicuously exhibited in The Apocalypse, that confers titles upon the Fishermen of Galilee, and their brethren, to give them sanctity and respectability in the estimation of the kings and princes of the world. The Apostasy uses the words “saint” and “divine” as applicable only to “Christians,” who have attained sanctimonious preeminence among their fellows; and who are skilled in “divinity,” and have received ordination, and a license to preach. But these words are not so used in scripture. Saint is there applied to all that are separated, or made holy, by the blood of the covenant; as it is written, “Gather my saints together unto me: those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice” — Psa. 50:5: “having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience (by the blood of sprinkling, Heb. 12:24) and their bodies washed with pure water” — Heb. 10:22. The sprinkling of heart, and the washing of body, are common to all in Christ, whether apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, or private persons. In apostolic times, these were all saints, or “the faithful in Christ Jesus” — 1 Cor. 1:2; Col. 1:2. There was then no canonization of obedient believing men and women into saints: all who believed and obeyed “the truth as it is in Jesus,” in that obedience became saints and children of the Most High.

The apostle John had no titles. He was neither “Saint John” nor “John the Divine.” He was one of the saints in Christ Jesus; but not “Saint,” as an ecclesiastical title of honor and distinction. He might as well have been styled King John or Priest John; for he was not only a saint, but a king and a priest for God. Ecclesiastical titles are of the pride of life, and not of God. They are assumptions of lordship over the saints; and strictly forbidden by their Prince. “Ye are all brethren; and the greater of you shall be servant” — Matt. 23:8, 11. This is the spirit of Christ, who, although the Teacher, and Lord, was as one who served. The reverse of this is the spirit of Antichrist. Wherever,

therefore, men professing to be Christians, exalt themselves, or allow themselves to be exalted, to high ecclesiastical estate, there is “the mark of the beast,” and there “the number of his name.” All this sort of thing was repudiated with contempt by the apostles, after they were converted and became as little children — Matt. 18:3. “Be of the same mind towards one another; not minding high things, but being conducted with the despised” — Rom. 12:16. This was the doctrine they inculcated, and practiced; and in so doing, though dead, still speak reprehending the unhallowed ambition of those who pretend to have succeeded them in all but their penury and woe — 1 Cor. 15:19; 2; 2 Eph. 11:21-28.

The apostle John is the only one upon whom The Apostasy has conferred the title of “the Divine.” Paul, James, Peter, and Jude are termed simply apostles, or messengers; while the messenger John is, as an especial honor, erected into *ho theologos*, the Theologian, or “Divine!” Was it imagined that he was Professor of Divinity in a Theological Seminary at Jerusalem; or, was it because he has narrated the discourses of Jesus on the relations of the Father and the Son, which are not found in the other testimonies? Whatever may have been the reason, it must of necessity be infinitely puerile. None of the apostles had any thing to do with what King James's flatterers and courtiers call “divinity,” or “theology,” but to condemn it as a corruption of “the faith once delivered to the saints.” They denounced it as “profane, and old wives' fables;” and its professors as “seducing spirits” and “demons,” “unruly and vain talkers, and deceivers.” Paul the Divine, Peter the Divine, or John the Divine, are epithets that desecrate the renown of the noble men whose names are thus entitled. John had no divine pretensions over Peter and Paul. James, Peter, and John were “pillars,” and Paul was not a whit behind them; for He that wrought effectually in Peter, was also mighty in him. They made no ostentatious display of their names; and in themselves claimed to be no more than weak earthen vessels, in whose feebleness and frailty the glory and power of God became more strikingly manifest. The Holy Spirit was the holy oil of their earthen lamps. By it they were guided into all the truth; and the light which shone around them was of that anointing, not of them.

### A Spurious Title

“The Revelation of Saint John the Divine” is a spurious title. The real inscription is contained in the first words of the book — *apokalupsis iesouristou*, Revelation of Jesus Anointed. The contents of the book did not come to John direct from God. They emanated from Him “who dwells in light,” who had hitherto reserved them in his own power — Acts 1:7. Till this emanation they were sealed up, and “known to no man, no not the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father” — Mark 13:32. Jesus affirmed this want of knowledge with reference to his apocalypse. “Watch ye therefore,” he continued; “for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.”

Arranged from the writings of Bro. Thomas by Bro. Bob Widding.

### What Does That Mean?

“And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city.” Isaiah 1:8

Why is the destruction of the nation compared to a “cottage in a vineyard and a lodge in a garden of cucumbers”?

This would be a very meaningful example of destruction and desolation for the people to whom Isaiah was speaking. We do not enter into the example because we are not familiar with the way things were done back then. When fields were not fenced it was necessary to hire persons to watch over them, especially while the fruit was ripening. Man, beast and fowls were all threats to the harvest. These “keepers of a field” as Jeremiah styles them (Jer. 4:17) can still be found in the East today. During the time when the crops are ripening they watch over the field, day and night and through all sorts of weather. It is necessary to provide them with some shelter and protection from the excessive heat, dew or storms. This protection is found in temporary huts, which are made of closely twined branches and leaves or of pieces of matting thrown over a rude framework of poles. When the crop is gathered and the field forsaken, the deserted lodge soon leans and falls. The whole scene is one of utter loneliness.

We can see why Isaiah would warn the people of Jerusalem that “the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers.” It is easy for us to relate to those passages which speak of life being like grass, but we think of a cottage or lodge as a more permanent structure. We must read the scriptures with the understanding that the people spoken to would have and not from our perspective.

With this understanding of a lodge or cottage several verses now make perfect sense. Job compares the home of the wicked “as a booth that the keeper maketh” (Job 27:18) and Isaiah tells us: “The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage.” (Isa. 24:20)

Brethren and sisters, is our home “like a cottage in a vineyard and a lodge in a garden of cucumbers” or are we building a more permanent structure for ourselves? Paul informs us, “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” (2Co 5:1) He goes on to explain how this temporary house will be clothed upon with immortality. Peter exhorts us in 1Pe 2:5: “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house.”

We have been given the opportunity for a permanent house. “But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” (Heb 3:6) Let us not trade it for a “lodge in a garden of cucumbers” that will soon topple and fall. Such was the picture of desolation to which the prophet is comparing the daughter of Zion in the above passage. Let us learn from their folly.

Bro. Jim Sommerville