

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

LAMPASAS, Texas – Sunday School 9:50am-adult class Nazareth Revisited; Memorial 11:00am; Eureka class 1:15pm; Wednesday Bible readings 7:30pm in Lampasas and Austin area. Bro. Jerry Connolly, 12609 Dessau Road #404, Austin, TX, 78754; 512-251-5101; jk5311980@yahoo.com.

Since our last correspondence we have had some wonderful ecclesial activities.

(1) For the February Hye Quarterly Bro. Lee Freeburg organized a study weekend with the theme “Men of Sign” many personal types of Christ portrayed in the Old Testament to include: Abel, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, Joshua, David, Solomon, Cyrus, Jonah, Zerubbabel and Melchisedeck followed Saturday evening with a Biblical wheel of fortune game with phrases pertinent to the day’s study.

(2) May brought us to our Sunday School Program: ages through 6 giving us a dramatic portrayal of Moses’ life and plagues; ages 7-9 presenting their verses from the Declaration; and ages 10-12 from their Sunday afternoon class did each a PowerPoint presentation on various topics of prophecy.

(3) Numerous investigative committee meetings with brethren and sisters of Goldthwaite in an effort toward unification, this endeavor is still in progress.

(4) June Gathering – we all felt was our best attended ever by both those in the fellowship and guests. So to not unintentionally exclude any individuals, I will only enumerate the ecclesias represented: Austin, Houston, San Angelo and Temple of Texas, Marlow, Oklahoma and Las Cruces, New Mexico. The theme for this weekend was “Behold, what manner of love...” a thematic study of the Epistles of John. Topics covered were antichrist; purity of fellowship within the ecclesia, within the home and by the individual; trinity on trial; true discipleship and God is light, love and life. The combined efforts by everyone were appreciated by one and all in attendance.

We have once again lost our Bro. Craig Kiley, but this time only as far as a transfer to the Austin ecclesia. A sadder note was shared when our Sis. LaDale Perkins turned in her letter of withdrawal “feeling it was the right thing for her to do”.

On brighter notes, besides the numerous visits from our brethren and sisters within the Texas ecclesias, we were pleased to have Bro. Lennie Naglieri visit from Hudson, New Hampshire and share with us exhortative words from Bro. Josh Garvey; our new Sis. Sara Garvey from Plymouth,

Massachusetts; and Bro. Ed and Sis. Delma Truelove from North Battleford, Sask., Canada. Our Bro. Ross Wolfe is back at home – 1802 East Avenue J, Lampasas, TX 76550 and truly welcomes any and all correspondence to him there.

In the one hope we share – Bro. Jerry Connolly

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

Dear brothers and sisters,

Loving greetings in the Lord Jesus Christ. Since our last correspondence the Houston ecclesia held a short meeting with Bro. Joel Pando to resolve a few differences concerning fellowship. As a result of the meeting, we are happy to report that Bro. Joel has returned to fellowship effective April 30th, 2006.

Additional news includes the Sunday School outing to Matagorda, Texas that was held on May 20th, 2006. The outing included a hamburger and hotdog lunch on Matagorda beach and a 2 hour discovery cruise on the S.S. Karma (a 57' teaching and marine research vessel). The cruise allowed the young ones to learn about marine biology from samples taken in a trawl and "mud grabs" which were seen through a video-enhanced microscope. The hands-on experience helped each one to understand more about marine life and ecology of the area. Since our last report we have been visited by Bro. Bob Bent, Bro. Lee Smith and family, Bro. Jr. and Sis. Juanita Hurst, and Sis. Casey Burgamey.

Our Sis. Sara Brown has moved to Pflugerville. Her presence will be missed in our ecclesia.

On behalf of the Brethren and Sisters of the Houston Ecclesia,
Bro. Michael Kramer

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

NE FRATERNAL GATHERING – BOSTON.....Sep 30–Oct 1, 2006

Bro. Len Naglieri, romans6@mac.com, USA. 1-603-598-1745

“Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in His sight? Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house, because thou hast despised Me” (2 Sam. 12:9-10).

The very next chapter begins to record the working out of this decree, in the case of Amnon's foolishness and sin. For two full years, Absalom quietly waited his time, plotting vengeance for his sister, and finally the opportunity came, and he slew Amnon, and David begins to feel the inescapable hand of God's righteous judgment.

The mother of Absalom, as far as is recorded, was the only foreigner among David's wives, and thus God works out the punishment of one sin through the consequences of another. Absalom, whose name, pathetically enough, means “Father of Peace,” was the principal instrument of David's punishment; and David's extreme grief at his death, after all his treachery, seems to indicate a special attachment to Absalom, even above his other children, and a bitter realization of what might have been had he himself acted differently.

Three years Absalom spends in exile at Geshur, and two more in Jerusalem before the king is reconciled to him. Seven years have now passed. Having returned, Absalom goes about cunningly to steal the hearts of the men of Israel. How easily are people deceived by a fair show and smooth words! How shallow and unstable is human loyalty! And, above all, how sharply the case of Absalom brings out the fundamental baseness of human nature, teaching us to ever look with distrust upon our natural desires and reactions.

Paul speaks of the foolishness of those who compared themselves with themselves and consequently found nothing wrong. Comparing their actions with their own natural conceptions and thoughts they found that they agreed perfectly. **But what of the mind of God?** A man's own heart is no safe guide.

But there is a lesson even in Absalom's wickedness — the lesson of the unjust steward. Absalom yielded himself wholeheartedly to selfishness, and the murder of his own father was the logical conclusion, as he stood in his way. Having given himself over to evil, it would have been foolish to draw the line anywhere. He was wiser in his generation than those who go halfway into evil and still attempt to cling to an appearance of good, or those who but half-heartedly follow that which is good. Having chosen his course, he followed it through to the end and hesitated at nothing.

It was truly an evil, human course, but his pursuance of it is a lesson in single-minded perseverance. And his scheming patience, although directed

The Sword Shall Never Depart

to base and selfish ends, is an illustration of the latent powers in us all which are equally effective for evil or good.

Two years he quietly waited to avenge himself upon Amnon, but the wait did not dull the keen edge of his determination. How long before his insurrection he had harbored ambitions for his father's throne is not disclosed, but there is no haste in his methods — only a painstaking and tireless singleness of purpose and a long and skillful planning — so thorough that when the moment came all Israel was with him, and so secret that David was taken wholly unawares.

Absalom was strong-willed, clever, ruthless and patient — attributes which could have made him as much a power for good as he was for evil, if he had been moved by the wisdom that is from above, instead of that which is from beneath. God allowed him to go far on the course he chose, for it suited God's purpose to do so, and each successful step would further embolden him for the next.

But when the proper time came, God turned his wisdom to foolishness and everything he had taken so long to build collapsed like a house of cards, and destroyed him in its ruins.

“The Lord appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the Lord might bring evil upon Absalom.”

What chance had Absalom's wisest scheming in the face of that? He was clever, and he prospered for a while, but the final chapter of his career revealed him as a pitiful and relatively insignificant tool in the hands of God Who was by bitter tribulation shaping the character of a far better man. In all things, **consider the end.**

The events connected with Absalom, tragic though they were, were not without a purpose; and even a certain amount of comfort, for David. The truest depths of friendship are only experienced in adversity; and the loyalty of Ittai the Gittite, and the faithful kindness of Barzillai the Gileadite, would go far toward bearing David up against the infidelity of his son. We are so constituted, in the mercy of God, that sorrow will add a keenness to the comfort of common blessings that are only shallowly appreciated in times of ease.

And the occasion, too, made possible one incident which, while galling at the time, brought out the underlying nobility and gentleness of David's character and would give him much satisfaction later as a bitter trial faithfully and commendably borne. That was the cursing of Shimei of the house of Saul, who viciously taunted David as he fled from Absalom, and insolently stoned him. When Abishai desired permission to destroy him, David said—

“Behold, my son—which came forth of my bowels — seeketh my life. How much more now may this Benjamite do it? Let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day.”

Weak and human though he was in many respects, he was at heart in full harmony with the mind of God. He realized that these trials were a necessary chastening from God to tame his unruly desires, and that the better he endured them, the shorter they would have to be.

As we look back, David seems to stand out apart from all others in the history of Israel. Moses truly is a far more majestic and awe-inspiring figure; Abraham exemplifies the nobility of a patient, enduring faith through a long and weary pilgrimage; but it is into the heart of David that we enter most closely. His life seems crowded with every variety of experience, and ranges from the purest God-fearing courage of his youthful encounter with Goliath to the ugly depths of adultery and murder.

His life was a battle between the highest and most intimate spiritual conceptions of God on the one hand, and all the strong currents of human nature on the other. That he repeatedly failed is true, but what is far more important is that he freely and humbly recognized his failures and continued to press on, accepting every form of tribulation with unresentful resignation.

His life, on the whole, was a broken and frustrated one. A long period he spent as a hunted fugitive — a wanderer away from his country and kindred, attended by a motley following whose company must have been on the whole small comfort and a constant burden. Then, after his wanderings end and he finally becomes king and has subdued all his enemies, he stumbles into a grievous sin which plagues him without respite for the rest of his life.

Had Jonathan lived, much may have been different in David's life, but such was not the purpose of God. The affection between them was of the most exceptional character, calling for the strongest terms of description. In the friendship of Jonathan, David could have found satisfaction and guidance for the restless desires that led him into pitfalls. But it was God's will that he should learn alone.

After Jonathan's death, David seems to have found affinity with no one, and such comfort as he could get in the course of a life of disappointment and turmoil he must get by a direct and lonely approach to God by himself which, while infinitely more difficult, was perhaps in the ultimate for the best.

The Psalms could never have been written by a man who could find satisfaction and comfort in anything short of a direct and individual communion with God. And therefore, in the wisdom of God, it was Joab and not Jonathan who became David's lifelong companion, though such would never have been David's choice.

God's purpose with David was very high, and David had much to learn. Therefore considerations of his present comfort must give way to those which through long and bitter tribulation would develop in him the peaceable fruits of purity and righteousness.

The wisdom of God chose a vessel ideally suited to His purpose, and no small part of that purpose was the recording of the Psalms. The strong light of the inspiring Spirit, shining through every facet of David's character and experiences, threw as on a screen each detail of hope and despair, of failure and triumph.

Moses' character is made before we meet him as he comes on a divine mission from the wilderness to deliver Israel from bondage. But in the Psalms every aspect of David's development is laid bare before us. Christ alone combined the exalted and prophetic majesty of Moses with the keen humanity of David. Tried and tempted in all points like his brethren, he alone as the representative of mankind fulfilled all the experiences portrayed through David in the Psalms and emerged triumphant and unspotted from them.

David typifies the body of Christ, those whom Christ came to redeem, the chosen generation, the spirit willing and eager but the flesh weak, a man after God's own heart, who through much tribulation must learn the way to the kingdom.

But David, as the writer of the Psalms, was permitted to be the instrument by which Christ was encouraged and strengthened. And each of the members, too, can in some small way share in this honor. For it was for the joy that was set before him that he was enabled to endure, and that joy consisted in the love and affection of those who gratefully accept the benefits he procured.

Our participation in the victory is measured, therefore, by our affection for him, and the value of that vice-royalty is increased by each one that lays hold upon it.

Between Joab and David there was no affinity. David was a man of God. Joab was not. No greater gulf could separate two men than that. They lived in different worlds. David repeatedly struggled and fell, but from beginning to end he was a man of God, intensely loyal and devoted.

Joab was a man of the world. Wiser at times than David, and strangely enough, sometimes his perception rose higher than David's, but to the deeper currents of divine communion which were the basis of David's life, Joab was a stranger.

In his reaction to David's grief for Absalom, Joab is practical and wise. But David could see many things to which Joab was utterly blind. David could see that day many years earlier when the prophet Nathan had stood before him and had solemnly spoken of the great anger of God and the consequences he would have to suffer. David could now see the humiliation of Tamar and the murder of Amnon, his firstborn. He could see that now another wayward son had been taken, leaving behind an ignoble memory of treachery and dishonor, all the consequences of his own folly and sin. And he would wonder where and when the next blow would fall.

But Joab's rough counsel would sharply remind him that his pilgrimage was not yet ended. Those terrible words would always be before his mind — *“Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from thine house,”* and he would see dimly, stretching into the future, a continuation of that trail of wickedness and bloodshed which he had set in motion. And so, aroused once again by Joab's brusque prodding, he concealed his grief that no one would understand, and carried on. Bro. G.V.Growcott

Bible Reading Notes —August

The first requisite to acceptability to God is the possession of faith. *“Without faith it is impossible to please God”* (Heb. 11:6). How is faith acquired? Let Paul answer. *“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”* (Rom. 10:17). No stronger reason could be advanced to justify a careful reading and study of the Scriptures. These notes are intended to help in that direction. The daily readings for August, according to the plan known as the Bible Companion, are 2 Samuel 18 to 24, 1 Kings, 2 Kings 1 to 5, Jeremiah 22 to 52, Romans 9 to 16, Mark, 1 Corinthians.

2 SAMUEL 18 TO 24

These chapters record the closing scenes in David's life. They beautifully exhibit the traits of character which caused him to be known as the “man after God's own heart.” Notice his grief at the death of Absalom, his mercy towards Shimei, his forgiveness of Mephibosheth, and his respect for the memory of Saul and Jonathan. **Chapter 22** records David's thanksgiving for God's powerful deliverance and manifold blessings. It reveals his complete trust and confidence in God, his Rock and Fortress, and it portrays in prophecy the conquest of his illustrious seed, Jesus, when

he rules upon David's throne as the King of the whole earth. The same glorious event is foreshadowed in David's last words, recorded in **chapter 23**. Notice how David links his own personal salvation with the establishment of the Just Ruler upon his throne, in fulfillment of the terms of the everlasting covenant made with him by God. The catalogue of David's mighty men is interesting as an analogy of the places of honor to be granted to the valiant soldiers of Christ in the day of awards soon to come. All are named, but some gain distinctions over others. One was "honourable of three," another was "honourable among thirty." Thus will it be in the "armies of heaven" which follow Christ to "subjugate the world" (Rev. 19:14). David's sin in numbering the people brought dire trouble upon his kingdom. It illustrates the gravity of willful disobedience to God's commands. David's repentance and repudiation of the sin was followed by God's forgiveness, in which is exhibited the principle upon which pardon is obtainable for all who confess and forsake their sins in the manner of God's appointment.

1 KINGS, 2 KINGS 1 TO 5

Solomon's accession to the throne of David is described in 1 Chron. 28:5 as sitting "upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord." This shows that God has had a kingdom in the past, and the same kingdom will be restored when Jesus "reigns over the house of Jacob for ever" (Luke 1:33). Solomon's reign began well. He was divinely endowed with wisdom, riches, and honour (**chap. 2:12**). His greatness became proverbial (**chap 10:6**). He was privileged to build the temple, upon which rested the blessing of God (**chap. 6:13**). But his early years were not wholly righteous. He married Pharaoh's daughter, and "sacrificed and burnt incense in high places," and acquired horses and horsemen, all of which were forbidden in the Law of God through Moses (**Exodus 34:16; Deut. 17:16**). In his later years he married many strange women (**chap 11:1**), whose idolatrous influence led to his downfall. The sin of alien marriage is condemned alike in both Old and New Testaments (**Deut. 7:3; 2 Cor. 6:14**). In punishment for Solomon's sin, God raised up many adversaries against him, and warned him that the kingdom would be divided in the days of his son. After Solomon's death the throne of David was continued in the two-tribe kingdom of Judah and Benjamin, the first of whose kings was Rehoboam. The ten tribes revolted under the leadership of Jeroboam, and set up a separate kingdom in the northern part of the land. This kingdom was styled the kingdom of Israel, and was governed by an unbroken succession of wicked kings. A few good kings ruled in the kingdom of Judah, notably Asa, Jotham, Hezekiah, and Josiah. **Chapter 17** introduces Elijah, the prophet of the Lord. Little is recorded of his antecedents. The mission, not the man, is the all-important concern of the Divine revelation. Elijah's mission was to demonstrate to a wicked,

idolatrous nation the existence and power of the God of Israel. His first recorded words are, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth." The withholding of rain upon the land for three and a half years was an answer to Elijah's prayer (James 5:17). The apostle uses this incident to show that "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." During the drought Elijah was miraculously fed, first by ravens and then by the widow of Zarephath. Jesus quotes the incident to illustrate that just as a Gentile widow was raised up by God to succour a prophet rejected by his own people, so a nation would be prepared to receive Christ in place of "his own which received him not" (Luke 4:24; John 1:11). The Gentiles were to be included in the scope of God's salvation through Christ. **Chapter 18** records the miracle by which Elijah proved the existence of the True God, and by which the false claims of the prophets of Baal were exposed. Elijah's work was interrupted by his removal from the earth. He did not go to the dwelling place of the Almighty, because Jesus said many centuries later, "No man hath ascended up to Heaven" (John 3:13). He was taken to a place known only to God, where he will remain until he reappears as the forerunner of Christ to turn the hearts of the ten tribes to the God of Israel, whose divinely appointed king will rule over them in the land of their fathers (Malachi 3:1). Elijah was succeeded by Elisha, who was called to be a prophet whilst engaged in his daily occupation. He obeyed without question. "He left the oxen, and ran after Elijah" (**1 Kings 19:19**). His example is recorded as a model for all called to the work of the Lord. An outstanding feature of Elisha's work was its accompaniment with continual displays of miraculous power. Sixteen miracles were performed by the prophet, who was endowed with a double portion of the Spirit. The object of the outpouring of the Spirit in Old and New Testament times was the same. It was to establish the credentials of the prophets and apostles as the messengers of God. There was especial need for this confirmation in the days of Elisha. The ten tribes were sunk in the gravest wickedness and idolatry, largely owing to the evil influence of Ahab and Jezebel and the prophets of Baal. The scattered remnants among Israel who remained faithful to the God of Abraham required strengthening. This was accomplished by the word and works of Elisha. The incident concerning the children (**chap. 2**) who mocked Elisha is to be understood in the light of the translation of the same original Hebrew word found elsewhere. In ninety other texts the word is translated "young men," and they doubtless were fully accountable for their insolent, disrespectful behavior. The healing of Naaman (**chap. 5**) illustrates the necessity for simple childlike faith in those that desire to receive the favor of the Almighty.

JEREMIAH 22 TO 52

Jeremiah is frequently regarded as a prophet exclusively of mourning and woe. The thirty chapters of his prophecy to be read during the coming

month amply demonstrate that the common view is a fallacy. He speaks of Israel's future restoration and glory in glowing terms. "A king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth" (**chap. 23**). "My people shall be satisfied with my goodness" (**chap. 31**). "I will gather them out of all countries" (**chap. 32**). "The days come that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel" (**chap. 33**). "Jacob shall return and be in rest and at ease" (**chap. 46**). These promises will be realized in the restoration of the twelve tribes under Christ, "the righteous Branch" (**chap. 33:15**). The reader should carefully note the example of Jeremiah's fortitude and patience in tribulation as recorded in the later chapters of the prophecy. He is one of the prophets commended for our consideration (James 5:10). The reference in **chapter 51, verse 39**, to the fate of the princes of Babylon is proof of the Bible doctrine that some will not be resurrected from the dead. "They shall sleep a perpetual sleep and not wake, saith the Lord." Christ taught that only the responsible will be raised (**John 12:48**). The closing chapters of this prophecy record the sins of Judah, which resulted in their captivity in Babylon, and the destruction of their Holy City and temple. The epoch of their restoration, foretold by Jeremiah and Christ (**Luke 21:24**), is now upon the world, and heralds the establishment of the Kingdom of God and the outpouring of blessing upon all nations (**Jeremiah 4:2; 3:17**).

ROMANS 9 TO 16

In the earlier chapters of this epistle the apostle had shown that both Jew and Gentile were equally guilty before God, and that the privilege of Divine sonship was not attainable as a matter of heredity, but on the principle of justification by faith. Nevertheless, Jews had precedence in the matter. "To them pertaineth the adoption" (**chap. 9:4**). But they boasted themselves in the law, and by so doing showed that "they had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge" (**chap. 10:3**). The word of salvation was "nigh them" (**chap. 10:8**), but Isaiah had asked, "Who hath believed our report?" (**chap. 10:8**), and had declared of Israel, "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (**chap. 10:21**). Israel nationally were rejected by God, but a remnant were saved "according to the election of grace" (**chap. 11:5**). The Gentiles were subsequently added to this remnant. They were like a "wild olive grafted into a good olive tree" (**chap. 11:17**). The extension of the privilege of sonship to the Gentiles was no ground for complacency. "If God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee" (**chap. 11:21**). But Paul continues to explain that the rejection of the Jews was only "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (**chap. 11:25**). In the end Jews and Gentiles would be saved, and Paul is led to exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God" (**chap. 11:33**). **Chapters 12 to 15** contain practical exhortations

arising out of the contemplation of the mercy of God "upon all" (**chap. 11:32**). "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice" (**chap. 12:1**). This can be done by subjection of the individual to the will of God (**chap. 12:2**), by love one towards another (**chap. 12:10**), by subjection to magistrates (**chap. 13:1**), by sympathy and consideration towards all (**chap. 15:1**). The last chapter of the book contains Paul's salutations to the believers, and concludes with an ascription of praise to God.

MARK

Little requires explanation in this beautiful record of the life and sayings of Christ. It is simplicity itself. The following first principle matters are worthy of notice, however, in the course of a reading of the book. The theme of Christ's preaching was the gospel of the Kingdom of God (**chap. 1:14**). Doers of the will of God are styled Christ's brethren (**chap. 3:35**). (The name Christadelphian comes from two Greek words signifying Brethren of Christ.) The return of Christ to the earth is a prominent feature of his teaching (**chap. 8:38**). Jesus proclaimed the unity of God and repudiated equality with God (**chap. 10:18**). He taught that belief and baptism are both essential to salvation (**chap. 16:16**). (**chap. 10:14**). He gives us a certain characteristic of Jesus. It was that of looking round about him before speaking (**chaps. 3:34 and 10:23**). It is Mark who tells us that when Jesus was in the desert he was with the wild beasts. He notices that Jesus commanded them to give food when the daughter of Jairus was raised from the dead, that at the feeding of the 5,000 the people sat in companies. Mark also uses the diminutive form of words. He speaks of little daughter (**chap. 5:23**), little ship (**chap. 3:9**), little ships (**chap. 4:36**), and of damsel (**chap. 5:39**). He points out that Jesus took the little children up in his arms (**chap. 10:16**), and that he loved the rich young man (**chap. 10:21**). These little "human" touches make the narrative fresh, graphic and dramatic. If we do not turn to Mark to prove doctrine, or even to find guidance, we do read with great interest to find the details of the Life of our Lord. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

THE EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

As a portion of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians and the whole of the second falls within the New Testament readings for September, it may be well to leave the subject-matter of both of them to the notes for that month, and to speak at his time of the circumstances surrounding both the ecclesia at Corinth and the occasion for writing the epistle. The little company of "called out ones" lived in a city proverbial for its wealth, its vice, and looseness of morals. It had been rebuilt (after destruction in 146 B.C.) with great magnificence by Julius Caesar, and had become the metropolis of the province of Achaia. It was the centre of the worship of

Venus—a worship attended by shameful licentiousness. It was the scene of the famous Isthmian games. If, as we read the epistle, we can reconstruct this background, we can the more clearly see the separateness of the little band who were “*sanctified in Christ Jesus,*” we can understand why he wrote to them of the foolishness of man’s wisdom (**chaps. 1 and 2**), of the vain position of idols (**chaps. 8 and 10**), of the proper conduct of their assemblies (**chap. 14**), and, alas, of the infiltration into their midst of some of the evils of their city (**chaps. 5 and 6**). And as we read the epistle, we can also see that amidst similar evils it is as necessary now as then to “*come out from among them and be ye separate . . . and touch not the unclean*” (**2 Cor. 6:17**).

God Is Light – God Is Love – God Is Life

Good morning, Brothers and Sisters, Sunday School Scholars and certainly our welcome guests, once again God has blessed us with a fraternal gathering. For the third day now we have had the opportunity to have a new mind-set, the opportunity to prepare ourselves to live close to our personal savior the Lord Jesus Christ.

One day we will not have this occasion. The last gathering will be had, and those that are serious enough to take God seriously, to take Him by His word, will face that judgment call with confidence that our elder brother will say—

“Come ye blessed of my Father and inherit the Kingdom.”

To be sure, we can not haphazardly go through the remainder of our life, living like your neighbors, doing the things everybody else does and expect to have that great welcome. The name Christadelphian will only condemn us because knowledge will bring responsibility.

We must not go through the motions of living the Truth but re-dedicate our lives not only for ourselves but for each one of us here. We all need each other. We cannot afford to lose one single brother or sister.

Our subject this morning comes from I John—all five chapters. The book is divided into three parts: God is Light – God is Love – God is Life.

Within these three phrases are the ingredients for success. Spiritual success has little to do with worldly success. It’s not influence; it’s not power, not wealth. You can have wealth and it can diminish, power and influence and it can be gone over night. Now any of these can be given of God to be used in His purpose. But real success is to become one of God’s children.

I John 1:5-10 – *“This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”*

What a glorious opportunity we have this morning! We can confess our sin and then express to Our Heavenly Father “Yes, we want to have that special fellowship with Him and His Son—Yes, we want to walk in that Light, and Yes, Give me that power to love those that are not very loveable, and cleanse me and give me an advantage that I might obtain eternal life on that great day.

John 1:12—*“But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.”*

That is the power we seek. What a marvelous thing we have that that power is available to us weak mortal sons of men—power to become sons of God—power to be filled with His glory, and grace, and truth. When we began to receive this grace and truth, we can see how dull and empty things are in this world and to remember that Spirit Word—God’s Word.

An example: For a moment let us think about ourselves. What do we value? What do we consider useful and desirable or pricey in our lives?

Let’s say you have come into a large, very large sum of money. You are now making plans for a new car, a pick-up, a house and all new furniture. But tomorrow you are to take an MRI, because of a sudden nagging problem. The results are bad—you have less than a year. Meeting with the architect and the contractor is not so important any more.

When you are filled with grace and truth, there is little room for worldliness, or self-pleasing or bitterness or unkindness or pettiness. There is grace and truth. Not saying you can’t have a house or pick-up truck, but your priorities are for God. There is a new light in your life.

Would our feeling change toward each other if all of us were to take on this new perspective? Not being bitter or harsh but peace, joy, love, goodness, faith, meekness, longsuffering, temperance or self-control.

Bro. Growcott wrote—

“The whole purpose of God is intensely personal: to surround Himself with an intimate family, a holy multitude of children, all knit inseparably together in the closest bonds of spiritual love: bound together by the knowledge that all in love have totally given their lives for each other, after the command and example of the great Elder Brother—

“Hereby perceive we love, because he laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 John 3:16).

“Are we just technically “in the Truth,” or are we really a part of this strange and glorious enterprise going on in the earth today: the true, select, eternal nobility of all the earth’s generations? To lay down our lives for the brethren, as John says we must, does not just mean to be prepared to die for them (though that is necessarily included). But much more it means to wholly live for them, as Jesus did: to yield the whole life to the service of Christ and his Body, as the Bride yields her life to the Bridegroom.”

You know, all of us here must have or have had training for a job. To be a teacher, you go to college. To be a carpenter or plumber or car mechanic, you’re trained by a skilled technician—GM or Ford.

But the wisdom, learning or knowledge of the Spirit is on a completely different plane, and depends on love and character and the way the heart is tuned to the light of the Word of God.

GOD IS LIGHT

Without light, there cannot be love, and without love, there would not be the promise of life. The proper sequence is God is light, God is love, God is life.

God is light—His very nature and essence and character is light. Therefore, we too must shine as lights.

Light creates because it brings forth life. Light manifests or makes known, because its searching rays go everywhere. It conquers because darkness ceases to exist when there is light.

Light is eternity; darkness is limited. Light is active; darkness is passive.

Light penetrates and completely destroys darkness. Darkness can only exist where light is absent.

Light reveals the true shape of things. Light is warming and cheers you up. Light is health-giving. It purifies and heals.

Jesus said, *“I am the Light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life”* (John 8:12).

Matt 5:14 – *“Ye are the light of the world.”*

Psa 119:130 – *“The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.”*

GOD IS LOVE

When we think of love, how can we but think of God and His patience. The human race has not changed at all in 6000years.

In the very beginning the Elohim had this personal relationship with Adam and Eve. He talked to them in the cool of the evening, just like you and I talk. He gave them the law—

“Of every tree in the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen 2:16,17).

They disobeyed and that sentence of death passed to them right on down to us. But what did our Heavenly Father do? He provided a way for life. He gave His Son’s life for us, because of a law that said without shedding of blood is no remission of sins, and he would have to live a perfect life of no sins.

And so comes the most popular verse in Scriptures: John 3:16—

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

God watched His Son being harassed, tormented, tortured, and then put to death.

Why did God allow that to happen?

Just before, Jesus had prayed, *“O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.”*

On the cross, *“And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, Why hast thou forsaken me?”*

You see, it was because of love: God is Love. The principle that God is light also reveals that God is Love.

This love is not that sentimental emotion that passes through the world as love. It is not flesh-like; it is a divine principle.

I John 3:1 – *“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.”*

What greater honor could we hope for to be called the Sons of God, but at the same time what a great responsibility rests upon us.

Does your manner of life, does my manner of life, reflect the nature of our high calling?

That is why we have to act and think and respond differently from the rest of the world.

I John 3:10-11 – *“In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.”*

Just before the crucifixion Jesus is talking to his disciples. Judas has just left and they are still at the table, and he says (John 13:34-35)—

“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

Where do we stand in this high standard? Can we say “yes”—even to the unlovable ones—those that get under your skin—”Yes, I love you and cherish you, and would die for you, anything for you.”

I was thinking about love towards our brethren, and I thought about the division of a few years ago. From that come Goldthwaite, Houston, London, and others.

So many of us were so close. At nights during the Hye Gathering we would stay up talking and having so much fun. We were always so excited and anxious to see each other at other fraternal gatherings. And then one day the split occurred and no more communication. No phone calls—no letters—no emails—no nothing. I’m talking from either side, both sides—receiving or sending—with many people. Not all.

Years—not days, not months, but years passed. If there is this love, why was there not some type of communication?

If we lived in close proximity what could have happened was this: a phone call—”Hey, you were really on my mind. How about going with me across town? I have an errand to run.” Or, “I miss you. How about us going and getting a coke?” Or, “I just want to talk to you, and the division won’t be discussed, I just miss you a lot.” Or, “Hey, the kids really miss your kids, could we get together?” Or just say, “I love you and I miss you. It’s good to hear your voice.”

Many of us in this room are guilty.

I John 4:20-21 – *“If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he*

love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.”

Brothers and Sisters, Just mentally look around, look to your right, to your left, in front, and think about who is there and after the meeting say to 1 or 2 or 3 of them, “I love you. I’m glad that you are a member of this ecclesia (or of the brotherhood) and that when they’re not in they’re usual spot they are missed.” Or, something like that.

It may be someone no longer with us—call them and tell them you miss them.

I John 4:7-19 – *“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love Him, because He first loved us.”*

GOD IS LIFE

We in this room should read very carefully the parable of the unjust steward, for we sometime in the future will give an account of our stewardship.

Each one of us here have a great responsibility because much has been given to us.

The truth revealed by Dr. Thomas and Bro. Roberts is not known on each street corner where there is a church. But we here in this little building have received the most beautiful pearl—the pearl of life, the pearl of great price. God is Life.

Last night, Bro. Curtis demonstrated to us that the trinity is not in the Bible, as every church teaches.

Why the Truth was revealed to us, we don't know, but it is so.

We probably do not realize how crucial the hour is. We have an immense responsibility and the accountability is there. Should we be irresponsible with the Truth, should we be irresponsible with our talents: Time, energy, health, finances, and our mental abilities, woe be to us on the Great Day of God Almighty.

Life in its very nature comes in stages of growth: conception—childhood—maturing sons and daughters—to final maturity. Each stage has its responsibilities and growth.

So it is with the spiritual sphere of life. It is begotten of the light of Truth acting in conformity with the Love of God. First God is Light. Next God is Love. Then God is Life.

A person that is begotten of God will reveal light and love, and if we do not, we are not of God.

The channel of that love is the Lord Jesus Christ. It is through him that we get that light and love.

John 5:24-25 – *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”*

In closing, Brothers and Sisters, we all have our burdens. Some are heavier than others, as our Sisters Juanita and Dottye. But let us examine ourselves, for God strengthens and comforts and will give guidance and His care.
Bro. Gary Smith

Cremation

“Six thousand people have been cremated in Buffalo. I suppose it does not much matter whether one is buried or cremated, and as Buffalo is a large city, it is needful to adopt the best means of burial, so that disease will be lessened.” *Ans.*—That may be a sufficient reason for cremation with the Gentiles, but there is something out of harmony with divine precedents in such a process. Abraham was “buried,” also Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob. So with all the patriarchs. Concerning them it is also said they were “gathered unto their people.” Man came from the earth by the fiat of his Maker. He has appointed burial as the means of disposing of His dead. If we belong to God or to Christ, it seems a strange thing to take that which belongs to another and cast it in the fire. Isaiah (ch. 26:19) speaks of the dead arising as his (Christ's) body. Then we remember that to be

denied burial was a reproach (see Isa. 14:19–20, &c.).
Bro. Henry Sulley

Mary and Elizabeth

We do not know where Dr. Thomas derived the proof of his statement (His Life and Work, page 199) that “he (Mary's father) married the sister of the father of Elizabeth,” unless from the fact stated that Mary and Elizabeth were cousins—(Luke 1:36). It would be difficult to account for their cousinship in any other way.

Bro. Robert Roberts—1880

Preaching the truth

Are we as courageous and enterprising in spreading the truth as were our brethren in by-gone days? This thought is suggested by reading the unpleasant experiences of Dr. Thomas and others who laboured forty years ago. If we are equally faithful, how is it that we escape so much of the antagonism—the contumely and rough treatment—that these brethren had continually to encounter? Some say that the change is due to the world having become more liberal-minded—more disposed to tolerate doctrines which half-a-century ago it would have resisted unto blood. There is perhaps a little in this explanation.

A few tell us that it is owing to the nicer way in which we present the truth. There is fallacy here. May not the charge be largely due to a declension in our activity and outspokenness in setting forth the whole counsel of God? As a rule, the bitterness of the adversary is to be measured by the way in which we make our voices heard and understood. The world to-day is as far away from God and salvation as it was forty years ago. It may be more broad-minded, but it is still fatally astray. Its very liberal-mindedness is a heresy to be noted and condemned.

Our duty is to make known the unpalatable fact of the world's condition—a duty not fulfilled by whispering in the corner, but shouting from the house-top. The text for our discourses must be “Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” Let us show ourselves Dr. Thomas-like, though it involve much that is disagreeable and painful. If we cannot exhibit such courage, let us, at any rate, refrain from disheartening those who are striving so to do.
Christadelphian

Memorial Meeting

Brethren are very unwise who neglect or treat lightly the meeting for breaking of bread. Such conduct is suicidal. The institution is of Christ—it

has been arranged as a restorative—a divine tonic for the jaded spiritual man after six days' battling with an evil world. Who does not feel himself run down on the Saturday night, and, as the result of Sunday's exercises, refreshed and invigorated on the Monday morning? Is it rash to say that without this weekly reminder of Christ many of us would long since have slipped away from the truth? Truly, it is a merciful ordinance, and one for which we should be devoutly thankful. Let us not despise it. Let each one who attends to it see that he does not mar the good which Christ intended this institution to yield. It is very easy to do this. Here are a few ways in which it can be done: Come in late, and chatter after the service has commenced. Show ourselves inattentive to the ministrations of the presiding and exhorting brethren (this may be done by yawning, giggling, talking, taking out the watch every few minutes, etc.). Find fault after the meeting is over with everything that has been done. Send all with whom we come in contact home with their minds full of irritating, absorbing, superfluous items best unknown. On the other hand, if we would co-operate with Christ in making the meeting pleasurable and edifying, then let us shun these things, and show ourselves true worshippers—earnest, zealous, reverential, grateful, loving, anxious to make the meeting to all a source of comfort and upbuilding.

Bro. A. T. Jannaway—1901

Divisions

Being called upon to speak, I selected for subject the history of the truth in the nineteenth century. During the address I drew particular attention to the "divisions" which had arisen among brethren, as a foretold necessary condition of the body (1 Cor. 1:10). It was useless to find fault and say, "Such and such a division ought never to have occurred." The practical way was to define our own relation to the division when it did occur, leaving the responsibility upon the shoulders of those who had caused it. What avail was it to constantly harp upon some incidents of a personal nature, which did not, and could not, affect the broad question at issue, say in relation to inspiration of the scriptures? There is such a thing as undue distress because of other men's sins (See Ecc. 5:8).

Although in making that remark I do not necessarily countenance the gainsaying of the grumblers—none of whom perchance ever carried out the commands of Christ in connection with their offended spirit. Murmuring is of no avail to remedy an evil. Better bear in silence if the sin cannot be absolved in a scriptural way. Some of those who murmur will give account for their hard speeches shortly, concerning whom Paul gives warning in the tenth chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians.

Bro. Henry Sully Travels—1901

Memorial Prayer And Exhortations

At this meeting, the presiding brother "Thanked God that we had been permitted to assemble and hear the word of His truth expounded," which was scarcely the best definition of the object, or what should be the object of the meeting, which is more correctly represented as an opportunity to unitedly offer praise, make supplication, offer a portion of the world-good with which we are endowed, confess our sins, reprove, exhort and encourage one another in the love of God in Christ Jesus. This brother finished by praying that "All might become believers in the blessings which God would bring upon all men." In all probability the brother did not mean what he said. I feel sure he did not; but I here reproduce these sentences as an illustration to show how important it is to approach the Throne of Grace carefully and with suitable and fitting words, respecting which we have much to guide us in the Mosaic Law. It appears under the instructions for preparing the incense which was offered in the Tabernacle. That incense was to be carefully compounded according to the art of the Apothecary, each item being specified in weight or measure. Now this incense was typical of and represented "the prayers of the saints" (Rev. 8:1-5). It follows, therefore, that "prayers" require to be carefully compounded—yea, even according to the art of the Great Apothecary, who is God. It is useless to pray for things that God has never promised to bestow; and it is offensive to Him for undue proportion to be given in our heart's desires for the attainment of human objects when the purposes of the Deity should have the first place. Of prayers after the divine model, we have many. Those who compare these models with the forms of prayer which natural impulse inclines us to put forth, will see what a wide difference exists between them. A recognition of that difference should in many cases work a transformation which will be highly edifying to both speaker and listener. The intrinsic importance of this subject will supply a sufficient reason for making these remarks. They are made in confidence that those to whom they apply will "suffer the word of exhortation" and receive it in the right spirit. For the reason above, it may be well also to here reproduce some remarks overheard; for one of the misfortunes associated with our meetings is, that brethren are sensitive to criticism, and for want of it defects—which they and all would like removing—continue to exist. While venturing on this very delicate subject, let me say that such criticism should be kept well within moderation, or else captious, heartless, cold blasts will starve out the love of Christ in us.

"Every exhortation ends in a lecture on first principles. What we want is building up."

"Oh, it is a shame to criticise, for all do their best."

No, it is not wrong to criticise if it be done in a proper way and is likely to help us to get what we all require. Few realize what exhortation should be. The second address this afternoon was good, but a little “chippy” after England. It is a mistake to say too much and think too much about the glorious position we occupy and the glory to be revealed apart from the means of maintaining that position. Exhortation should be a blend of the following ingredients. First, contemplate the greatness, wisdom, power, omniscience, and love of God. Next, the high character which His children are to emulate. Next, let faith be stimulated by looking to those examples of fidelity under trial of which the word is full. And lastly, the glory to be revealed should be portrayed before us, so that, like our great fore-runner, we may, “because of the joy which is to be revealed” (Heb. 12:2), endure the trials incident to our calling. To accomplish this good work in any meeting, Scripture portions according to the *Bible Companion* should be read, and exhortation to good works based upon it. This plan furnishes food for thought and speech both varied and nourishing. To be always talking of first principles will simply dry up the deep well springs of love. Peter says, “Desire the sincere milk of the word in order that ye may grow thereby.” Now milk is nourishing for babes, young men and maidens, strong men and the aged.

Bro. Henry Sully Travels—1901

Brisbane, Gympie And Ballarat

Brisbane is a large city, and an important seaport. It is the capital of Queensland. The main streets are substantial enough, but for the most part it is a city of wooden houses built on posts stuck in the ground, between the top of which and the timbers of the house, an inverted zinc or galvanised iron saucer is placed. This is to prevent the white ant climbing up and destroying the woodwork of the structure. The ravages of the ant are such that if they once get access to woodwork (unless it be a particular kind of timber), the whole substance is destroyed, leaving only a shell, which crumbles at a touch. (That has been the case with some ecclesias. The leaven of the world has created such rotteness within, that the moment the hand of judgment is laid upon them, they melt like ice in the sun.)

These buildings are mostly one story high, and covered with galvanized iron, present a peculiar appearance. On a bright moonlight night they shine snow-white. Each house has its verandah, always; from the two-roomed cottage to the broadly-spreading mansion, only the latter will be surrounded in this way. You are not likely to forget the rain when it patters above your shelter. In a thunder storm the noise must be terrific, especially such thunder storms as arise in Australia, when it is no uncommon thing

for a hole the size of your double fist to be made through these iron roofs by hail stones, which are sufficiently heavy to kill a man. Such a storm was reported during our visit to the country. The thoughts of Him who said, “Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?” (Job 38:22–23), came into my mind. And I thought of the consternation of that great host, which, upon the mountains of Israel, will suffer destruction by this very agency (Ezek. 38:22). We had seen something of a hail storm in America, but nothing like that which was reported in Australia, when so much damage was done.

GYMPIE.—*July 8th to 10th.*—We left Brisbane at 7.53 a.m., and arrived at the above about 1.5 p.m., taking some five hours to cover the intervening one hundred miles. For the greater part of the way the scenery was uninteresting, for the Australian bush is not particularly pretty, especially where “blue gum” trees abound. At a distance the great rolling brown hills, variegated with deep olive green when lit up with golden sunshine, look pleasing enough, but near by the ragged bark, which hangs in shreds from the tree stems, showing great grey patches, and the limp, languid-looking leaves, which droop like dying willows, convey a sense of desolateness indescribable, and when the foliage is sparse and separated by stretches of coarse brown grass, the picture is still more dreary. Yet there are “pretty peeps” here and there where palms, singly and in groups, with tall, straight, pillar-like stems, surmounted with graceful, bow-like fronds, spreading out in symmetrical curves of matchless beauty, rise in the midst of a wilderness of low, springing ferns. Even the humbler specimens look elegant, although they only form a setting to their more vaulting brethren. Frequently when we crossed a creek, a cultivated patch appeared, and often the inevitable bullock team stood patiently waiting its master’s orders, or was slowly working under his direction on the way. We passed three beehive, pyramidal hills, which rose abruptly from the plain, called the “Glass House Mountains,” noteworthy because first observed by passing navigators long before the river and port of Brisbane was discovered, and because they are infested with venomous snakes.

At Gympie we were in the midst of the goldfields! What a charming experience, you think. The reality is not so romantic as the imagination pictures. Gold, like many other valuable things, is not usually found on the surface of the earth free and pure. As a rule, you must dig for it. Everywhere in and around Gympie—along the creeks, by the roads, all over the fields—you see the ground disturbed, as if the whole neighbourhood had been one vast cemetery, and the resurrection had taken place. There was to be seen, also, windlasses of every kind, from the low

sloping shelter covering the hand gear, which is used when a sinking is begun, to the high derrick wheels driven by steam power. Ruined. Broken-down shafts and abandoned workings everywhere appeared. These, with the heaps of overturned soil interspersed with scattered dwellings, cast a sad and desolate aspect over the place. But, wherever you saw a white cloud issuing from the cradled carriers, you might be sure that there was a more or less successful effort to rob the bowels of the earth of her hidden treasures; and of these indications of active work there were many. Yet gold is sometimes found on the surface, I was told. Although every nook and bend of the river has been dug around and turned over, people even now meander up the stream after every flood to see if some of the precious metal has been exposed. But the experienced eye is required to detect its presence. All is not gold that glitters. On the occasion of the evening lectures, I was able to enlarge upon the spiritual parallel, and to make known the fact that I had fine gold for their acceptance, more precious than could be found in Gympie.

Two lectures were delivered in this place, as referred to in the following extract from a local paper: "The Salvation Army Barracks were comfortably filled last night to hear Mr. Sulley's first lecture, his subject being: 'The world approaching a great crisis. Israel's relation to it. A new universal government foretold.'" Mr. Sulley, who has a very emphatic and interesting way of placing matters before big audiences, delivered an inspiring and interesting address, illustrated with large diagrams. Tonight Mr. Sulley discourses on 'Jerusalem and her future temple to hold a million worshippers. The Prince of the age to come.' Admission is free and there is no collection."

We stayed at the house of brother Marshall, who, together with his sister-wife, made us thoroughly comfortable during our sojourn with them. We also were particularly pleased to see sister Weldon, wife of brother Weldon above mentioned, and to have their company while at Gympie. We parted regretfully, feeling that another meeting in the flesh was not within the range of probability.

From this point the country was new to us. Wide fields of great extent stretched "away to mountainous hills in the dim distance. These were partly cleared. Decaying stumps and gum trees dotted the landscape. Then came rolling hills, some clothed with trees, rising in the midst of brown grass. *So* different from verdant England.

We arrived at Ballarat as the sun was setting, casting up in the after-glow those wonderful pearl-like gradations of colour, from golden yellow, orange, and red, to intense deep blue, with which Australians are familiar, and which, perhaps, therefore, may to them appear commonplace, but

which, to a pilgrim on THE KING'S highway, create that sombre, restful joy when contemplating the breadth of beauty which the Father has set in the heavens for His own glory and for the benefit of His children.

Bro. Henry Sully Travels—1902

Errors

If the reader knew how much trouble an editor has to get compositors to do their duty conscientiously, he would be astonished rather at the tolerable accuracy of typography, than surprised at the blunders it displays. Compositors and binders cause us more vexation than we can express. They seem to have no ambition to excel, though they are better paid here than abroad, where the work is better done. We heard of a printer in London who used to expose his proofs in his window to the public view; and to offer a reward for any errors that might be pointed out; but we are told by one of much experience that no printer here would be so rash as to venture on such an experiment.

Publishing, then, at the risk of being *compelled* to speak nonsense through the negligence of Typo, we must throw ourselves upon the forbearance of the reader, and request him to make all due allowance in the case.

Bro. John Thomas—The Herald 1857

A Little Help

If any little word of mine
May make a life the brighter,
If any little song of mine
May make a heart the lighter,
God, help me speak the little word,
And take my bit of singing,
And drop it in some lonely vale
To set the echoes ringing.

If any little love of mine
May make a life the sweeter,
If any little care of mine
May make a friend's the fleeter;
If any lift of mine may ease
The burden of another,
God, give me love, and care and strength
To help my toiling brother.

—(Selected)

Analecta Apocalypticae (4) **The Apocalypse Not Given To The Church**

*“A Revelation of Jesus Anointed which God gave to him to show to **his servants** things which must come to pass speedily.”*

The Revelation was only intended for these. It was not communicated for the information of the wicked; for it had long before been noted in the Scriptures of truth that “None of the wicked should understand.” Dan. 12:10. “To the wicked, God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.” Psa. 50:16, 17.

Who Are the Wicked?

From this testimony we learn that “the wicked” are a larger class than is generally supposed. They are not restricted to murderers, drunkards, thieves, and the licentious. The wicked are to a great extent very pious and religious people. They have “a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.” Being ignorant of God's righteousness, they go about with great diligence and at enormous cost, to establish their own righteousness, not having submitted to God's. They compass sea and land to make proselytes; they make long prayers; sing with sweetest music the praises of him they profess to worship. The world is full of their piety; for it is fashionable to be religious, or rather to “profess religion;” so that Christianity is thought to be habited in “fine linen, purple, silk, and scarlet;” to walk in silver sandals; and to be “adorned with pearls and precious stones.” Apoc. 18:12. But, be this as it may, there is a characteristic of wickedness which no sect, party, name, or denomination, regarded as “orthodox,” can repudiate as inapplicable to itself. That characteristic is, “Thou castest my words behind thee,” saith God. No man, sect, or party, can offer a greater insult to Yahweh than this; for it is testified, that He hath magnified his word above all the attributes of his name; Psa. 138:2; and it was foretold in commendation of Messiah, that when he should be revealed, he would “magnify the law and make it honorable.” Isa. 42:21. “I came not,” said he, “to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill; for the heaven and earth may pass away, but not one jot or tittle shall pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” He continually impressed upon his hearers the necessity of believing the words of God, and of doing his commands: and never ceased to make the “obedience of faith” the test of men's devotion and affection for him. “If

ye love me,” saith he, “keep my commandments;” and “ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you;” for “love is the fulfilling of the law.”

Now these are principles which no sophistry or reasoning can set aside. They are as true today as when they fell from the lips of him who gave utterance to the words of God.” “My words,” saith he, “are spirit and life;” and Moses has testified, saying, that whosoever would not hearken unto Yahweh's words which he should speak in his name, He would require it of him.” Deut. 18:15-19. The reader may profess to believe that Jesus of Nazareth is he to whom Moses referred; for, Jesus said, “He wrote concerning me.” But does the reader know what the Father commanded the prophet like unto Moses to speak in his name? If he know it, does he believe it? And if he believe the things spoken, has he obeyed them? To believe and do is the only evidence a man can give that he does not cast Yahweh's words behind him. “Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”

Hear this, ye bishops, priests, and ministers! Hear this, all ye eloquent “divines,” and leaders of the people! All ye scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites, whose garb, grimace, and tone, are the counterfeit of wool to disguise the ravening wolf! Hear this, all ye zealots of the world religious; this question is for you who call Jesus, Lord, and do not the things which he says! Deny not the truth of the indictment; for your “names and denominations,” in their creeds, institutions, and practices, are standing memorials of your guilt. Do ye know what the glad tidings were Jesus was anointed to preach to the poor? Do ye know what that kingdom was whose gospel he announced? What was that acceptable year of Yahweh he proclaimed? Can ye define that righteousness of God attested by the law and the prophets, he exhorted men to seek with the kingdom? Do ye consent to his words, appointing men to believe the gospel he preached, and to be immersed, that they may be saved? Do ye not rather make void all this by your traditions, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men? To believe and do, ye practically repudiate, in affirming the salvation of those who neither know, believe, nor obey. Now He whom ye call Lord, testifies against you, saying, “He that receiveth not my words, the word that I have spoken, the same shall condemn him in the last day.” “The gospel of the kingdom” is “the word of the kingdom,” which he sowed in his field. By faith in this word men will be justified; without it, they will be condemned; for the words of Jesus are, “He that believeth not shall be condemned.”

Now, it is notorious, O ye clergy of all orders and degrees, that ye do not consent to “the truth as it is in Jesus;” but that ye substitute all sorts of foolishness in its place. Ye blaspheme “the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,” by invoking it in the *rhantism* of

babes, who, you teach, are by that absurdity engrafted into the body of Christ. This is taking the name, “the Glorious and Fearful Name,” Yahweh-Elohim, in vain. That name is holy and reverend, and He hath commanded, saying, “Thou shalt not take the name of Yahweh thine Elohim in vain; for Yahweh will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain” — Exod. 20:7. And surely it is an egregious vanity, in view of the testimony, “that without faith it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh to him, must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him” — to bring a puling babe to a pint basin, incapable of faith, ignorant of any thing called God, and a diligent seeker only of its mother’s breast! And this ye do, and many other abominations too, O ye Destroyers of the people. Hear, then, what Paul, whom ye style “the Great Apostle to the Gentiles,” hath declared to your confusion. In 1 Tim. 6:3, he says, “If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the teaching which is according to godliness; he has been besmoked, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.”

It is manifest, then, from these premises, that the pious zealots of the names and denominations of Gentile Christianity, together with their professional guides, are all of the same category. Though very respectable and orderly members of society, they are besmoked know-nothings, and wicked, not consenting to the words of Jesus, but casting his words behind them, and denouncing them as “heresy.” The revelation before us, “which the Deity gave to him,” was not for them. It was for “his servants;” and the “spiritual guides” of the people are not his servants. This is the reason why there is no interpretation of the Apocalypse extant, written by “a theologian” or “divine,” that has any claim to consideration or respect as a scriptural exegesis of the book. Though learned in mythology and the dead languages, in history ancient and modern, in general literature and science, they are not learned in Moses and the Prophets, and the teaching of Jesus and the Apostles. “The fear of Yahweh,” as taught by these, “is the beginning of wisdom;” and this commencement they have not made. No man can interpret the Apocalypse in harmony with the prophetic writings, who believes that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David, are now inheriting the promises covenanted to them; or that the inheritance covenanted is beyond the skies.

An occupant of an Episcopal Throne in the State Church of any nation, cannot interpret the book, not being able to see that his own Church is one of the daughters of the Mother of Harlots, and that he himself is one of “the merchants of the earth,” whose merchandise is of

tithes, bodies, and the souls of men. He that denies the personal reappearance of Jesus Christ upon Mount Olivet, who affirms that he is now sitting upon the throne of David; and that consequently there will be no rebuilding of David’s dwelling-place, or reestablishment of his throne in Zion: he that denies the restoration of the twelve tribes of Israel to their native land; maintains that they are for ever outcasts; and that no kingdom will be restored to them — cannot “read the book, nor see it.” Believers in a “past millennium” are literally shut up and sealed, and totally destitute of all spiritual perception. In short, the grand prerequisite for an expositor of this wonderful little book is, that he understand the gospel of the kingdom as exhibited in the prophets; the preaching of Jesus as the Christ; and the revelation of the mystery as set forth by the apostles. He must have a comprehensive understanding of the Scriptures from Genesis to Jude; for the light shining from all these testimonies converges upon the apocalyptic page, whose crises, as a mirror, reflect the kingdom promised to the saints.

The Apocalypse Given Wholly to the Ecclesia

“The Apocalypse of Jesus Christ” is then for the servants of God: — for those who believe the Gospel of the Kingdom it exhibits; and have been “washed from their sins in his blood,” in being baptized into his name. “Know ye not,” says Paul, “that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of Sin unto death, or of Obedience unto righteousness?” Here are two masters; the first, the Lord of the world, the last, the ruling principle of Yahweh’s people. “Sin is the transgression of law;” and because this is the natural tendency of our nature, “sin” is sometimes used for “the flesh.” He, therefore, that serves his own lusts, “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life,” which not only constitute the man, but the world, or aggregate of such, is Sin’s servant or slave. Such a man, be he “priest,” “clergyman,” “minister,” or “layman,” serves sin unto death. Being of the world he speaks of the world, and the world hears him — 1 John 4:5. He is essentially a man-pleaser, who holds men’s persons in admiration for the sake of advantage; and therefore cannot be the servant of Christ — Gal. 1:10; Jude 16. The thinking that characterizes such is termed “the thinking of the flesh.” What they think and give expression to is palatable to those who do not know the Scriptures, which is a great cause of error in the world. Their thoughts and reasonings are at issue with the thoughts and ways of God; and therefore, the thinking of the flesh is said to be at enmity with God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be — Rom. 8:7.

When a clergyman or layman thinks on God and his purposes; on what would be pleasing to him; on his own destiny or that of nations and the earth; and judges of these, not according to what is written in

the Bible, but according to what appears to him to be “the fitness of things,” and according to the institutes of theological schools and seminaries; such thinking and judgment is the thinking of Sin, and inevitably at variance with the mind of Christ. Sin reigns in his thoughts, in his flesh, and in his ways. He is Sin's servant, and though a slave, being free from righteousness, he serves him with delight.

Paul reminds the Saints in Rome that they were all the servants of sin once; but thanks God in their behalf, that they had been freed from sin, and were now the servants of righteousness, “having obeyed from the heart a form of teaching, *tupon didachv*, into which they were delivered” — Rom. 6:17. They obeyed a form of teaching which emancipated, liberated, or set them free, from the lordship of Sin. This was Paul's mission — to invite men to a change of masters. He addressed himself to free men and slaves, all of whom, whatever their political or social position, were in bondage to the devil or sin. He did not invite slaves to abscond from their fleshly owners; on the contrary, he told men to remain in the several callings of life in which they were when they first heard the truth. “Let every man,” says he, “abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called, being a slave? Care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather.” As if he had said, “Social or political liberty is a small matter in view of what men are called, or invited to, by the gospel of the kingdom. My mission is to “open men's eyes, to turn them from darkness (of mind) to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among the sanctified by faith [which leads] into Jesus” — Acts 26:18. He invited Sin's servants to become Yahweh's servants upon the principle of purchase; so that, in addressing those who had abandoned the synagogue and temple for the house of Christ, he says to them, “Ye are bought with a price. They were “not their own,” being bought bodily and spiritually; “therefore,” said he, “glorify God with your body and with your spirit, which are God's — 1 Cor. 7:23; 6:19, 20. When a man's body and spirit become another's property, all property in himself is surrendered to the purchaser. All that he used to call his before he was sold, is transferred to his owner; and, if allowed to retain it, he must use it as the steward of his lord.

Redemption is release for a ransom. All who become God's servants are therefore released from a former lord by purchase. The purchaser is Yahweh; and the price, or ransom, paid, the precious blood of the flesh through which the Anointing Spirit was manifested. It is therefore styled, “the precious blood of Christ:” as it is written in the words of Peter to his brethren, saying, “Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conduct paternally delivered; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without

spot and without blemish” — 1 Pet. 1:18. If this Christ-Lamb had not been slain, the fifth and sixth verses of the first chapter of the Apocalypse could not have been written; the “New Song” of chap. 5:9, 10, could never have been sung; the 144,000 could never have been sealed, the robes of the saints, the palm-bearers of ch. 7:9-14, could never have been washed white in blood; there would have been no Altar, no worshippers thereat, nor souls underneath it in death — ch. 11:1; 6:9; and there would have been no “fine linen, clean and white,” to clothe the body guards of “the King of kings” — ch. 19:8, 14. All these parts of the Apocalypse are based on the slaying of the Christ-Lamb as the redemption price of the servants of God.

Satan took the price of release. In the day of his power he valued the blood at thirty pieces of silver. In this was fulfilled the saying of the prophet, “They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver: and cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them” — Zech. 11:12, 13. The life being purchased for this amount of blood-money, Satan nailed the Christ-Lamb to the tree; and poured out his life with a spear. Jesus entered no protest against the arrangement. On the contrary, he lovingly laid down his life for the sake of those who had died under the law of Moses, walking in the steps of Abraham's faith; and for them also, who should afterwards become Abraham's children by adoption through himself. With the first class, as a man, he had no personal acquaintance; with the last, comprehending multitudes of his contemporaries, his acquaintance cost him his life. Unknown by the one, and condemned and persecuted by the other, he nevertheless laid down his life to purchase their release from the bondage of Sin and Death. “I am,” said he, “the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep; and I lay down my life for them of myself. No man taketh it from me. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again” — John 10. He regarded this as the greatest evidence of love; for, as Paul reasons, “Scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet perhaps for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Well, therefore, may it be said, “Unto him that loved us, to him be glory and dominion for the Aions of the Aions”—ch. 1:5, 6.

The “servants of God, sealed in their foreheads,” are represented by the square of 12; so that their measurement is 144 cubits, and their numerical representation 144,000 — Apoc. 7:3, 4; 14:1; 21:17. This square is the sum of all released from bondage to Satan, consequent upon their “obeying the form of teaching delivered unto them.” The releasing them, of course, is an affair of the ages, seeing that the redeemed do not belong to one and the same nation and generation. Jesus died and rose again for the release of these — his sheep

scattered among the nations and generations of centuries. In the providence of God, “the Form of Teaching” is brought before them; and being of his sheep, they discern in the teaching the Great Shepherd's voice, and follow it — John 10:26, 27: and as he said to Paul at Corinth, “Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city” — Acts 18:10. After this encouraging admonition, Paul continued speaking in Corinth a year and six months, for the manifestation of this people. They heard; they believed; and they were baptized. They believed “the teaching,” and “obeyed the form.” The teaching was the Gospel of the Apocalypse of the Lord Jesus Christ. He tells us that “Christ sent him to preach the gospel; which is the power of God for salvation to every one believing; for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith” — 1 Cor. 1:17; Rom. 1:16, 17. In preaching this, he says, “I came declaring the testimony of God;” and “speaking the hidden wisdom of God in a mystery, which had been hid from the Aions and the Generations, but now is made manifest to his Saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” — 1 Cor. 2:1, 7; Col. 1:26, 27.

*Arranged from the writings of Bro. Thomas.
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