

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

ODIADO, Kenya — Sunday School 9.00 a.m; Memorial 10.00 a.m Wednesday 2.30 (Home Visit)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Greeting in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

We here report to have had a Bible school on 24th July 2006 to 28th July 2006 of which a number of brothers and sisters attended from all over Kenya.

Among them were Bro. Fred Omoto, Bro. Stephen Mbithi from the Mtondia Ecclesia, Bro. Shawyn Taylor, Bro. Eliud Simiyu from the Nakalira Ecclesia, Bro. Stephen Juma, Bro. John Kuto, Bro. Samson Wafula and Sis. Everline Juma from the Sikusi Ecclesia, Bro. David Mukoro, Bro. Lusweti from the Kimukungi Ecclesia.

Several topics were covered on Sunday, the Exhortation was conducted by Bro. Shawyn Taylor on “Run the race you will not be left out when finishing” and met at the Lord’s table breaking bread and wine.

The following successfully qualified on the interview i.e. **Jenipher Owuor Patricia Ogama, Alice Ogutu and Everline Nahori**. They were baptized and received the right hand of fellowship by Bro. Humphrey Odaba.

We shall be holding another Bible School next year 2007 in August God willing and the date will be later set.

We hope to hear more from all brothers and sisters throughout the world while waiting for the return of our Saviour on earth.

On behalf of Odiado Ecclesia,
Brother Humphrey Odaba

RICHARD, Sask., Sunday School 10:00 am; Breaking of Bread 11:20 am; Young People’s Class every 2nd Sunday 3:00 pm; Wednesday night class 8:00 pm; Friday evening class; Bro. Terry Readman, RR# 1, N. Battleford, Sask, S9A 2X3, Canada

Dear Brethren and Sisters in Christ,

Since our last report, we held a young people's study weekend on March 25 and 26, 2006 entitled Signs, Signs, Everywhere a Sign. We had quite a few visitors from the Edmonton ecclesia as well as Bro. Lynn Osborne from the Denver ecclesia. We thank Bro. Steve Armstrong and Bro. Lynn for their talks, as well as all those who participated in making this weekend such a success.

We also had a young people's camping outing at Clearwater Lake on August 18-20, 2006, where we enjoyed the company and fellowship of each other as well as God's creation.

We also lost two of our members when Bro. James and Sis. Jeanne Fuhr moved to Vernon, B.C. where they have begun their new ecclesia. We pray that God will be with them in their new life and pray that He will give them opportunities to spread the Word to any who would hear in Vernon.

We have enjoyed the fellowship of several visitors around the table of the Lord including: Bro. Ben and Sis. Jen Darter, Bro. Steve and Sis. Gwen Armstrong, Sis. Brenda McChesney, Sis. Rachel Luard, all from the Edmonton ecclesia; Bro. Dave and Sis. Cheryl Sargent and Bro. Lynn Osborne, from the Denver ecclesia; Sis. Grace Punter, Kindersley, SK; and Sis. Jeanne Fuhr, Vernon, B.C.

On behalf of the Richard Ecclesia,
Bro. Terry Readman, Recording Brother

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

EDMONTON STUDY WEEKEND.....Nov 11-12, 2006

Bro. Steve Armstrong, Box 16, site 440, rr#4 Stony Plain , Alberta, T7Z-1X4.
Canada Tel:780-963-7115, stevearm@cruzinternet.com **“Called Out Of Egypt”**
“Ye shall Henceforth Return No More That Way “, and the Sunday Exhortation **“A Prophet Like Unto Moses”**

NORTH CAROLINA–VIRGINIA STUDY WEEKEND.....May 28–29, 2007

Bro. Dale Lee at dleecpa2@mindspring.com.

LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING.....June 8–10, 2007

Bro. Jerry Connolly, 12609 Dessau #404, Austin, TX 78754 USA 1-512-251-5101

RICHARD FRATERNAL GATHERING.....June 29 - July,2, 2007

Bro. Bro. Terry Readman, RR# 1, N. Battleford, Sask, S9A 2X3, Canada

HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING..... Jul 23–29, 2007

Bro. Curtis Hurst, Rt.1, Box 40, Mullin, TX 76864, USA. 1-325-985-3868

Study Class Topic: 1Thess. 6- and Titus; Daily Bible Readings; Discuss on Zech. 8-7

Every Man Perfect in Christ Jesus

COLOSSIANS 1:1-23

“Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering WITH JOYFULNESS”—Colossians 1:11

Colosse was a city in western Asia Minor, the present Turkey. It was quite near the city of Laodicea and the rest of the seven ecclesias of the Revelation. No mention is made of it in Paul's travels, though it is very likely he visited there.

Paul's epistle to them was, like most of his epistles, written from prison. Paul's concern was never for himself or his own circumstances. For the Gospel's sake he gave up everything. He had no family, no home, no permanent employment. His life was a weary and continual pilgrimage.

This epistle's great theme is the supreme position of Christ in the purpose of God—the necessity in all things of being *with him and in him*. This basic Truth is presented as a bulwark against being led aside by crotchets and invented forms of self-righteousness and self-discipline which are ministered to pride, and do not get to the root of the problem of *overcoming the flesh*.

It teaches that true holiness is both beautiful and practical, cleansing and purifying and ennobling every aspect of life, but that there is no value or virtue, but rather harm, in performing self-imposed regulations that God has not required.

The epistle is addressed (1:2) to the—*“Saints and faithful brethren in Christ at Colosse.”*

Most versions render this—

“To the holy and faithful brethren.”

There *is* such a class of people. There *must be* such a class—holy and faithful—completely different from the world in all they say and do—men and women of heavenly beauty and godliness, sealed with the living seal of Christ in their character for all the world to see.

“Grace be unto you”—“grace” means kindness, favor, blessing, mercy, goodness. *“And peace”*—calm, relaxed tranquility, confident in the assurance that *“ALL things work together for good”*—that God never slumbers, and that nothing happens or can happen that He does not control.

“We give thanks unto God for you” (v.3).

Paul's heart was always full of thanksgiving—thankful for the revelation of the great divine purpose—thankful that he was called to play a part in it—thankful for the holy and faithful brethren throughout the

world who had been separated from the world and were united with him in God's great purpose.

“Praying always for you.”

All men of God give much time to prayer—not just on specific occasions, but a continual attitude—a continual maintaining contact. All study of the Word and all work in the Truth should be done in the spiritual atmosphere of prayer—all should be done in the spirit of active, living communion with God.

Consider how many brethren and sisters were within the circle of Paul's attention and care! Yet he could truthfully say to *all* that he prayed *always* for them—not just general, impersonal prayers for them as a group, but loving and personal prayers for each one. We must pattern ourselves after Paul in this respect, keeping all the brethren and sisters in memory, contemplating them one by one in loving and prayerful regard.

“Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and your love to all the saints” (v.4).

This is a *special love*. We are commanded to love all men—that is, to look with compassion and benevolence upon them and to do them good, even in return for evil. But the love of the *saints* is a *special* love.

How do we know who *are* the saints?—the *holy* ones?—whom we should love in this special way? Paul says of some who were called brethren that they—

“... walked as enemies of the cross of Christ, minding earthly things” (Phil. 3:18).

It is not ours to judge, but our deepest love is drawn out to those alone whose hearts are wholly centered on the things of God. Love to the saints means being truly affectionate toward them and interested in them, desiring and enjoying their company. John warns against a “love” that is just in word.

“...for the hope” (v. 5).

That is, *“because of The Hope,”* as most versions render it. Love to the saints must be mutually founded on the One Hope, and the Hope must lead to love of the saints, if this hope is not a barren, lifeless one within us.

“The Hope which is laid up for you in heaven.”

He says later in the epistle—as he exhorts them to keep their minds on heavenly things—

“Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

Our hearts and interests must be centered in heaven, for Christ is there and we are part of him. We have died to our natural selves, and to all things connected with present, passing things of the world.

“Whereof ye have heard before in the Word of the Truth of the Gospel.”

Here is the solid foundation of all—the Gospel of the Kingdom—the promise of God to Abraham—to Israel—to David—the return of Christ to sweep away all the present evils and sorrows of the world, and to establish universal peace and righteousness, to judge the responsible living and dead, to reward his servants with eternal life with him, and to begin the millennial reign that will bring all the earth to eternal oneness with God: “the *Word of the Truth of the Gospel.*”

“Which is come unto you and bringeth forth fruit” (v. 6).

The Gospel *must bring forth fruit* in us—the fruit of the Spirit—the characteristics of godliness. He emphasizes this very strongly, later in the epistle.

“Since the day ye heard of it, and knew—experienced—the grace of God in Truth.”

The Gospel had begun to work on their hearts and develop fruit from the first day they heard it—this is a wonderful thing—a great mystery of godliness—it is the *powerful, living*, spiritual seed sown in the heart.

“As ye learned of Epaphras, our dear fellow servant.”

It would seem from this that Epaphras had been the one who had brought the truth to the Colossians. He was at this time with Paul in Rome, and it would be from him that Paul learned of the Colossians' circumstances and problems. Paul's commendation here would confirm the teachings of Epaphras and strengthen his hand in resisting the errors Paul later mentions.

“Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit” (v. 8).

The Spirit is the surrounding and bonding and guiding influence. Love *in the Spirit* is love founded upon mutual affection and understanding in spiritual things.

“For this cause also we do not cease to pray for you” (v. 9).

What does prayer for others accomplish? Does not the salvation of each depend upon their *own* record? And would God's care of His Own children be any less if Paul did not continually pray for them? Do we need other intercession than Christ? Does God have to be urged and reminded to look after his children?—it may be asked.

The mystery of the power of prayer is very wonderful and very real. We must seek to comprehend it. The natural mind cannot comprehend the things of the Spirit of God.

“Pray for one another . . . The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

It is the gracious will of our Father that we be “*workers together with Him*” in this respect. He assures us that the earnest prayers of those who please Him *do* carry great weight on behalf of others. It is His will that the Body should be one interdependent whole.

Do we exercise this great power and privilege as much as we should? Paul, amid all the pressure of daily things, felt a continual sense of responsibility to pray for the blessing of his brethren. We **MUST** feel the same urgent sense of mutual responsibility. And there is another important consideration—we must labor, too, to be among that well-pleasing class whose prayers alone *are* effective with God.

“That we might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding” (v. 9).

How do we compare in this matter? Are we just drifting through life from day to day, absorbed in our daily tasks and problems and desires, like all the rest of the perishing world, or are we consciously filled with these thoughts and daily getting closer to this ideal?

Life or death depends upon what we are filled with—what we fill our minds with most of the time—upon the consistency and earnestness of our search for spiritual understanding.

“Filled with the knowledge of His will.”

A *well-founded knowledge* seems to have been the great need of the Colossians. Paul fears that they may be carried away with fanciful theories and crotchets, not having a broad, balanced picture of the Truth as it is in Jesus.

The word “knowledge” here is *epi-gnosis*. *Gnosis* is knowledge. *Epi-gnosis* is thorough, or full, knowledge. The Diaglott gives “*exact knowledge.*”

The Truth is a lifelong study. To please our Father, our knowledge of what He has revealed must be *detailed and accurate*. There are no short cuts. Learning more and more of the depth and meaning of His Word must be the consuming purpose of our life. We have time for no side issues.

“That ye might walk worthy of the Lord.”

We note the significant connection between an *exact knowledge* and a *walking worthy*. Paul makes it clear that we cannot walk in a manner the Lord considers worthy without a continual application to the broadening and deepening of our knowledge of Him and what He has revealed.

“... unto all pleasing.”

This is the only place in the Bible this word appears. It means *to make amends, to seek the favor of another*. It was generally used in a bad sense to indicate a crawling self-abasement to another (just like the word “ptochos”—poor—which Jesus uses in the expression “poor in spirit”), but in a good sense it means fervent devotion—straining every effort and intensely desiring to be approved and accepted.

“*Being fruitful in every good work.*”

A constant, active life of good works for Christ's sake. Not necessarily anything special, nothing great and spectacular, but in our everyday life and common activity. Everything we do—every word we say—even every thought—is either a *good* work or a *bad* one, according to whether we are consciously trying to please God and obey His commands, or just pleasing ourselves.

“*Increasing in the knowledge of God.*”

Increasing—developing. This is the great purpose of life—*learning, growing, improving*, in every aspect of godliness and spiritual understanding. Can we not, in looking back, see how stupid and blind we have been in so many ways? But it is so hard to discern our *present* stupidity and blindness, yet we know it is there. We must *continually advance*—seeing our own selves more clearly—seeing the mind of God more clearly—realizing how great our darkness and how marvelous the divine light.

Our knowledge is so limited—our ignorance is so great—at best we see but through a glass darkly. But still, growing in the things of God—painfully slow and creeping as it is—is the greatest and most important experience of life. It is a lifelong process, at different stages in different people, and who are we to judge the final result? These thoughts should engender great reverence and great humility. Verse 11—

“*Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power.*”

Actually it is the same word both times—*empowered* with all *power* according to the ruling or dominion of His glory.

This is what our prayers are for—that God work in us and empower us to overcome. Of ourselves we can do nothing. We must recognize the utter evil and foolishness of our nature, our own complete powerlessness to

overcome the motions of the flesh—anger, pride, impatience, selfishness, self-pity, fear, desire, greed, despondency, unhappiness. All overcoming is of God.

“*Unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.*”

This is what the man of God is to be strengthened unto. These things are the heart of the Truth. These are the things that mark the true children of God. These are the things by which we must examine ourselves to “*see whether we be in the Faith.*”

Patience, in Scripture, is far more than just cold, stoical resignation to the inevitable. It is an active, living, cheerful, persistence in goodness, regardless of any contrary circumstances.

Longsuffering must be the basis of all our dealings with others. In the great mercy of God we can be forgiven many things—mistakes, and failures, and blunders in the darkness, but unless—by persistently seeking the power of God—we are strengthened and enlightened in the way of kindness and longsuffering toward all, we shall never stand approved before Him. Whoever lacks longsuffering is not a godly character, whatever his works and beliefs may be.

With patience and longsuffering most problems can be solved. Without patience and longsuffering there is no point in even trying to solve anything else, because not only is the task almost hopeless, but even if it succeeds it is but a dead and barren triumph—an intellectual victory but a spiritual failure.

Any manifestation of impatience, or rudeness, or unkindness, or bitterness in any discussion on God's Way of Truth immediately reveals the whole thing as but fleshly contention—for these spiritual characteristics that Paul specifies here are the *basic principles of the Truth*.

Peter says (2:1:8-9) that he that lacketh these things—patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness and love—is *blind, barren* and *unfruitful* in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ—that is, the knowledge of Jesus Christ is in him a barren tree; it is like the talent hid in a napkin that will serve only to condemn its blind possessor.

But we have not even come to the most important part of Paul's thought—“*with joyfulness.*” That is the most wonderful and unearthly part of all. No one is living the Truth whose basic frame of mind is not a deep and thankful joyfulness. Here again we can well “*examine ourselves whether we be in the Faith.*”

This does not mean there will not be sadness and grief, for the Great Example himself was pre-eminently a “*man of sorrows and acquainted*

with grief.” This present mortal pilgrimage is in so many ways a vale of tears. But through all the passing sadness there runs the deep joyfulness of the eternal purpose. Though many things we cannot understand, we know God is wisdom and love, and if we faithfully serve Him, all will be well at last.

“Giving thanks unto the Father.”

Do we find ourselves carried away by this overwhelming sense of thankfulness for all the goodness of God? This again is part of the essential character of the true saint in Christ Jesus.

It is this intense thankfulness—the humble recognition of the infinite, unmerited goodness and mercy and kindness of God toward us that warms and softens us and makes us gentle and compassionate to others.

We are all under the dominion of sin—all in the pit of darkness and corruption: and God—from the great height of His unapproachable holiness—has looked down in mercy upon us. We have all been forgiven 10,000 talents—what are the few pence we have against each other that we should dare be harsh and unkind?

“Who hath made us meet” (v.12).

“Meet” means fit or qualified. It is God who makes His children fit for His Kingdom. It is God that works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Our simple part is to draw nigh unto Him in love and prayer and reverent study of His Word, and to submit in joyful thankfulness to that divine willing and doing within us.

“Who bath delivered us from the power of darkness”—Colossians 1:13.

Do we realize the greatness of this deliverance?—the terrible reality of this relentless power of darkness and of sin and of death? We take our salvation far too much for granted, and often act as if we were doing God a favor by serving Him. We unconsciously take a self-commending attitude regarding our work in the Truth, as if *we* have done something for *God!*

Jesus said, when they came in the night to seize him—

“This is your hour, and the power of darkness.”

Sin and evil, darkness and death, triumphed for a moment in the schemes of the flesh against the spirit. But in his patience and submission he led captivity captive. Paul said to the Romans:

“Ye were the slaves of sin.”

And Jesus said—

“Whosoever committeth sin is the slave of sin.”

Let us keep that thought before our minds. Pleasing the flesh—self-will (which is sin, for *“Whatsoever is not of faith is sin”*) is not freedom but slavery. God has in Christ given us the key to freedom from this servitude of death. Regardless of how great a blessing may be, and of how thankful we are at the first, the natural way of the flesh is, like Israel, to soon take it for granted, and—in the very presence of divine glory—to squabble over petty things and complain of minor inconveniences.

“And hath translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son.”

This passage is relied on heavily by those who teach that believers at present constitute the Kingdom of God, and who deny the true Gospel of the Kingdom. But this requires that we ignore all the plain teachings concerning the establishment of the Kingdom as a worldwide dominion at Christ's return, and the fact that those who inherit it must be immortal.

The word here rendered “translated” is the same as “put out” or “removed” in the passages—

Luke 16:4—*“When I am put out of the stewardship.”*

Acts 13:22—*“When God had removed Saul.”*

And the word rendered “into” is often translated *for* or *unto*, so the thought here is that God has taken the believers *out of* the dominion of darkness *for*, or *unto*, the coming eternal Kingdom of His Son, as Paul says to Timothy, using a very similar expression (2 Tim. 4:18)—

“The Lord shall preserve me unto (same word) His glorious Kingdom.”

* * *

“In whom we have redemption through his blood (v. 14).”

Paul is about to speak, in the next few verses, of the supreme position of Jesus in all the works and purpose of God. It is by him, and by him alone, that we have redemption from the power of death and darkness. He is our only gateway to life.

And that redemption is “through his (shed) blood.” Greater love hath no man than this. We are not, and dare not be, ordinary people. We have been purchased and redeemed by a treasure of inestimable value and preciousness—the perfect life-offering of God's beloved and only begotten son—willingly and lovingly suffered, even to the cruelest, most shameful of deaths.

These are among the things we must ever keep before our minds. All we do must be in solemn and gracious harmony with these great truths of

our redemption and separation from the world. True joy is divine, but there is no place for folly.

“Even the forgiveness of sins (v.14).

Forgiveness is a beautiful thing, when it is an eager and loving forgiveness, anxious for reconciliation, as the Parable of the Prodigal Son shows God's forgiveness to be.

God is strongly *desirous* of forgiving us. He has provided this beautiful way of forgiveness, and pleads with us to accept it. What could He do more? What condescension in One so infinitely high and self-sufficient! With what eagerness we should strive to comply with the terms of His reconciliation!

“Who is the image of the invisible God” (v.15).

We are led here to the threshold of a subject of great holiness, where we must tread with reverence and reserve. We are told just as much as is sufficient for us—that in the love and wisdom of the Creator man was made in the image of God—that Jesus Christ is His only begotten Son, and that it is His glorious purpose to develop a divine family for Himself from the redeemed of all ages.

“The firstborn of every creature” (v.15).

One of the principle purposes of this epistle is to establish the foundation of the preeminence of Christ—to bring him plainly to the forefront—to show the vital importance of being *in him* and *holding fast to him*.

There are various dangers the apostle warns them about—philosophy and vain deceit—the keeping of days—self-made regulations of men, well-intentioned indeed, but useless as far as the development of true godliness is concerned. It is very satisfying to create our own regulations of conduct and to glorify ourselves for keeping them, but we are not going deep enough. We are catering to pride, rather than overcoming it.

The only hope is a complete submergence into Christ—a complete emptying and denying of self—a carefulness to learn *his* simple, inner way of righteousness, and to be *“found in him,”* resting wholly upon him, freely confessing our insignificance and hopelessness without him. In his beautiful parable of the vine, he said to all who would follow him—

“Without me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

A sense of personal achievement, whether in natural or spiritual things, is apt to blind us to the deep truth of that statement. We must get a true perspective of ourselves, and of mankind in general. There have been great

men in the past—we do not mean the petty potsherds of the earth: the Napoleons, the Washingtons, the Caesars: but such men as Moses, Abraham and Paul—truly great men in a divine, eternal sense.

But they were nothing compared to Christ. Casting themselves upon God, they were empowered to do a great work each in their day, but all the meaning and value of their work depended upon Christ alone.

Any straying away from him—any assertion of our own individuality—any self-reliance—any pride or dependence upon self—and we are lost.

“The firstborn of every creature” (v.15).

This is made clear in v. 18: *“The beginning, the firstborn from the dead.”* Christ is the firstborn of the Sons of God taken from among men, the beginning, the foundation stone upon which all is built, the forerunner, the Head of the Body; first and chief in every respect.

“By him were all things created” (v.16).

The RV and Diaglott have this *“in him”*—all the eternal purpose is built upon and contained *in him*.

“Whether they be thrones, dominions, principalities, or powers.”

What are these? Paul speaks of them as *visible and invisible*. In heaven and in earth—all powers, all rulerships, all dominion and authority focuses in him. He is saying more emphatically what Jesus himself said after his resurrection (Matt. 28:18)—

“All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”

For this end was he born. To this end was all arranged from the beginning. We have heard theories even among some who know the Truth, about there being other worlds, and other processes of salvation going on, outside of Christ, but Paul here shows him to be, under the Father, *supreme in heaven and earth*.

“He is before all things, and by him all things consist” (v.17).

Literally, as in the New American Standard, *“in him all things hold together.”* This defines his supremacy very vividly—the whole framework of the divine purpose—the whole eternal building is held up, and held together, by him.

“He is the Head of the Body, the Ecclesia” (v.18).

The Ecclesia is a body having many members. The members have been scattered in all parts of the world, and in all generations, but they are all one in Christ. In him there is a oneness to their lives, wherever and

whenever they have lived. This oneness knits them together in a love whose depth the world cannot comprehend. V. 19—

“For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.”

It pleased God to manifest Himself in and through the Son in every aspect of the divine nature and character—

“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Jesus said (John 8:29)—

“I do always those things that please the Father.”

How simple, and yet how profound, was his way of life!—the ruling principle of his conduct—

“Not my will, but Thine, be done.”

Paul said: *“He pleased not himself.”* For a few brief years he *pleased not himself*, but gave every moment of his life to pleasing the Father—and now he hath a Name above every name. How simple, and yet how profound! What a simple formula of eternal success, and yet what prayer and self-control to carry it through!

The relationship of the Father and Son—the love, the unity, the victory, the glory—is the perfect example of the Father's great purpose with men.

“Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him He reconciled all things to Himself” (v. 20).

It is good to be continually reminded of the blood of the cross, and how it was needed to bring peace between God and man—how in all things God must be exalted, His righteousness manifested, His holiness declared.

God having through Christ laid the foundation of holiness, He purposed through him to reconcile all things to Himself—to develop a state of things, all radiating from Christ, in which all will be in beautiful and eternal harmony.

“You that were some time alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works” (v. 21).

The natural man, however good and well-meaning, is in this category. To the Ephesians Paul says that the natural man is alienated from God by ignorance, blindness and darkened understanding. What the world calls good is *not* good. Only true, enlightened harmony with God is good—all else is evil.

Man must face these facts of his natural state and seek to be delivered from the darkness of ignorance and wickedness into the light of knowledge and obedience.

Paul says in v. 22 that Jesus had reconciled them to God—

“In the body of his flesh, through death.”

He reminds them of the great price paid—the one way to life that was opened with such sorrow and pain, and yet such glory and joy.

“To present you holy, and unblameable, and unproveable in His sight” (v. 22).

The apostle tells us here that it is Christ's purpose and work to present the redeemed unto God *“holy and unblameable and unproveable.”* It is his work and purpose to develop a group of people in this condition of holiness and perfection.

To the Ephesians the apostle says similarly that it was Jesus' purpose to present his Bride *“holy and without blemish, spot or wrinkle.”* And in v. 28 here he speaks of his own work—

“That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.”

Now what we are concerned with is: What does this *“holiness”* and *“blamelessness”* and *“spotlessness”* and *“perfection”* mean as far as we are concerned? What does it entail? What is expected of us? What is required, and what is possible?

These are practical questions, and we should face them as such. We should face these things in their literal import, regardless of how we may find ourselves to compare with them. Then we should set ourselves the full time task of approaching as close as we can to them, never underestimating the mighty power that He has promised will work in us just as long as we faithfully do our part.

Beyond that, everything rests upon God's compassion and mercy. But **LET US AT LEAST RECOGNIZE WHAT WE ARE TO AIM AT AND STRIVE FOR**, and the continuous effort and study that is expected.

In ch. 3 Paul speaks specifically of many of the distinguishing marks of the state he describes as *“holy and blameless”*—marks by which we can measure ourselves. Among the requirements Paul lists are—

Fixing the heart on heavenly things; Not setting our interests on any present things; Putting to death the evil tendencies and reactions of the flesh; But to put on mercy, kindness, humbleness, meekness, longsuffering, forbearance, forgiveness, love; Allowing the peace of God to rule the heart; Allowing the Word of Christ to dwell within us in all

wisdom; Every word and deed done in the Name of Jesus and in thanksgiving to God; The speech always pure, and sober, and gracious; Walking always in wisdom—*“Wisdom excelleth folly as light excelleth darkness.”*

These are some of the elements of the holiness of which the apostle speaks. *“If ye continue in the Faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel”* (v. 23).

To be moved away from the hope of the Gospel does not just mean to *openly* leave the Truth. There are other equally disastrous, and far more subtle, ways we can be “moved away.”

Other interests can take more and more of our attention—interests that may be perfectly legitimate and necessary *up to a point*—as our daily bread, or our family, or our home.

Or we can gradually get our knowledge of the Truth unbalanced and distorted by being absorbed by certain aspects to the extent of their becoming crotchets. It is so easy and so natural to just keep going around and around on the same subject or two, instead of truly *studying the Scriptures as a whole*, and developing knowledge of the whole Truth on a broad front.

Bro. G.V.

Growcott

Bible Reading Notes —November

“God hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.” (Acts 17:31)

It is recorded in one of the chapters due to be read this month that Paul commended the believers at Thessalonica because, *“when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God.”* No stronger reason could be advanced to justify regular Bible study. It is the first condition of acceptability to God. *“To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word”* (Isaiah 66:2). The Bible Companion has proved invaluable among the community of Christadelphians in encouraging this all important practice.

The allotted readings for November are 2 Chronicles 30 to 36, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Acts 10 to 28, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, Philemon.

2 CHRONICLES 30 TO 36

Hezekiah was one of the few good kings who reigned over the kingdom of Judah. Notice his insistence upon a thorough observance of the law of God commanded through Moses (**chap. 30**). He *“wrought that which was good and right and truth before the Lord his God”* (**chap. 31:20**). He possessed unbounded faith. When threatened by Sennacherib he encouraged the people by saying, *“with him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles”* (**chap. 32:8**). The discomfiture of the Assyrian hosts was a vindication of the power of the Lord God of Israel. The same power is operative to-day on behalf of all who trust in Him. Manasseh and Amon were idolatrous kings, as were all the remaining kings except Josiah (**chaps. 34 and 35**). He cleansed the land of idols, revived the reading of the law, and celebrated the Passover. He is an example of enthusiastic service and robust faith. The last king of Judah was Zedekiah, whose career was cut short by the invasion of the Babylonians. Jerusalem was destroyed, the temple razed to the ground, and the people taken captive. The throne of David was overturned, never again to be restored *“until he comes whose right it is”* (Ezekiel 21:24). It has been covenanted to Christ (Luke 1:32), who will reign thereupon at his second coming (**Matt. 25:31**).

EZRA, NEHEMIAH

These two books describe the return of the captives from Babylon, and their re-establishment in the land of Palestine as a subject province of the Persian Empire. Ezra records two separate returns, one in the first year of Cyrus, 536 B.C. (**chap. 1:1**), and the other in the reign of Artaxerxes (Longimanus), 458 B.C. (**chap. 7:1**). These returned Jews were the ancestors of the population inhabiting Palestine when Jesus was born, and this period of Israelitish history strikingly illustrates the ways of Providence in directing the affairs of his people for their ultimate well-being. Notice the enthusiasm and willingness which characterized the returned exiles (**chap. 1:6; 3:5**); also their insistence upon separation from the alien peoples who had inhabited their land during their absence (**chap. 4:3**).

Owing to continued opposition the work of rebuilding was arrested for about half a century, but resumed under the personal direction of Ezra. His prayer of contrition (**chap. 9**) is a beautiful example of humility, and his reform of the mixed marriages (**chap. 10**) an illustration of the separation enjoined upon the servants of God in all ages. Nehemiah's book is mainly his autobiography, relating his sorrow for his own land and people whilst he was cup-bearer, in exile, to the king of Persia. It describes the permission granted for his return, and the work he performed in maintaining the confidence of his people. He was a man of prayer (**chaps. 1:5; 2:4**), of unbounded faith (**chaps. 2:20; 4:20**), and of indomitable

courage (**chap. 6:3**). The spirit of his life is expressed in his answer to those that sought his life. *“Should such a man as I flee?”* (**chap. 6:11**). The same spirit of fearlessness in doing the work of God will characterize all His true servants. Nehemiah encouraged the reading of the law (**chap. 8:8**), and a strict observance of the things written therein (**chap. 8:15**). His petition to God with which he closes his book is expressive of the mind of all who trust in Him. *“Remember me, O my God, for good”* (**chap. 13:31**).

ESTHER

The reason for the inclusion of this book among the inspired writings is doubtless to teach the lesson that God is always mindful of the circumstances and needs of His people. The book does not even mention God, but it clearly reveals His unseen workings. The disgrace of Vashti, the crowning of Esther as queen, the subsequent advance of Mordecai, the hanging of Haman, and the slaughter of his confederates, were all links in a chain of events by which the Jews were preserved, and the divine purpose in them furthered. God has decreed that Israel, though persecuted, shall survive, shall remain separate, and shall ultimately be restored as a nation to their own land. Every age has produced its Hamans, who have been set upon the destruction of Israel, but by means similar to those employed in the days of Esther, God has thwarted their evil designs and saved His people. The closing words of this book describe the advancement of Mordecai and foreshadow the honored position of Jesus as their final deliverer. *“He was great among the Jews, and accepted the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed”* (**chap. 10:3**).

HOSEA

Hosea's mission was mainly to the northern kingdom of Israel, during the reign of Jeroboam II. The prevailing wickedness and apostasy of the nation was shown by the figure of a harlot being taken to wife by the prophet. The names of her children (**chap. 1:4 to 9**) were expressive of God's rejection of the people. *“I will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel”* (**verse 4**). True to her character, the woman subsequently left the prophet, but he was afterwards commanded by God to take her back (**chap. 3:1**). This prefigured the mercy and forgiveness which God would extend to His people in their final restoration (**chap. 3:5**). The book contains many pictures of Israel's depravity. *“There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land”* (**chap. 4:1**). *“Israel is defiled”* (**chap. 5:3**). *“Ephraim is like a silly dove; they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria”* (**chap. 7:11**). Judgments were to follow in the wake of their unfaithfulness. *“They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind”* (**chap. 8:7**). The book contains many gracious promises of ultimate blessing. *“The number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand . . . it shall be*

said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God” (**chap. 1:10**). *“I will break the bow and the sword, and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely”* (**chap. 2:18**). *“He hath torn, and he will heal us . . . after two days will he revive us, in the third day he will raise us up”* (**chap. 3:2**). Already half of Israel's third day of a thousand years, since her captivity, has passed, and the time of her healing is close at hand. The prophet's closing exhortations are equally applicable to-day. *“Return unto the Lord thy God”* (**chap. 14:1**). *“Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them”* (**chap. 14:9**).

JOEL

No information is available concerning the time of Joel's prophecy, though conjectural evidence points to an early date in the history of the divided kingdom of Israel and Judah. **Chapter 1** describes the ravages of locusts upon the land of Israel. This visitation is portrayed as a divine judgment upon the people for their hypocrisy and idolatry. It is evident, however, that the plague of locusts had a figurative application. *“A nation is come up upon my land”* (**chap. 1:6**). *“O Lord, give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them”* (**chap. 2:17**). Four distinct invasions are alluded to under the figures of the palmerworm, the locust, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar (**chap. 1:4**). The figure suggests the same idea as indicated in the vision of Daniel's four beasts (Dan. 7). These represented the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman invasions, and probably Joel's prophecy alluded to the same events. Joel speaks of coming blessedness. *“The Lord will be jealous for his land and pity his people”* (**chap. 2:18**). *“I will remove from you the northern army”* (**chap. 2:20**). *“Ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God”* (**chap. 2:26**). **Chapter 3** describes the gathering of the nations upon the mountains of Israel in the latter days, when the kingdoms of men will be finally abolished, and the God of Israel known and adored in all the earth.

AMOS

Amos was contemporary with Hosea and Isaiah, and prophesied in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah, and Jeroboam II, king of Israel. His utterances reveal the decadence of the entire nation, making them ripe (like the basket of summer fruit, **chap. 8**) for the impending divine judgments. The prophet also foretold the outpouring of wrath upon the surrounding districts, Damascus (**chap. 1:3**), Gaza (**chap. 1:6**), Tyrus (**chap. 1:9**), Ammon (**chap. 1:13**), and Moab (**chap. 2:1**). Judah and Israel were also to be punished for their ingratitude (**chap. 2:9**), their oppression and idolatry (**chap. 4**). Notice the references to their especial privileges (**chap. 3:2**), and to their final blessedness when *“the plowman shall overtake the*

reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed” (**chap. 9:14**). This prophecy will be fulfilled when Israel is regathered, and Christ, their Messiah, reigns over them.

OBADIAH

This prophecy concerns primarily two nations, Edom and Israel. Edom was proverbially an enemy of Israel. She refused Israel passage through her land in the days of Moses. She was proud and arrogant (**verses 3 and 4**), and added to Israel's afflictions (**verses 10 and 11**). Obadiah foretold her extinction, and history proves the truth of his prophecy. There is no doubt that Edom's downfall characterizes the overthrow of all the enemies of Israel. “*The day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen*” (**verse 15**). The prophet's message concludes with a reference to the final triumph of Israel, when “*upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau, and the kingdom shall be the Lord's*” (**verse 21**).

ACTS 10 TO 28

The case of Cornelius (**chap. 10**) is important as showing that good living is insufficient to commend a man to God without correct belief. Notice how often baptism is taught in the Acts. Paul was baptized (**chap. 9:18**), the Philippian jailor (**chap. 16:33**), and the Corinthian believers (**chap. 18:8**). **Chapter 19** shows that even baptism must be accompanied by right understanding. Another feature of the Acts is the prominence given to the doctrine of the resurrection. 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 defense before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa, and it was the theme of his preaching when a prisoner in Rome (**chap. 28:23**). Many glimpses are supplied of Paul's righteous character, notably his patience under trial (**chap. 16:19**), his zeal (**chap. 17:2**), his tact (**chap. 17:23**), his love of the brethren (**chap. 20:2**), his earnestness (**chap. 20:31**), his faith (**chap. 27:23**). These traits of character justified the apostle in declaring, “*Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ*” (1 Cor. 11:1).

COLOSSIANS

This epistle was written to combat the growth of worldly philosophy and intellectual pride. In Jesus alone are “*hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*” (**chap. 2:3**). The only knowledge worth acquiring is “*the knowledge of God's will*” (**chap. 1:9**). It finds expression in a desire to be like Christ (**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 (**chap. 3:4**).

THESSALONIANS

The cardinal doctrine of these two epistles is the second coming of Christ. There is at least one distinct reference to it in every chapter. (**See 1:10; 2:19; 4:16; 2 Thess. 1:8; 3:5.**) These epistles were written to encourage the believers to patiently wait and prepare for it.

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**), pure in heart and mind (**Titus 2:11**), peacemakers (**1 Tim. 6:6**), grave, temperate, sound in faith (**Titus 2:1**), in all things, patterns of good works (**Titus 2:7**).

PHILEMON

As a personal letter from one servant of God to another, this epistle illustrates true brotherly love. It breathes the Spirit of sacrifice, humility, service, and devotion, and portrays the courtesy, sympathy, and kindness which should exist among all the servants of Christ. It was written by Paul when a prisoner at Rome, and is an intercession with Philemon for Onesimus, who was a runaway slave.

Christadelphian History and Biblical Fellowship

The Foundation

At the outset we wish to mention that the following treatise is not intended to be an exhaustive study upon Christadelphian history and Biblical fellowship. Lord willing, our desire is to provide an overview of both subjects so that we might gain a greater appreciation of the Scriptural position.

When contemplating the subject of Biblical fellowship our minds are first directed to *Yahshua Anointed*. The Scriptures reveal our Lord to be *The Foundation* – The Chief Cornerstone – upon which is built a *Spiritual House*: The Congregation or *Ecclesia of the Deity* (Eph. 2:19-22). This is a house with rules. All interpersonal relationships among the occupants are governed generally by 1 John 1:3-7, and specifically by many verses, which fall under its umbrella. John writes:

“*That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ...If we walk in The*

Light as Deity is in The Light, we have fellowship one with another..."

Light is a Biblical metaphor for Truth. Accordingly, as John declares, walking together in the Light of Yahweh's Truth is the sole basis of The Fellowship of the Brethren and Sisters of Yahshua Anointed (Isa. 8:20; Psa. 119:105; Prov. 6:23; John. 1:4).

A Summary of Ecclesial History

Throughout the centuries many individuals have both entered and exited The Fellowship – a community of believers that has been known by several names: *The Way, The Sect Everywhere Spoken Against, Christians, The Brethren of Christ, et al.* Notwithstanding these various appellations, all have been of the Ecclesia of Yahweh, at least initially.

Over the passage of many centuries, and no doubt for a host of diverse reasons, so many individuals exited The Fellowship that it had all but disappeared from off the spiritual landscape. Then, in 1847, it was wholly re-established. This Fellowship was also known by several names: *Thomasites, Nazarenes, The Royal Association of Believers,* and ultimately, *The Christadelphians*, taken from Colossians, chapter one.

During the course of some 160 years, this Fellowship would also witness many both entering and exiting. A continued violation of the 1 John 1:3-7 "House Rules" would cause some to exit voluntarily, and others *via* disfellowship.

A failure to walk in The Light, and consequently, fellowship being breached, *The Dowieites* would exit in the 1860s; *The Renunciators*, in the 1870s; *The Partial Inspirationists*, in the 1880s. This latter group would become known as *The Suffolk Street Fellowship*. Then, in the 1890s, *The Anti-Responsibility Group* would follow suit. They would become known as *Advocates* or *Unamended*.

In those days there was a capable leader in brother Roberts who properly and Scripturally reacted to the threat posed by men who would corrupt the Truth. During these tumultuous times Ecclesias found themselves in the midst of disfellowshipping others, at least partially as a result of brother Roberts' use of *The Christadelphian* magazine to encourage support for the preservation of Yahweh's Truth in the Ecclesias. All of this history is well documented.

In 1898, with the falling asleep of brother Roberts, contending for The Faith would become lax. By 1923, Christadelphians known as *The Birmingham (Temperance Hall) Fellowship* exited The Fellowship.

Toleration of error among them concerning clean flesh, constabulary service, military service, suing at law, voting, and oath-taking, took them, in effect, along with their sympathizers and, sadly, some among them who probably knew no better, out of The Fellowship. From 1932 on, this group would become known as *The Central Fellowship*. (See *Christadelphians Then and Now: A Plea for the Birmingham Statement of Faith*, by Frank G. Jannaway, 1927, pp 23-27; *The Christadelphian*, 1932, p. 554.)

In 1923, those remaining in The Fellowship were brethren and sisters comprising over 100 Ecclesias in the British Commonwealth and the Americas who would become known as *The Berean Christadelphians*. These held to the original Christadelphian doctrines.

Since that time others would exit The Fellowship as well. In 1953, many would join Central. At least two splinter groups off the Bereans still exist.

The Fellowship Today

All of the above history is highly interesting, but the vital question is: Where are we *today*? Yesterday is gone. It cannot be changed. Let us, therefore, look at the Berean Christadelphians at the present time.

Are the Bereans still in The Fellowship? On our part, both careful research and personal contact has revealed that *on the whole, as a fellowship*, Berean brethren are more oriented toward original Christadelphian beliefs than are the other respective groups *on the whole, as a fellowship*. Even on their worst day, Bereans appear to be better off doctrinally than virtually anything else we have been able to find, *on its best day*.

Are the Bereans morally perfect? No, indeed (1 John 1:8-10). Worldliness has crept into both the Ecclesia and the lives of all men and women since the Fall of Adam. It is a daily struggle to overcome the sin that so easily besets us. The brethren and sisters of the Berean Ecclesias seem to manifest an unusually keen realization of the principle of Galatians 6:1 in helping one another to overcome sin. This is refreshing.

Do the Bereans have doctrinal problems? On occasion this occurs. However, from personal knowledge we can declare that these issues are dealt with in a Scriptural manner. After all has been said and done, there is *closure* either one way or the other. Every effort is made to recover our erring brother. If there is repentance, then the Ecclesias rejoice over a wayward brother restored to good standing. If not, then the Biblical principle

of disfellowship remains in place. Error will not be allowed a platform whereby the Christ-Body can become infected with spiritually destructive disease (2 Tim. 2:17).

Berean Christadelphians still hold to the *Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith* and the *Berean Restatement*, both of which enumerate the beliefs of the *early* Christadelphians. Moreover, the Bereans *are not* continuously plagued by individuals who hold unscriptural notions that trouble especially the Central and Advocate groups. These groups are chronically afflicted by errorists *from within their own respective fellowships* who, at sundry places and diverse times, hold false beliefs of which the following is only a partial list:

1. Preterist view of the Apocalypse.
2. Futurist view of the Apocalypse.
3. Clean-Flesh, i.e., no sin in the flesh.
4. Christ not offering for himself.
5. Only covenant-makers will be raised and judged. (*Limited to Advocate.*)
6. Evolution.
7. Genesis creation account not literal.
8. Open door fellowship.
9. Participation in police and military service.
10. Participation in politics and voting.
11. In the Kingdom now.
12. Partial inspiration of the Scriptures.
13. Suing brethren at law.
14. Nebuchadnezzar's Image being Arab.
15. No Papacy in prophecy.
16. Russia not the invader of Ezekiel 38-39.
17. Salvation at baptism.
18. Saved by faith: works not necessary.
19. No Millennial Temple.
20. No Post-Millennial Rebellion and Resurrection.
21. Paid ministry and seminarians.
22. Lax (or no) pre-baptismal confession of faith.
23. Present possession of the Holy Spirit.
24. Ecumenicalism

It takes effort on the part of all Berean Ecclesias to maintain a decent level of freedom from false doctrine. This is not a big policing effort. All Ecclesias have endeavored to be "of one mind" and have kept true principles together (John 17:11). Such is not being "holier than thou." It is, we hope, an honest effort to manifest obedience to the Lord. Notwithstanding, we are not immune from attack by errorists. We must be

ever on our guard: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (1 John 4:1; 1 Cor. 10:12).

May we be always thankful to the Lord for His many blessings, one of which is the Ecclesial peace that ensues from endeavoring to preserve sound doctrine (Jas. 3:17).

Those Who Have Exited The Fellowship

Were those individuals or groups who exited The Fellowship still in the way of life? Only the Deity knows for certain how much divergence from sound doctrine He will tolerate and still consider a person to be in the way of life, or an Ecclesia, a viable Lightstand. There would certainly be degrees of responsibility and condemnation – teachers bearing the greater burden (Jas. 3:1). However, it is not our prerogative to make such judgments. Faithful brethren and sisters are duty-bound by numerous principles such as 1 John 1:5-7 and Ephesians 5:11 to be circumspect in truth and fellowship. Although the Deity might consider a doctrinally unsteady brother to be in the way, we cannot afford to ignore the Biblical principles which both create and dissolve fellowship: walking in the Light as Deity is in the Light that begets fellowship, and walking in Darkness that severs fellowship. We would be disobedient to the Lord by extending fellowship to an erring brother (or brethren) *indefinitely* without *Biblical closure* on the issue.

Contenders in Other Groups

There are brethren and sisters who, in various ways, contend for the Truth within their respective Christadelphian groups. A few of these individuals are known to us. Some of these groups are so rife with apostasy that one wonders how any spiritually sane person can stand it. Yet certain Contenders remain, trying to make a positive difference. In this regard, we remember Lot. His righteous soul was vexed daily as he witnessed the wickedness in his midst. We also remember Noah, the Preacher of Righteousness. No doubt he did not view with favor the evil surrounding him. We remember the Prophets as well, and empathize with those in similar circumstances.

There is Biblical precedent for brethren to remain in association with an Ecclesia (or Ecclesias) while serious problems are being addressed. Paul in Corinth comes to mind as well as the Ecclesias of Asia Minor. When we think back to our own days in the association of an unsound group, we can recall the rationale for remaining in the midst of terrible error. We understood the longstanding views of respected brethren and generally agreed with them as to their reasoning behind not abdicating responsibilities. "Nothing would make the wolves happier than for us to leave," was a common rejoinder among them. Was the approach promulgated by these brethren a Scriptural one? Yes, it was, but only to a point. Then it became quite *wrong*, as we shall see.

A Time to Stay and a Time to Leave

After years of contending, and facing no solution to the false doctrine besetting the unsound group, we left. Why? Because there must eventually be Biblical *closure* to error troubling the Congregations. In the unsound group there never was *closure*. Problems only waxed gross. Like a cancer, it continued to eat away at the heart of the Ecclesias, all efforts at contending notwithstanding.

As with Lot, so it was with us. There was a time to stay. There was a time to leave. At the urging of the Elohim, Lot wisely chose to leave prior to the judgment upon the city. We do not necessarily need an appearing angel to tell us when to leave. The Word can direct us.

And there is Noah, the Preacher of Righteousness. There was a time for preaching, and a time for building. Then it was time to leave. We need not remind ourselves of the prophetic parallel between Noah's day and our own.

What of the Prophets? During the time of the *Old Covenant*, they proclaimed the warnings of the Deity. They were *commanded* to remain continuously in the midst of a rebellious and apostate Nation, whether their words were heeded or not. Is it the same for us? Not necessarily.

Under the *New Covenant* we have been given commands as well, one of which is to work within the Ecclesia to solve problems. However, in so doing, we cannot fellowship error (or those who fellowship error) *indefinitely*. There must ultimately be Scriptural *closure*. To proceed otherwise would put us at odds with The Word. The following summary of Biblical principles reveals the various circumstances, both doctrinal and moral, under which fellowship *cannot* continue:

1. Withdraw thyself from such as teach or consent not to the doctrine which is according to godliness (1 Tim. 6:3-5; cf. Titus 1:1).
2. Reject a heretic after the first and second admonition (Titus 3:10).
3. Withdraw yourselves from disorderly brethren (2 Thess. 3:6).
4. Avoid them that cause division and offenses contrary to the doctrine (Rom. 16:17).
5. Receive them not into your house who bring not this doctrine (2 John 7-11).
6. Put away from among yourselves that wicked person;
do not eat with such an one (1 Cor. 5:11-13).
7. Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness (Eph 5:11).
8. Unrepentant errorists are to be disfellowshipped (Rev. 2:14-15).

9. Offenders who will not hear the Ecclesia are to be as

a heathen and publican (Matt. 18:17).

10. Those who walk in darkness have absolutely no basis for fellowship with the Christ-Body (1 John 1:5-7).

The Contender must choose the time when his work in an unsound Ecclesia(s) is over. No one can make this choice for him. It is between he and the Almighty through Yahshua Anointed and guided by an intelligent understanding of the Word in tandem with prayer. However, when the Contender's hope of salvation is put at risk by a continued association with Darkness, it is time for him to leave. He must discern, Scripturally, at which point the Darkness has become so great that his further association therein could cause both he and his family to become castaways.

Once departed from an unsound fellowship, the Contender can still reach out to those in the other groups. This only requires both the desire and effort through word, pen and example to "save others with fear, pulling them out of the fire" (Jude 23).

A Word to Those in Other Groups

We have shared with you some of the rationale – both historical and Biblical – as to why we believe the Berean Christadelphians to be the *Original Christadelphian Fellowship*. Some of the more vocal individuals in the other groups do not agree with us. These disagreements have been aired both over the Internet and elsewhere. We believe the information they have presented concerning us to be a *misrepresentation* of the true facts of the case.

If you wish to learn more about us, you are invited to contact the Berean brethren. No one, save the Lord, knows more about us than we do. We would be delighted to visit with you and share the original Christadelphian position, free of the specious interpretations placed upon our writings by others.
— Bro. Bob Widding

Where Is Your Treasure?

In answer to the kind salutations and enquiries of many correspondents, I am thankful to say that I am fairly well, and still rejoicing in the hope of Israel, which I find the only thing left to rejoice in at my age. I am now over 80 years of age, and you will understand that I am not able to write and talk so well as I used in days gone by. I greatly appreciate your

enquiries and loving remembrances, in a variety of ways, and am as well as I can expect to be at my time of life, and certainly as much interested in the truth and all that belongs to it as ever, and in the many signs of the near approach of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose advent is “all my salvation and all my desire,” as it was to our father David.

I may refer to my past writings in “Woman: Married and Unmarried” as examples of what I should perhaps wish to say in another form did strength permit. It would only be repetition however, and I have recently contented myself with distributing some of these.

I am glad and thankful that the work of the truth is being carried on so faithfully in many hands. The twelve years of my widowhood have been cheered and brightened by this. The greatly enlarged distribution of *Christendom Astray* and the steady circulation of *Elpis Israel* and *Eureka*, Dr. Thomas’ standard works, are most encouraging, and both Dr. Thomas and brother Roberts, in the day of resurrection, will be very much interested to find out to what an extent they, “*being dead yet spoke.*” And we trust the Lord will approve of the testimony maintained. Paul gave thanks for the faithful testimony of the Thessalonians, saying, “*Ye were examples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia, for from you sounded out the word of the Lord*” (1 Thess. 1:7, 8). This is how I feel. Both Dr. Thomas and brother Roberts desired that their writings should be kept in circulation if they died before the Lord’s return.

When, after the Doctor’s death, it was suggested to brother Roberts that he would be preserved until the glorious event, as it was thought he could not be spared, his reply was, “Ah! we don’t know what God’s purpose may require—more may be accomplished by my death than my life.” When brother Roberts died the brethren everywhere seemed to be stirred up to do their utmost to fill the gap, till now we have just the kind of activity going on in regular, organised methods for the extension of the work of the truth, which gives scope for the capabilities of both old and young, and seems to bear out and justify the thought that brother Roberts entertained. It is arduous work, and many-sided; but if it be done as to the Lord, it will bring joy and gladness at last. We must “*maintain good works,*” and to all, and especially to the young, I would say, “*Let your treasure be in heaven, and not on earth,*” as the Lord commands. How can we “*lay up treasure in heaven*”? Whatever we devote to God is treasure laid up in heaven. Nothing is too small to be noted in His book of remembrance, if given in the right spirit. We are but stewards of whatever talents the Lord may entrust to us; as we sow, so shall we reap.

There is treasure laid up in heaven by God for those who keep His commandments. His laws were strictly obeyed by His beloved Son, and he is already enjoying the treasure he laid up by his loving obedience. He requires his brethren and sisters to keep his commandments and makes this a test of their love for him. He is our example, and we are asked to follow his steps, and endure as seeing God who is invisible. Some of the commandments are hard, but not so hard when we keep close to the encouragements we receive day by day from intimacy with the Scriptures. The hope of deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of spirit-nature will nerve us often to overcome the weaknesses of human nature, and to rejoice in the hope of the inheritance laid up in heaven for us by the abounding grace of our Father, which He has purposed in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Let your treasure be in heaven, where it will be in safe keeping.

Treasure stored or laid up on earth is liable to come to nothing. I was much impressed with the story of the poor Roman lady whose remains, with the hands full of jewels, have just been found in Pompeii. Here is the report from *The Daily News*:—

“An important discovery has been made at Pompeii, where, in the course of building operations outside the area of the buried city, the petrified body of a woman has been unearthed, with both hands full of jewels. Evidently the woman fled when the eruption began, carrying all her jewels, but was overwhelmed by the rain of ashes when just outside the city.

“The jewels are numerous and valuable, consisting of bracelets, necklets, rings, and chains. All are admirably preserved, as they were protected from the molten lava by the owner’s hands. Among the jewels is a pair of earrings considered to be a unique specimen of ancient goldwork of extraordinary value. Each earring is shaped like a bunch of grapes with 21 perfect pearls representing the grapes, set in gold of exquisite workmanship.”

Poor lady! Where is she, and where is her treasure? We may not be overtaken in a tragedy like that, but the Lord has warned us of the great danger of being surcharged with the cares and pleasures of this life, that when he returns, we may be left to struggle with the terrible judgments that will befall a heedless world (Luke 21:34–36). “*Let your treasure be in heaven,*” and when you get to my age in the flesh, which I pray you never may, by reason of the Lord’s speedy return, you will be satisfied, in measure, to look back upon a lifetime spent in the service of God (with

whatever imperfections) in the ardent hope and desire for the realisation of “*the hope of Israel.*”

I may live till the Lord comes, if not then, like Simeon of old, I will say, “*Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*”

I have not indeed seen the Lord, but in these latter days I have seen such assurances of his coming again, that I am sure God will soon perform all the rest of His purpose concerning him—With love in his name, your sister and fellow-pilgrim, —Sis.
Jane Roberts

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. It’s 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.

—*The Christadelphian*

1905

Clean Flesh Heresy

Unless brethren and sisters who know the Truth, especially those who have taken upon themselves the responsible task of guiding and shepherding the ecclesias, wake up—unless they bestir themselves in imparting sound instruction, faithful exhortation, and showing the necessity for pure fellowship, this “Clean Flesh” [partial atonement] heresy will establish itself in our midst, and the calamity which has befallen the new countries will befall the old.
—A. T. Jannaway—1925

Meditations—Are We Weary?

ARE we weary? If so, let us cheer up. To lose heart is fatal. “We shall reap,” says Paul, “if we faint not.” It is endurance that wins the prize. There are many things, truly, to discourage—to try our patience—to tempt us to doubt and leave the truth. But let us remember that the number of things—if we will but stay to ponder them—that will antidote this feeling, and give us hope and nerve, is far larger. When in trouble, let us open out our hearts freely to God. Let us search the pages of His Word for the consolation which He has provided. Let us turn to “*Seasons of Comfort,*” and dip deeply into this super-excellent work as a help and friend in this direction. Our strength to overcome lies in our perception of what God has said and promised, and in attaining this essential, the works of brother Roberts are unequalled and invaluable. Are we weighed down through poverty or oppression?—through continued illness?—through shortcomings?—through the unkindness and treachery of companions?—through dissension in the ecclesia?—through the death of dear ones?—through Christ’s long delay? If so, let us not give in. These trials have been common to the approved children of God in all ages. They did not give in, and why should we? Let us remember that our affliction at its worst is but “light,” in comparison with the result to which it leads—“*the eternal weight of glory*” (2 Cor. 4:17).

To progress in divine knowledge is the duty of one and all. Abound yet more and more is the oft-repeated admonition of the word—Phil. 1:9; Col. 1:10; 2 Pet. 3:18. Let us assent to our duty not only in word but in deed. If we do this, we shall exert ourselves in order to become wiser. We shall not be content simply with what we glean at the meetings, but we shall also read and study for ourselves. How many of us do this? It is to be feared that some, having attained to a knowledge of the first principles—to that degree of enlightenment which gives validity to baptism—look upon further study as optional. This should not be, as a consideration of the passages quoted above will show. Advance—let this be our motto for the new year. Let there be no standing still—no waiting for knowledge to be

brought to us—let us adopt an up-and-at-it attitude. As our numbers increase, this obligation of growing in knowledge becomes more and more imperative. Brethren and sisters who have been newly immersed, naturally look to those of long standing for information on Bible questions, and it is a thousand pities if it is not forthcoming. Let us then, brethren, “Advance”—let there be more reading and less talk. Let the works of Dr. Thomas and brother Roberts be more in evidence than those of Messrs. Harmsworth, Pearson, Cassell, and Company.

Touching the important and sublime predictions of the Bible in regard to current events and the establishment of God’s kingdom, the clergy are either silent, glaringly weak, or positively stupid. It is here—upon the subject of unfulfilled prophecy—that the vast superiority of Dr. Thomas over the clergy is so clearly and strikingly manifest. The latter can deal, more or less correctly, with predictions concerning Christ’s first appearing, but what can they say about his future coming and mission? They can speak of Daniel’s four great world powers, but what can they say concerning the fifth, and the smiting of the great image by the little stone? They can say a few good things about the uprising and history of the Papacy, but are as blind as bats respecting the nature of its doom and the relation of Protestantism to the Roman system. Similarly are they deficient on the subject of the Jew—very eloquent as to his shortcomings, but mute as to his approaching exaltation above all peoples. Are we sufficiently grateful for the unselfish labours of Dr. Thomas on our behalf? Shall we grow angry with the ungrateful brother, or shall we pity him from the bottom of our hearts?

As an eye-opener (if such be needed) regarding the unreliability and uncertainty of clerical exegesis, let an orthodox commentary dealing with the sixty-third chapter of Isaiah (“Who is this that cometh from Edom”) be compared with Dr. Thomas’ lucid, masterly, and thrilling exposition in *Eureka*, vol. II., pp. 544–567. Bishop Lowth tells us that most learned interpreters supposed that Judas Maccabeus and his victories were the subject of the chapter, but that he himself thought that the prophecy might apply to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the Jewish polity, adding that it is quite possible that it may be a prophecy not yet fulfilled. Dr. A. Clarke and a host of other prophetic flounders, ancient and modern, follow on Lowth’s unedifying lines, or worse. Dean Milman ridicules the idea of any literal fulfilment of this grand Messianic prophecy, arguing that it was the benighted Jew who took that view. He says: “The robber chieftain looked out from his hill-tower to see the blood-red banner of him whom he *literally* expected to come from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, and treading the winepress in his wrath.” Oh, brethren! when we read such

perversions of prophecy, shall we not be truly thankful that God, in His kindness, has removed us from these profitless Gamaliels, and has given us sufficient humility and wisdom to sit at the feet of men more faithful to His Word?
—Bro. A. T. Jannaway

Analecta Apocalypticæ (7) **All Things Are for the Ecclesia’s Sake** *In Spirit on the Lord’s Day*

The book opens with the picture of John in the island of Patmos, a small desolate isle on the west coast of Asia Minor. To the solitude of this place he was banished on account of the faith of Christ, by the Roman Emperor Domitian, who it is said first tried unsuccessfully to destroy him by immersing him in boiling oil. He tells us that before the vision began, he was “*in spirit on the Lord’s Day*.” Some people take this to mean that the vision came to him on Sunday. There are various objections to this. First, Sunday is never called the Lord’s Day in the Scriptures. Even under Moses, the sabbath was the “*seventh day*”—not the Lord’s Day—the Sabbath of the Lord, but never the Lord’s Day. Still less was such a description employed under Christ who was the end of the law for righteousness to everyone believing (Rom. 10:4), and who liberated believers from the law of the Sabbath, as well as the other parts of the law (Col. 2:14-16; Rom. 14:5). The only use to which we ever find “the Lord’s Day” put, or “*day of the Lord*” (for the latter is the more correct form of the phrase), is to express an appointed day of the Lord’s manifestation in some form or other, particularly the day appointed for the judging of the world in righteousness by Christ. This last is the day most commonly expressed by the phrase “*day of the Lord*” (Acts 17:31; 1 Cor. 5:5; 2 Cor. 1:14; 1 Thess. 5:2; Phil. 1:6).

Then the intimation: “*I was in Spirit*”, is conclusive against the common way of regarding this passage. The meaning of this phrase is illustrated unmistakably a little farther on. At the close of the first series of things shewn to him, John heard a voice addressing him thus: “*Come up hither, and I will shew thee things that must be hereafter*” (4:1), “*and*,” says he, “*immediately I was in Spirit, and, behold, a throne*,” etc. What this means exactly is shown in the case of another prophet, Ezekiel, who being also addressed on the occasion of being about to receive visions, says (Ezek. 2:2): “*And the Spirit entered into me when he spake to me*,” and again, “*So the Spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in*

bitterness in the heat of my spirit, but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me” (3:14). To be “*in Spirit*” is to be seized, covered or held by the Spirit of God for the particular purpose in hand—generally a purpose of vision and revelation. Now, for John to be “*in the Spirit on the day of the Lord,*” was to be present on that day in vision by the Spirit. The Spirit was John’s constant companion, as Jesus had promised (John 15:26; 16:13)—a Comforter, an Instructor, a revealer of things to come. When was the comfort of this illumination more needed than in the solitude of Patmos, when John was compelled to pine away for the truth’s sake? What more suited to the needs of the spiritual man than that he should receive this comfort in the shape of a preternaturally-engendered contemplation of the day of the Lord, when all tribulation should cease? and what more natural than that such a moment should be chosen for the communication of a further and larger revelation for the benefit of the whole household of God?

Command from the Trumpet-toned Voice

John, then, in Patmos, being, through the power of the Spirit, *en rapport* on a particular occasion with the day of the Lord, hears behind him a loud trumpet-toned voice, saying, “*I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and what thou seest, write in a book and send it to the seven ecclesias which are in Asia, unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea*”. Turning to see whence the voice proceeded, he saw “one like unto the Son of Man”, whom he describes in detail. On this it has to be remarked that the figure seen was not Jesus himself. The nature of the figure— (with sword proceeding out of his mouth, etc.) —itself shows this; but it is more evident from the statement of the first verse concerning the whole Apocalypse, that Jesus “*sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John*”. This statement is repeated at the end of the book (22:6) that “*the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to shew unto His servants the things which must shortly be done*”. It was an angel and not Jesus that visited John in Patmos. John refers to this angel visitant thus (22:8): “*When I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, see thou do it not, for I am the fellow-servant of thee and of thy brethren the prophets*” etc. The angel visiting John in Patmos, so operated upon him by the power of the Spirit of God as to cause him to see and hear things that had no real existence, but which to John seemed real, just as things seen and heard in dreams seem real to the dreamer, with this great difference, however, that dreams are the interfusion and confusion of ideas already

impressed upon the brain by natural means in waking hours—the vision caused to appear to John was the exhibition, in signs and symbols, of things that were really to come, the knowledge of which had been received by the angel from Christ, to whom the Father had communicated it in the first instance.

The Son of Man then, seen by John when he turned to see the source of the voice, was not the actual Jesus, but a symbolic representation of him in certain relations which become apparent in the messages sent to the ecclesias of Asia.

Send to the Seven Ecclesias

Here it is well to realize that though sent to seven congregations contemporary with John, the messages were really intended to be of worldwide application so far as saints are concerned. It was not only for them: it was for all the friends of Christ. We learn this from the addition of this clause to every message: “*He that hath ears to hear, let him hear*”. We also learn from this that Jesus, in sending the messages, contemplated the possibility of some not having ears to hear. This apparently unimportant deduction may often be of great practical value. We are liable to be depressed and even diverted from right conclusions by the general apathy and want of interest shown towards the great matters involved in the Apocalypse. We are liable sometimes to feel as if this mass of public inertia were in some way or other in the right, and that the holding of definite and interested views on the subject is a sign of narrowness and a mistake. It will help us to resist this (at bottom) unreasonable feeling, to see that Jesus appeals to the discerning only. He always speaks disparagingly of the spiritual attainments of the mass of mankind. In his prayer, for example (John 17), he plainly says “*The world hath not known Thee,*” and again, “*I pray not for the world,*” and again, “*That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God*” (Luke 16:15). In this very Apocalypse, the spectacle is prominently and strikingly exhibited of all nations being in the wrong. All nations are said to be figuratively drunk with the (symbolic) wine of abomination ministered to them by the Roman ecclesiastical adulteress of Europe (Rev. 18:3; 17:18). All the world were to wonder after the beast (13:3). Consequently, enlightenment, instead of finding it a difficulty, will rather recognize it as one of the characteristic features of the present situation of things, that Apocalyptic matters enlist no sympathy and rather excite the contempt than the attention or even the opposition of mankind.

Why was the Apocalypse sent to only seven ecclesias? There were many more than seven in the world at that time. There were the ecclesias

at Jerusalem, at Rome, at Antioch, at Corinth, at Colosse, at Philippi, and many other places. The seven golden candlesticks take no note of these: Why not? Because seven represents all. The seven golden candlesticks in the midst of which the figure of the Son of Man was seen, represent the entire community of the saints as a light-bearing community. They did this in representing the seven ecclesias in Asia which stood for all the ecclesias everywhere, as shown by the intimation appended to each message, that what was said was intended for everyone having ears. Seven were chosen whose states differed, and who therefore called for seven different messages, applicable to all the states in which professedly Christian communities could be found.

Prophetical Delineations are for the Christ-body

Here we have to notice that the Apocalypse was not only sent to the friends of Christ, instead of being published to the world, but that its prophetic delineations, as relating to the course of events in the world, are prefaced by a message peculiar and private to themselves. The second and third chapters are wholly occupied with the messages to the seven representative ecclesias, with respect to their condition and Christ's views and intentions with regard to them. This shows the position the friends and servants of Christ occupy in his estimation. It shows the force of Paul's statement on the same head: "All things are for your sakes." The drama that has been enacted in Europe during a long and dark series of centuries, in harmony with the programme sketched in the Apocalypse, has the body of Christ as its *ultima ratio*. At the beginning of that programme, and during its evolution, the body of Christ is developed, and at its close, it is seen in glorious and triumphant occupation of the earth and all its honors and glories. The messages to the ecclesias have the first place because the body of Christ is first in the regards of Christ, and because of the important work they are intended to effect in that body during the ascendancy of evil appointed to prevail during his absence.

We will take a glance at the messages before going into the political forecast involved in the seals, trumpets, etc. Very great beauty reveals itself as we study the structure of these messages. They appear at first sight to be haphazard and without plan: they are the reverse of these. They are complete, symmetrical, unique. The description of the Son of Man seen by John (contained in the first chapter), is the basis of the messages. Each message is prefaced by an allusion to some separate feature of the Son of Man so described: and in each message, the feature selected is not only different, but has a direct bearing on the nature of the message to be communicated.

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

What Does That Mean?

"But whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away."

1Corinthians 13:8

The Holy Spirit gifts were to assist the growth of the community of believers, known as "*the body of Christ*" into maturity in obedience to its head, the Lord Jesus (Ephesians 4:15-16). But, as in the natural development of a child into a man, so the time would come, when the state of immaturity of the apostolic community must finish (I Corinthians 13:11), then, the gifts would be no longer necessary, and must end. So Paul warned that soon, after he wrote: "Prophecies shall fail [the Greek word means "*vanish away*"]... Tongues shall cease... Knowledge shall vanish away" (I Corinthians 13:8).

The gifts would cease "*when that which is perfect* [the word means "*complete*" or "*mature*"] *is come, then that which is in part* [or "*partitive*"] *will be done away*" (verse 10). The word "perfect" is the same word in the Greek language as that in Ephesians 4:13, which describes the full development of the body of Christ.

The time did arrive when all congregations of believers became established, settled and functional. By that time the New Testament Scriptures had been completed by spirit-inspired men, and distributed, so that when the last of the apostles died at the end of the first century, the New Testament became their written witness, powerfully continuing the work of God down to our day (I John 1:1-3; Revelation 1:1).

This is the view expressed by Bro. Roberts in *Christendom Astray* and has been the widely held Christadelphian stand since.

However another view of the time period of the gifts removal can be found in the writings of Bro. Thomas where he states,

"There is, however, no evidence that the gifts of the Spirit were withdrawn, and the light of the presbyterial lampstand extinguished, in the generation contemporary with the publication of the Apocalypse. It is possible that discipline and admonition operating upon some of them may have resulted in a change, and a renewed manifestation of zeal, to which they were exhorted by the Spirit; for if he had no people among them capable of being saved, the exhortation would have been entirely useless, "*be zealous, therefore,*" said he, "*and change.*" "

In this section in *Eureka*, Bro. Thomas held the view that the Spirit gifts were withdrawn some centuries later than the first century...i.e. when they were "*spued*" out of the Spirit's mouth.

Eureka Volume II (Logos edition), page 232 to 233—"...we can only infer that His "grace" was not entirely withdrawn, and was still sufficient for the emergencies of the few, who in the fifth seal period, kept his word and denied not his name". *Eureka* Volume IV (Logos edition), page 49 to 50—Bro. Thomas is speaking of the period of the 6th seal, or AD312-314, and the Spirit Gifts were still there. *Eureka* Volume IV (Logos edition), page 263—a point

to note in that the Spirit “*spuing*” is associated with the removal of the spirit gifts, not the death of the apostles.