

# 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 The Berean Christadelphians since 1923.

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Vol. X No. 10 (XCV)

October, 2007

*Please send Ecclesial communications to:*

Bro. Fred J. Higham, 20116 McKishnie, Clinton Twp, Mich. 48035 U.S.A.  
Phone: (586) 790—2156 Fax: (586) 349—6304 e—mail: fhigham@gmail.com  
Web Site: [www.BereanEcclesialNews.com](http://www.BereanEcclesialNews.com)

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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.

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CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

## **Ecclesial News**

**AUSTIN, Texas,**  
Loving Greetings!

We brethren and sisters down in the Austin, Texas area may not make very many news announcements, but this is certainly a good time for one.

First of all, new arrivals. Sis. Julie Osborne from Massachusetts has now joined our ecclesia, and Sis. Lori Gustavsson has transferred back from the ecclesia in Lampasas. Also, Bro. Lee and Kristy Smith welcomed their new child, Claire, a few months ago.

In terms of visitors, we naturally have had Bro. Gary and Sis. Brenda visit us, as happy grandparents. Bro. Frank Darter also came down for a visit in early July. And as can be expected, the Sunday before Hye brought a nice collection of visitors to the Austin area: Bro. Jerry and Sis. Kitty Connolly, Sis. Leiah Morrell, Sis. Becky Van Pelt, and from out of state we had Bro. Jeremy Osborne and Sis. Sharon Osborne. It goes without saying that small ecclesias appreciate visitors!

The main purpose of this notice, however, is this:

Due to the small nature of our ecclesia, we do not have a dedicated recording brother. We certainly prefer it this way, but it's also a liability when important ecclesial news must be sent to us, and it is not known WHERE this news should be sent.

So, to handle situations such as these, we have created an ecclesial email address: AustinBereans@gmail.com This is the prime destination for any news that is intended for the whole Austin Ecclesia, where it will be forwarded to all its members.

However, we would like to stress once again that this is an ECCLESIAL address. Any other email intended for the specific attention of ONE brother, sister, or family is NOT meant to be sent here, as in some cases this might be a violation of the confidentiality required by Matthew 18. So please take care when sending messages to this address. Thanks.

That is all the news we have for now.  
May God watch over us all and keep us as we await the return of His Son.

Love in Christ,  
The Brethren and Sisters of Austin, Texas

### **Berean Christadelphian Assistance Fund**

Dear Brethren and Sisters.

The BCAF committee would like to ask all contributing ecclesias if they have appointed a representative to be a contact with the BCAF committee. If you have, please confirm that information with us. Having a representative is not a requirement, if you do not wish, but it is certainly welcome. These representatives will receive communication from the main BCAF committee, and will also be able to identify and report to us any needs that arise in their home ecclesia, which we may be of assistance regarding. If we do not receive information as to an ecclesial representative we will use the name of the recording brother listed in the January Berean Ecclesial News. Please forward this information to Bro. Sid Jones.

## **Encouraging Words**

I have noticed over the last few months when we're visiting with brethren and sisters that a surprising number aren't aware of the EW email or don't get it because they don't know the address. I wondered if it would be possible to put the EW address in the BEN with maybe a brief explanation of what it is. Some brethren and sisters are missing out on a great means of contact with the ecclesial world and we were surprised at the number of people who did not get the EW.

—Sis. Christine Jones

The Encouraging Words are sent out to those requesting them to be sent to their computer email address. To receive Encouraging Words please send an email note to Sis. Susan Sumler at: susan1956@sbcglobal.net.

## **Ecclesial Address Change**

### **KENYA**

**MAYANJA**, Bro. John W. Simiyu, 2467 Bungoma, 50200 Kenya

## **FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES**

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

**HENGOED FRATERNAL GATHERING.....Mar 7–9, 2008**

Bro. Stephen Male, 63 Ty Llwyd Parc, Quakers Yard, Treharris, South Wales, CF46 5LB, United Kingdom, Phone: 011 441 44381 3828

**NORTH CAROLINA–VIRGINIA STUDY WEEKEND.....May 31–Jun 1, 2008**

Bro. Dale Lee, 1— (757) 620—6639, dleecpa@cox.net

**LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING.....June 13–15, 2008**

Bro. Ricky Hurst, PO Box 1381, Goldthwaite TX 1—325—451—4075

**HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING..... July 23–29, 2008**

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

**Study Class Topic: Hebrews 1—13; Bible Readings**

## **A Woman on David's Throne**

Among the many events divinely recorded in the history of Israel, one of the most remarkable is the interregnum of Athaliah—her usurpation, reign, and destruction—with the consequent restoration of the house of David. It is unique, no such circumstance occurring before or after.

The historian informs us (2 Kings 11:3) that "*Athaliah did reign over the land*"; and we are impressed at once by the spectacle—a *woman* sitting on the throne of David! And such a woman! No daughter of Sarah, but a Canaanitish idolater; a concretion of all that is detestable and abominable in the sight of the Deity reigning in Zion enthroned in Jerusalem.

Hath not Jehovah covenanted with David that he should never want a *man* to sit on his throne? Our faith is shaken for a moment, and we ask what were the circumstances producing this phenomenon.

In order to obtain a right understanding of this revolution in Israel we must go back in its history, trace out its origin and development. The *causes of things* are often more important to know than the things themselves in matters where learning and instruction are to be obtained.

While the event itself may impress us greatly, it furnishes no teaching—nothing observable to avoid, or to follow. It is to the causes we must direct our attention; results cannot be avoided, they are inevitable.

Who was Athaliah? Where did she come from? And how came she to be Queen of Judah? She was wife to Jehoram, King of Judah; daughter of Ahab, King of Israel. Jehoram was son of, and successor to Jehoshaphat, the late King of Judah.

The characters of these two kings—fathers respectively of Athaliah and her husband—and their relationship to each other, must first engage our attention. From this we shall be able to ascertain how so disastrous a state obtained in Zion.

Jehoshaphat and Ahab were contemporaneous kings in Judah and Israel. Unlike many of the former kings, they were on very friendly terms. "*After certain years,*" Jehoshaphat paid a visit to Ahab in Samaria; the latter made a great feast and received him royally. Ramoth Gilead at this time had been taken from Israel by Syria; Ahab seizing the opportunity, invites Jehoshaphat's help—

*"I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses,"* replies Jehoshaphat; thus placing his whole resources at Ahab's disposal (1 Kgs. 22:4). The opposite characters of these men would incline us to the conclusion that Jehoshaphat would not have joined hands with so notorious an evildoer as Ahab: the one was undoubtedly a good man, the other, a bad one.

These terms are but relative and convey nothing: goodness or badness must be considered by that to which it stands related. In the present case it is the Word of Deity; we have then to search the Scriptures to know what made them so. Of Jehoshaphat it is recorded in 2 Chronicles 17:3—10—

*"And the Lord was with Jehoshaphat because he walked in the way of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim . . . therefore the Lord stablished the kingdom in his hand . . . and he had riches and honor in abundance . . ."*

*"In the third year of his reign he sent princes, Levites, and priests to teach in the cities of Judah . . . and they had the Book of the Law with them . . . and taught the people."*

*"And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms round about so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat."*

In chapter 19:5—9, it is written—

*"And he set judges in the land throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city, and said, Take heed what ye do for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord who is with you in the judgment . . ."*

*"Wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you; . . . thus shall ye do in the fear of the Lord, faithfully and with a perfect heart."*

This is a character pleasant to contemplate, resulting in great blessings not only to the king, but the subjects also. The Lord was with him, and the land had peace—

*"When the righteous are in authority the people rejoice, but when the wicked beareth rule the people mourn"* (Prov. 29:2).

The people of Judah were enjoying the blessings consequent upon a righteous reign.

For twenty—five years this continued, a sufficient time for the whole land to be well established according to the righteousness of their king; for we have this record at his death, that—

*"He departed not from doing what was right in the sight of the Lord"* (2 Chr. 20:32).

From such a record as this we expect to find a righteous continuance in the son and successor. We cannot admit that so excellent a king, so diligent in teaching his people the ways of the Lord God of Israel, and in abolishing idolatry out of the land, could have been a less excellent father, neglecting his own children, not bringing them up in the fear of the Lord.

Instead, however, of this happy condition continuing, *an era of bloodshed and idolatry immediately commences*, the outcome of which is the spectacle presented to us of *a woman ruling Judah*, a worshipper of Baal established in Zion.

Although we have so admirable a character in Jehoshaphat, we can nevertheless trace to him the origin of this great evil. We find him lacking in that principle so characteristic of the prophets and all God's children in times past, namely—that stern contention for the truth shown in Phinehas.

Though so zealous in repressing idolatry and teaching his own people the law of the Lord, *yet we find him fast friends with one of whom it is written that he did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him!*

It is through this ill—advised friendliness, a yielding to that good natured but deceitful and destructive sentiment that makes friends with the world where purity is sacrificed for peace. This was the “cause” that produced the unhappy result we are considering.

*“The law of the wise is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death”* (Prov. 13:14).

*“When the King sitteth upon the throne of his Kingdom, he shall write him a copy of this law, and he shall read therein all the days of his life”* (Deut.17:18—19).

It was written in this Law (Deut. 13:12—18)—

*“If thou shalt hear in one of thy cities that . . . men have withdrawn the inhabitants, saying, Let us go and serve other gods . . . behold, if it be true . . . thou shalt smite the inhabitants of that city destroying it utterly.”*

This was the Word of the Lord that Jehoshaphat should have executed upon the house of Ahab. He failed to do so. On the contrary, he is fast friends with him, helps him personally to fight his battles, providing him with war material, and *finally consummates his folly by joining affinity in marriage*, and Athaliah becomes wife to his son Jehoram, heir to the throne of the Lord in the land of the house of David.

How different the testimony to Ahab's character recorded in 1 Kings 16:25—33.

*“And Ahab made a grove and did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him”* (v. 33).

This is what we should expect from a son of such a father, for Omri, Ahab's father—

*“. . . wrought evil in the eyes of the Lord, and did worse than all that were before him”* (1 Kgs. 16:25).

But how much more are the evil conditions intensified when we consider the wife of Ahab.

*“And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal King of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him”* (1 Kgs. 16:31).

A fit wife for such a king—her unrelenting hatred of God's people and sanguinary character appears in her efforts to exterminate them. Faithful Obadiah took one hundred of them and hid them in a cave. Eight hundred and fifty prophets of Baal did eat at her table; these were all destroyed by Elijah, who fled to Horeb from her vengeance.

The murder of Naboth is the culminating act in her career; a righteous man charged with blaspheming God and the King, stoned to rob him of the inheritance the Lord had given him. But, *“Vengeance is mine, I will repay,”* saith the Lord, the terrible message comes (1Kgs. 21:19)—

*“Thus saith the Lord, in the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood.”*

And of Jezebel, God declares (v. 23)—

*“The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.”*

Not only themselves, but all Ahab's posterity were doomed to extermination—

*“Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field the fowls of the air shall eat, and I will take away thy posterity”* (1 Kgs. 21:24).

However bad Ahab might have been, he was influenced to still greater crime by his execrable partner—

*“There was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up”* (v. 25).

The good Jehoshaphat, had he exterminated this brood of vipers, would have done great good to Israel, adding lustre to his name. They were at least to be avoided as a pestilence.

We can reasonably expect an upright son from Jehoshaphat, but what manner of offspring can we look for from such a stock as Jezebel and Ahab?

*“That which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned”* (Heb. 6:8).

Knowing the readiness with which human nature absorbs all things contrary to the mind of Deity, and the vile nature of the worship of Baal so agreeable to that flesh by which it is devised, we may expect a reproduction in the children, or probably something still worse.

Such was the family with whom Jehoshaphat made affinity; from such a stock did he select a wife for his son who was to succeed him on the throne of the Lord.

*“Jehoram was thirty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem”* (2 Chr. 21:5).

His marriage with Athaliah must have taken place at a very early age, his youngest son, who succeeded him, being twenty—two (2 Kgs. 8:26) when he began to reign.

It is necessary to note this in order to account for the great difference between the character of Jehoram and that of his father. Immediately the latter died, we look for the uprightness of the father in the son with a faithful adherence to the law of the Lord, having been in his early days brought up in that fear which is the beginning of wisdom—but we find it not; the days of peace and prosperity ended with Jehoshaphat. No longer could Judah rejoice in the blessing God gave through a righteous reign.

The direct operation of Deity for good or evil is the spirit of these records of His people. How could they be His people apart from this? Thus it is that their history is equally for God as the doer, and of Israel as the instrument. The divine character of the events recorded is imprinted upon the text recording them in the rigid, concise, yet all—embracing style.

In the histories we have a mass of facts, with little or no comment capable of indefinite expansion, this makes their study so interesting and absorbing, things new and old continually arising from this storehouse of the Spirit.

*“Now Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and . . . when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself, and slew all his brethren with the sword, and divers also of the princes of Israel”* (2 Chr. 21:1—4).

What an appalling introduction is this to the new King of Judah! Though a son brought up in the way he should go, of what advantage was it when a serpent was placed in his bosom?

This sanguinary character would not be hereditary from his father; we look to the other side and we see the leaven of Jezebel working the old animus. Those “princes of Israel” slain by Jehoram were not men according to his murderous heart, otherwise they would not have been slain. There was a wholesale clearing away of those obstacles to the purpose he ultimately attained.

The revolution that has now taken place in Judah makes the prospect for the future dark for the Lord’s people. The probable reason for exterminating his brethren was to obtain *“the gold, silver, and fenced cities”* Jehoshaphat had given them, and this seems the reason for its being recorded. No doubt such gifts were not uncommon, though unrecorded, in the history of other kings.

The act shows its author; the Jezebel instinct in murdering Naboth for his possession finds its expression in Athaliah’s moving her husband to do likewise. Again, these *“brethren and princes”* would be faithful men, worshipping the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Whatever Jehoram’s disposition was, we are sure his wife, as a worshipper of Baal, was filled with all the deadly hatred that Jezebel exhibited against the people of the Lord. Having the power now in her hands in the authority she exercised over the king, we see it at once taking effect when Jehoram reigns.

That the influence of the wife was over the husband, and was the cause of these evils, it is so written—

*“He walked in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab: FOR he had the daughter of Ahab to wife”* (2 Chr. 21:6).

The inspired writer sets it down as a natural conclusion. The peace and prosperity of the former reign soon ended, and as God had then given them rest round about, so now wars and troubles are the fruit of unrighteousness. Edom revolted, and Libnah also *“unto this day,”* because he had forsaken the Lord God of his fathers and compelled Judah to sin—

*“Moreover the Lord stirred up the Philistines and Arabians and they carried away all the substance that was found in the king’s house, sons and wives, so there was never a son left him, save Jehoahaz his youngest son”* (vs. 16—17).

A writing from Elijah is sent to him; an awful message soon fulfilled; and after all this the Lord smote him—

“. . . with an incurable disease . . . and after two years his bowels fell out by reason of his sickness, so he died . . . and his people made no burning for him . . . He reigned eight years and departed without being desired; and was not buried in the sepulchre of the kings” (vs. 18—20).

No language can describe the horror of such a death, the merited reward of an iniquitous life; an example of the apostolic teaching that the Lord is not mocked, and that he that soweth to the flesh shall reap corruption.

Had the commandments of Moses been observed, no such cause would have been possible. Strange marriages constituted the fruitful source of idolatry in Jacob, which ultimately enveloped them in the darkness that altogether obscured for them “*the Light that came into the world.*” Jehoram’s fatal marriage was the cause of all.

By the death of Jehoram, Athaliah is left a widow; the throne vacant by her husband’s death is filled by his youngest son, the only one who escaped death at the hands of the “band that came with the Arabians.” We recognize the hand of Jehovah in thus preserving one of the house of David to fulfil God’s promise to him.

“*And the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah king*” (22:1).

The unhappy state of Judah, the miseries arising from the foreign invasions of the Philistines and Arabians, the wars undertaken against Edom and Libnah, with the evils within that would follow upon the suppression of the temple service, and the undoing of the good Jehoshaphat had brought to pass—this unhappy state of affairs which would not cease from the accession of a son coming from such a stock.

The tree—bad in Ahab and Jezebel—was made far worse in Jehoram and Athaliah; the fruit of such a union proves worthy of the tree equally corrupt with its bearers. “*Can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit?*” Let history answer. Ahaziah, son of Athaliah, grandson of Jezebel, reigned one year—

“*He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: FOR his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly. Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the Lord like the house of Ahab: for they were his counsellors after the death of his father to his destruction*” (2 Chr. 22:3—4).

The friendliness commenced with Jehoshaphat towards Ahab would naturally increase after the two families had inter—married. Thus we find Ahaziah repeating his grandfather’s action in helping Ahab; he joins with his uncle Joram, Ahab’s son, in battle against the Assyrians at Ramoth—Gilead.

Ahaziah’s death is brought about specially by this alliance (2 Chr. 22:7)—

“*And the destruction of Ahaziah was of God by coming to Joram: for when he was come, he went out with Joram against Jehu the son of Nimshi whom the Lord had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab.*”

Thus was the eighth son of the house of David slain, destroyed by the sword of God in the hand of Jehu; and again is the throne of Judah vacant. We look now for a son of Ahaziah to succeed, as had been the case with all former kings, for Ahaziah had many sons. But no, *there is now to be a new thing in the earth as concerning the rulers in Judah.*

The opportunity has at last presented itself; the throne is within her grasp, and Athaliah’s ambition is satisfied.

“*Two and twenty years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign; and he reigned one year in Jerusalem*” (2 Kgs. 8:26).

He was therefore but twenty—three years old at his death; the children were young and tender, and at least had claims on the natural affection of Athaliah—her own flesh and blood, her own grandchildren.

But natural affection under the teaching of Baal had no proper place: its devotees were like brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed. A ritual that made prostitution a religious obligation would be utterly incapable of producing either a moral character or developing those finer sentiments so abounding in the Law of Moses and teaching of Christ.

These filthy abominations were practiced in the very House of the Lord itself—in that glorious temple built for His worship and service. So utterly degenerate had Israel become that Baal was established in Zion and Jehovah forgotten (2 Kgs. 23:4).

We readily understand the hatred such practices would engender in the human mind against those things written in that Book which the kings of Israel were commanded to study. To Athaliah it would be an intolerable burden, grievous indeed, and in like measure to those priests of Baal abounding in Jerusalem.

No such opportunity for serving Baal in Judah had before been possible. Now was the golden chance—the pinnacle of fame to be reached—High Priestess of Baal and Queen of Judah! With terrible brevity the sacred historian records it—

“*When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw her son was dead, she arose and DESTROYED ALL THE SEED ROYAL OF THE HOUSE OF JUDAH*” (2 Chr. 22:10).

The murderous hostility of the mother against the priests of God, finds its counterpart in the daughter. True to the family instinct Athaliah stops short at no crime that serves her ambition and animosity. Void of all that is admirable and lovely in woman, the innocent children are ruthlessly slaughtered—her intention being to exterminate the house of David—and

“ATHALIAH REIGNED OVER THE LAND.”

In our consideration of these things we are enabled somewhat to realize the words of Peter and to account the longsuffering of God as salvation—for what had been the condition of things in Zion during the few years since the advent of Jezebel?—a king rises who murders his brothers and sets up the abomination of the Zidonians in Jerusalem; wars commence with the Gentiles round about who plunder Jerusalem itself; the king’s sons all slain save one; the king himself, smitten by God with a horrible distemper which consumed him, dies uncared for; the son who succeeds, and in like manner follows the evil ways, is also smitten by God after a brief reign of one year.

Probably the children of Ahaziah were no better, and their murder was no more than a *clearing away of the serpent—seed* so strongly developed in Judah, and filling up the iniquity of Athaliah to the full before the judgments of Jehovah come upon her as upon the Amorite of old.

Athaliah, by killing her grandchildren, helps, with her own hand, to execute the judgment upon the house of Ahab and Jezebel then being so thoroughly performed in Israel by Jehu her own son, the late king, having been slain by that valiant man.

Doubtless had Athaliah lived in Israel she also would have suffered at the hand of Jehu; for surely no such pernicious offspring of Ahab would have been spared. The events then occurrent in Israel, the killing of all her own kindred, and the extinction of Baal so energetically carried out by Jehu would have a great effect upon such a woman urged on, as she no doubt was, by the priests of Baal in Judah, who would be anxious both for their own safety and that of Baal.

Athaliah herself would also be involved in the ruin that would ensue did Jehu extend his operations to Jerusalem. In this way did the Jezebel—leaven work its own destruction by her own daughter; there had been a general clearing out, with but one more left of this accursed family who had killed the children of God and stamped out the truth to the best of their ability; and this solitary one is Athaliah herself.

By her counsel prevailing with her husband to kill all his brethren, and by her own hand slaying the remnant, she exists the last representative of a house accursed of God—murderers of the prophets—destroyers of God’s people—doomed to extinction: an imperious, sanguinary, ambitious woman that hated Jehovah of Israel—inheritress of all that Ahab and Jezebel could leave, and where do we now find her? *Seated on the throne of the Lord at Jerusalem*—in that place concerning which the Lord said (Psa. 132:14)—

“*Here will I dwell, for I have desired it.*”

Has the Lord forgotten His promise? Has His love for Zion ceased? Is it not written that the Lord—

“*Loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob*” (Psa. 87:2).

What a severe trial of faith this darkness in Judah must have been to the few faithful! The promise to David apparently a delusion—and Baal supreme! For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken up the House of God, and also all the dedicated things of the House of the Lord did they bestow upon Baalim.

No more hopeless picture could be presented to those believers in the sure mercies of David. David’s sun had apparently set. They no longer rejoiced in their appointed feasts; no morning and evening offering was made to the Mighty One of Jacob; darkness was over the land.

Having comprehended the purpose of God involved in this kingdom, it is of absorbing interest to know all things concerning it—past, present, or future—and if we admit that God has a purpose with it, we thereby make a connection between past and future.

If this purpose were not fulfilled during the past existence of the kingdom, it follows that its past is a certainty of its future; it indicates it, prefigures it, and becomes a type of it. Having a prophetic character, its history is mixed with prophecy, and supplies us with information relative to the greater future.

The times of David and Solomon are eminently typical, shadows of good things to come to be fulfilled in David’s greater son; and shall we say that these two kings *alone* are of a typical character and all the *subsequent* history affords no information of the future?

We think that *many* of them have this character. It may be said they are undesigned coincidences; but it is not human history we are considering, it is divine.

*“It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honor of kings to search out a matter”* (Prov. 25:2).

We apply this scriptural principle to Israel’s history, and its truth is evidenced. With this view interest is heightened, the past is but a reflector, throwing the light far ahead to the future. We look for a time when these things, realities though they were, will be finally consummated *“in that day”* when the events of which these were shadows will be fulfilled. They form part of those *“things written aforetime,”* that through them we might obtain patience, comfort, and hope.

It is from this aspect of *historic prefigurement* that we are considering the position of Israel’s history from Jehoshaphat to Joash.

Continuing our history of Athaliah—we left her reigning and ruling Queen in Jerusalem. *Where was God’s kingdom?* The people truly were there, as was the land, but kingdom there was not. The name of Jehovah—regally and ecclesiastically—was no longer in Zion. Neither—as was supposed by Athaliah and the Baalites—was there *any representative of David’s line living to trouble them.*

The worship was to Baal; the ruler, a Canaanite; and the authority of Deity usurped by a woman. This is the condition of things today; God has no kingdom on earth. His power and authority are usurped by a “woman” who has climbed to this high position as Athaliah did, through blood.

In teaching us things spiritual from things natural, the Spirit employs one or more persons or things, as the case requires, to typify but one antitype. The many things Mosaic all converge upon one antitype—Christ.

So also in establishing the kingdom; two kings are required—David and Solomon—they are the two halves of a perfect whole; what is foreshown in the one could not be in the other. Yet they are both one in Christ, *the man of war and the prince of peace.*

As two men—though representing—one are the instruments in setting up the kingdom, so also two *women* are instrumental in setting up an idolatrous apostasy in the very seat of God on David’s throne, casting the truth to the ground and prospering.

Athaliah completes the half—type of Jezebel as Solomon did that of David; and we consider the two as one, in the result of their operations. Athaliah’s birthright is the curse pronounced upon her father and mother; *it is her inheritance and will overtake her at the right time.*

The diversity in operation—though one in spirit—seen in the mother and daughter, is that their operations are respectively against the two great “estates” of the kingdom—kingly and priestly. Jezebel perpetrates her animosity against the prophets and the Lord’s people, and the saints in Israel. The land was hunted for them. They were hid in caves from her ferocity.

An easy solution of their difficulties would have been to serve Baal and receive his mark; but they were faithful and true. They were specially preserved by Jehovah who had reserved to Himself seven thousand that had not kissed Baal. *So completely was the Lord’s people suppressed that Elijah thought himself the last one left.*

Though Jezebel could thus operate against the prophets, she was powerless against the royal line. Not so with Athaliah; having by marriage got among the seed of David, it required but the opportunity to strike a blow at the royal line; with the result already seen. Here then we have a political and ecclesiastical, idolatrous, sanguinary power, doomed to extermination, usurping the highest position on earth; to which she has no shadow of a claim; and obtained through the blood of God’s saints and princes.

We have no difficulty in pointing out the living fulfilment of this prophetic personage and power. She calls herself a woman and a mother, thus indicating her own identity. The Spirit has branded her with the name of her infamous type *“that woman Jezebel that calleth herself a prophetess.”*

There she sits usurping the authority of God upon earth, claiming both regal and ecclesiastical authority over all men, sitting as a God, claiming to be possessor of the attributes of God, with no more right to her exalted position than had Athaliah. The high authority of king and priest belonging to the Prince of the House of David has been usurped by her, and the right of Christ to this position in the earth is consequently unknown by her followers.

She has attained to this position through the same means employed by her forerunner, scarlet with the same blood, the blood of priests and princes of Deity; for they are a royal priesthood hated by her. These faithful ones, who protested against both her abominable practices and right to authority, were put to death; their extermination was necessary in order that the throne be hers.

Thus has she attempted to destroy all the “seed royal.” Not only has the seed of the kingdom been the object of her hatred and destruction, but also the *“incorruptible seed, the Word of Truth.”* As in Athaliah we had a Gentile usurper downtreading the Holy City, so again is there a downtreading by a Gentile persecuting power, which can be identified in this same second

Jezebel. The resemblance is continued in the time allotted; they are both limited to prophetic periods, both are alike doomed to the same end.

The description of the latter—day Athaliah is also equally applicable to the former. We see them seated on their thrones arrayed in purple and scarlet, drunken with the blood of saints and martyrs, and of their own children; drunk also with pride (Rev. 18:7)—

*“I sit a queen and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow, she saith in her heart. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day—death and mourning and famine—and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God that judgeth her.”*

Although the King of Israel who sitteth in the heavens had thus given over His city to a Gentile downtreading, yet had He not forgotten Zion or the covenant made with David. Should a Gentile woman be the means of breaking it by destroying the line royal and usurping the Throne? No; God will realize His plan. Jehosheba, sister to the late king, took his infant son—

*“. . . and stole him from among the kings sons that were slain, and they hid him and his nurse in the bedchamber from Athaliah, so that he was not slain, and he was with her hid in the house of the Lord six years”* (2Kings 11:2—3).

Here was a seed *secretly and surely preserved by God in His house* for the purpose of bursting forth at the appointed time and consuming the idolatrous usurper.

So will it be with the latter—day fulfiller. Power has been given into her hands for a set time to tread down the truth and usurp the office of Christ. During the time of her oppressing, a seed has been developing *unknown to her and her Baalite daughters*.

The members of that seed are not only in the Temple of God, but *are* the Temple. There can be no more connection between this Temple and “Jezebel” than there could have been between Athaliah and Jehoiada, the High Priest; for the Spirit saith to them (2 Cor. 6:16)—

*“Ye are the Temple of the living God, and what agreement hath the Temple of God with idols?”*

These have been specially prepared by that Word of Truth she has striven to destroy; these whom she thinks she has destroyed are *alive to Him*; they live under the altar crying day and night against her for the blood she has slain, and to them are entrusted the execution of the “judgments written.”

The Gentiles’ dogs also shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh even as the Samaritan dogs ate the flesh of her predecessor under the walls of Jezreel.

The infant prince thus divinely preserved may be regarded as a *new seed in the earth*. His aunt, who had stolen him, was wife to the High Priest Jehoiada. Apparently his existence was kept secret from all others, probably through the state of things in Jerusalem.

The house of the Lord being broken up, and Baal supreme, the priest and his family doubtless lived very secluded lives, and their attention would be devoted to nourishing the young seed, the hope of Israel, at that time, with the good words of truth.

Thus, in secret, the work of preparation went on during the hidden period; though surrounded by Baal, the work went surely on. So with the seed—growing during the career of the second Athaliah. Surrounded by Baal, they are nevertheless *under the care of their High Priest*; his counsel and instruction they hear daily. Unheeded by those around, they are silently going on to perfection, and it will be their duty to pull down the scarlet woman, preparatory to raising again the Tabernacle of David in the holy place.

As there was a perfect number, seven thousand, who had not bowed the knee to Baal, whose existence was unknown, even to Elijah; and who had escaped the vengeance of Jezebel; so again are there those who have not received the mark of modern Baal on their hands or foreheads, who are known of God and reserved by Him, as were their brethren of old.

In the new seed, Jehoash, we recognize a strong prefigurement of Christ as the seed hid in the Temple; not the Temple made with hands, but the *“Most Holy Place,”* heaven itself; the hope of Israel, on whom alone depends the hope of his people to destroy the idol—worshipping system of iniquity. With the spirit of his mouth and the brightness of his coming will he do this.

When this hidden seed is manifested to the world in order to accomplish this appointed work, then will those who are to share in the honor be revealed, for their lives are hid with him in God.

In the preserver of the young prince, we have an interesting instance of a Scripture name signifying some special aspect or character relative to God’s purposes. Thus, Jesus, *Saviour*; David, *Beloved*; Solomon, *Peaceable*, etc.

In the present case, the Lord having sworn to David an everlasting succession, His oath was for the moment (humanly speaking) in danger of being thwarted by Athaliah's purpose to destroy "*all the seed royal.*"

The saving of the infant is evidence of God's remembrance of His oath; this is expressed in the preserver's name, viz., Jehoshabeath, *Whose oath is Jehovah.* She becomes its embodiment for the time being in the high honor she had in upholding it.

In the *seventh year*, God remembered His oath to David, and once again interfered for His Name's sake. The time had come for iniquity to have an end and His righteousness to be re—established. A terrible retribution was in store for the down—treaders of the Holy Place. The faithful High Priest commenced his operations secretly and surely—

*"And the seventh year Jehoiada sent and fetched the rulers over hundreds with the captains and the guard, and brought them to him into the house of the Lord, and made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the house of the Lord and showed them the King's son"* (2 Kgs. 11:4).

These were men upon whom Jehoiada could rely; that they were faithful is evident by their subsequent actions; truly their hearts must have rejoiced at the revelation made to them that *David yet had a son to sit on his throne*, that the Lord had not deserted them, and that the time had come to sweep away the desolating abomination from the Sanctuary.

A secret compact is entered into—a covenant made by oath to which they solemnly subscribe. Two things are necessarily involved in this, viz., *the pulling down of the one, and the restoration of the other.*

Here we have the constitution of a little kingdom—a king, priest, rulers, and captains—banded together, unknown to the usurper. Its organization, the work it had to do, with the allotments of their various parts, are given in the subsequent portion of the chapter. They did all Jehoiada commanded.

What an honor for those who "*compassed the king about!*" The hope of Israel under their charge! The captains who were thus selected by Jehoiada, called and chosen and faithful, were armed in a manner not to be passed by (v. 10).

*"And to the captains over hundreds did the priest give king David's spears and shields that were in the Temple of the Lord."*

As captains of the guard, they must reasonably have been armed with their ordinary weapon, but *this seems some special arming.* Their shields and spears are holy, having been sanctified in the House of the Lord. The cause was a righteous one, therefore the Lord opened His armory and brought forth the weapons of His indignation; these shields of faith and swords of the spirit are invulnerable.

In the creation of this little kingdom, can we not see the figure of the future—when he whose right it is shall have gathered his warriors together, and clothed them with invulnerable armor, to sweep away the impostor whose right it is *not* to be the representative of Jehovah upon earth, and whose idolatry has covered with thick darkness the words of Deity? The arrangements completed, the coronation takes place—

*"He brought forth the king's son and put the crown upon him, and they made him king and clapped their hands and shouted, God save the king!"* (v. 12).

The shouting and rejoicing is taken up by all the people, for the king has come suddenly to his temple; Athaliah hears the tumult, and, rushing in, she sees at a glance the whole position. There stood the priest of Israel's God, and there was His representative, the youthful Jehoash; there stood the temple guard, and the shouts of the people, with the sounds of the trumpets as of old, making Jerusalem rejoice again.

She cries, "Treason! Treason!" and rends her clothes. There is something grimly humorous in this cry, remembering the path this woman had trod to attain her position—murdering the rightful heirs, and defying Jehovah by setting up Baal in His sanctuary; *and SHE cries, "Treason!"*

We have heard this cry in these latter days; the wailings and vain thunderings—unheeded by the spoilers who inaugurated the work—proceed from the modern woman, who has cried, and still cries, *Treason!* As with her sister of old, these cries were but the signs of her approaching end, so are they now. In either case her sins have reached to heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

The House of the Lord was not to be defiled by the blood of such a creature; "*Have her forth without the ranges*"; away with her to an unclean place. Not only herself, but all who followed her out were to be slain—

*"And they laid hands on her, and she went by the way by the which the horses came into the king's house: and there was she slain"* (v. 16).

Her calamities came in one day, and Jehovah remembered the blood of the innocents, His seed, and the word He had given through Moses, His truth. Having dispatched the head and fountain of all uncleanness, a most important transaction follows, namely—a *covenant*, not with the captains and rulers; but, between—

*“Jehovah, the king, and the people, that they should be the Lord’s people”* (v. 17).

This covenant involved the restoration of the truth; yet to be repeated when the people will again rejoice in the truth, confessing that they had inherited lies and things of no profit. Having made this priestly covenant through Jehoiada, yet another is made between the king only and the people: the political—or regal.

The two covenants combined declare the acceptance by the people of a new royal and ecclesiastical constitution in the room of those destroyed. Can we not discern here a foreshadowing of the new covenant to be made with Israel when they will rejoice at the truth then impossible to be disbelieved by reason of *their king being shown them*; when the Lord will write His laws upon their minds and hearts and remember their iniquities no more?

Having slain the queen and once again become the Lord’s people, they give evidence of the nature of the covenants in their subsequent actions. They could not be the Lord’s people and Baal’s—

*“. . . and all the people of the land went into the house of Baal and break it down, his altars and his images brake they in pieces thoroughly, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal”* (v. 18).

What an example we have had presented to us of the result of marrying out of the Truth! Whatever good intentions there were at the time of the union, the facts before us are that the unbelieving wife ate the Truth out of the “believing” husband.

No such result could have been anticipated by Jehoshaphat. These things are written for our instruction; if we blind our eyes to the plain conclusions of such a history as Athaliah’s, on our own heads be it.

Although we have a history which is in itself dark and sanguinary, we can recognize that which is a comfort to us; we see that the providence of God overrules all. *“Thus far, and no farther, shalt thou go,”* was the divine determination; while things on the surface seemed dark and cheerless.

Yet concurrent with the permitted evil was there the preparation proceeding for the deliverance. The preparation period for the manifestation of the King of Israel is again at hand. He will come again like Jehoash, not to all the world, but first he will be shown secretly to a few, the faithful.

These, brought from their graves, will—with the living—enter into a covenant with him as King and Priest; they will then be armed with the holy weapons, invulnerable in person, in righteousness perfect. With their king they will proceed to the accomplishment of the work before them—the destruction of the Roman Athaliah and the Temples of Baal, even more “thoroughly” than of old.

*“And he took the captains and rulers, and they brought down the king and he sat on the throne of the kings, and all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet”* (vs. 19—20).

Then shall the impostor be eternally silenced, and he whose right it is set the righteousness of Deity in the Holy Place. Surely in that day, the land will rejoice with a rejoicing that shall be heard afar off. A new covenant will the inhabitants of the earth enter into, and that kingdom be established whose work is—

*“Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men”* (Luke 2:14).  
—Bro. G.V.Growcott

## **The History Of The Truth In Texas**

While Bro. Ed and Sis. Delma Truelove were at my house in February, Ed copied correspondence by computer from the old Christadelphian by Bro. John Banta regarding the Truth in Texas. I thought it would be good to share this with you.

The Truth was brought to Texas around 1854 by John and Clement Oatman from Illinois, who learned the Truth from Bro. Dr. John Thomas before leaving Illinois.

It is interesting that the first Christadelphians in Texas were in this part of Texas, what we call Central Texas. This at the time was a wild frontier. There were no railroads and after the Civil War since there was no economy left, long horn cattle were driven up from Texas to Kansas to the railroad. Much of this part of Texas was Indian territory. That is why Ft. Croghan in Burnet was built; it was on the edge of civilization.

A note was written to Dr. Thomas about conditions in Texas, dated Dec. 8, 1858, which reads: “Dear Bro. Thomas, I write among other things to give you an item of news, and a little encouragement from this far off southwestern portion of God’s

heritage, comparatively shut off from the clamour of the world and the pollution of politics, secluded from railroads and telegraphs with the prowling Indian upon our immediate border.”

The Civil War ruined the economy in Texas, what there was of it. I remember reading that the Christadelphians were so poor that they bought one Christadelphian Magazine and passed it around to the different families to read.

If I have the story right, the way the Bantas came in the Truth was that Bro. Clement Oatman was going to have a debate with John Banta, my great, great granddad who was a Campbellite. The weather got bad, so the debate was called off. Mr. Banta lost his horse, so he had to spend the night with Bro. Clement Oatman. In that one night's discussion bro. Oatman convinced Mr. Banta that the Campbellites did not have the Truth.

We quote from the 1903 Christadelphian: “After the Confederate war ended in 1865, a man from Illinois, named Clement Oatman, began to introduce the Truth in the southwestern portion of Texas; and, being an able exponent of Christadelphian doctrines, which he had learned from Dr. John Thomas before leaving Illinois, he soon began to make quite a stir in religious circles by establishing ecclesias in several different neighbourhoods, based on the truth of the Bible, as brought to light by Dr. John Thomas.

“In 1867, the writer, who was then a member of the Christian (Campbellite) church, came in contact with the soul—sleeper, as Mr. Clement Oatman was then called; and after one night's discussion with him, the writer saw clearly that Mr. Clement Oatman had the plain teaching of the Bible on his side, and that the doctrine I had been preaching did not have truth enough in it to save one soul from death; and I publicly renounced my former doctrine, and set in, in real earnest, to learn the truth, which I was not slow in mastering. I was then baptized into Christ, for the first time, by my former opponent, Mr. Clement Oatman; and from that time to the present have been rejoicing in the one hope of the kingdom and glory of God, and earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to saints.”

We start our story by going back to the 1874 Christadelphian and reading the correspondence from Bro. John Banta:

“Burnet (Texas.) – Brother John Banta sends the following interesting communication: “About twenty years ago, Elder John Oatman emigrated from Illinois with a large family—mostly men of families—and settled in Bastrop County, Texas, where, after a few years' residence, he became dissatisfied, and removed to a more healthy locality in Llano County, on the Texan frontier, where his wife died full of the hope.

His son, Clement Oatman also was bereaved of his wife, who was a faithful sister. After this, the said C. Oatman turned his attention to proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, with considerable success, he being the only preacher of which we have any knowledge in this State, who is able to set forth the whole truth. The few who have been enlightened by the truth, and are now rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God, owe their enlightenment to his able and faithful labours. He has a spinal affection, which renders him at times unable to lecture.

I suppose that about 100 persons have been baptised by him, the greater number of whom have turned aside, some after heresy and the love of this present evil world, and a few continue to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. Among these few is a little ecclesia on the Colorado river in Burnet county, consisting of 7 members, with which the writer is connected as teacher. There is an ecclesia at Zanzenburg in Kerr county, Texas, numbering 6 or 7 members, and one on Hickory Creek in Blanco county, Texas, numbering 7 or 8; also one in San Fernando valley in Llano county, Texas, consisting of 6 or 7 members.

There are several members of the body scattered off from here, with whom we correspond by letter, and endeavour to show them the importance of assembling with the members of the one body, to show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light. Our daughter Alice, 12 years old, was immersed by brother C. Oatman, in September last, after being questioned on all the essential points pertaining to the one faith, in giving full satisfaction as to her knowledge of the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, and her confident faith in the promises of God. She meets with us, and with solemnity and reverence observes all things Christ has commanded his apostles. There are some few seekers after the truth in this vicinity, among whom are two who have expressed their intention to put on the saving name soon.

As a general thing, the truth is very unpopular in these parts; being everywhere spoken against. Its few advocates, however, are alive to their duty, and watching, with joyful expectancy, the steady development of the signs of the times, which indicate the near approach of the Just One in power and great glory. The writer has assisted three in putting on the sin—covering name, sister Molly Green, wife of brother William Green, in the spring of 1872; and brother and sister G. W. and Susan Banta, in August, 1872, all of whom continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, &c.’

In a later correspondence in 1874 he adds an ecclesia at Oso in Fayette county and one in the west end of Bell county on the head waters of Nolen Creek.

Still in 1874 Bro. Banta traveled to Oso and delivered 7 lectures. It is stated he traveled 130 miles over rough country, carrying his provisions with him and camping out at night. His eyes became so inflamed from the dust and the glare of the sun that he was unable to read. (This is quite different from us going to an ecclesia in an air—conditioned car or air plane.) There were 5 baptized on this occasion.

There was a gathering proposed in Burnet county in 1875. At the gathering a J.K. Magill was baptized who is related to Sis. Lois Sharp. There was a baptism of Bro. J.T. Benton and wife at Liberty Hill, Tx. in 1875. A Bro. and Sis. Green from Arkansas attended. A rudely constructed brush arbor was where they had the meeting. Later the same year a Samuel Magill, age 29, the brother of J.K. Magill was baptized.

In 1876 Bro. S.H. Oatman writes of a gathering at Bro. G.W. Bantas' house for 10 days in Oct. after which some were baptized. It is an interesting statement that they learned the Truth from Elpis Israel and Christendom Astray.

In 1876 a Bro. J.A. Corbell writes that there was an ecclesia started at Center Point with 9 members. Center Point, Tx. is near Kerville, Tx.

Burnet, Tx. 1876 – Bro. Banta reports 6 being baptized; among them is Joseph Greer.

We see right away that they had trouble, as we do today, with some marrying an unbeliever. We quote from Bro. Roberts remarks in the 1876 Christadelphian:

“(In answer to question: We are nowhere commanded to “put away” a penitent transgressor. The “wicked person” of 1 Cor. 5:13 was one living in transgression, the same as in the case of an idolator, a drunkard, &c., with whom he is classed in verse 11. When a man acknowledges and forsakes his sin, we are bound to receive him, remembering that “He shall have judgment without mercy that showeth no mercy.” Leave judgment to the Lord. As to marriage, it is going beyond the word to say that a believer marrying an unbeliever becomes a fornicator. Marriage is a civil contract, on a natural basis, regulated by the law of the land. Rome has made it “a sacrament.” Let us not fall into her mistake. A believer takes a false and dangerous step in uniting in wedlock with unbelief or indifference, and will probably be punished in the spiritual injury that results; but to call upon him or her to annul the marriage as a condition of fellowship is to do that for which there is no warrant, either in Scripture or reason. — Ed.— RR)”

1877 – records a debate between Bro. S.H. Oatman, Bro. John Banta and 2 Campbellite preachers on the subject “Is the Soul Immortal?” Another gathering to start on Aug.12, at Valley Spring 12 miles west of Llano at a brush arbor. Report of 12 members in an ecclesia at Sandy, Tx. near Hye.

Bro. Banta writes from Valley Spring, Tx. that Bro. S.H. Oatman is laboring in Hunt and Hopkins counties and 6 have been baptized of whom one is Maggie Wolfe, wife of Bro. Willie Wolfe.

Report by Bro. Fisher who was baptized in 1875 of an ecclesia in Fieldcreek about 12 miles from the San Francisco Valley ecclesia, what we call Valley Spring, Tx. (The Fieldcreek ecclesia numbered 6.)

In those days the Christadelphians moved around a lot to get employment. In 1879 there were 89 members in Texas. In Center Point, Tx. 10, Verde Creek 6, Bandera 9, Blanco county 7, Burnet county 13, Cold Creek 7, Valley Spring 17, Bell Co. 7, Hunt county 5, Galveston 2.

1879 – Purposed gathering at Williamson's Creek to start second Sunday in August, which is across the river from our present day campgrounds at Hye. It was a stage stop from Austin to Fredericksburg, Tx.

1879 – Bro. Blessing writes that 5 persons were baptized in Galveston, Tx. All the ecclesias were in Central Texas except this one.

There was a question of what kind of bread should be used at the memorial. Bro. Roberts replies that any bread was all right.

Bro. G.W. Banta and J.R. Magill visited Blanco county and delivered some lectures after which 6 were baptized of which one was Sis. Elizabeth Colbath. The Colbaths gave us the land for the present day Hye grounds.

Webberville, Tx. 1880 in Bastrop county – Bro. W.A. Oatman reports Bro. Sam Johnson is one of 5 baptized by Bro. John Banta at the close of a meeting held at Bro. Oatman's house in October. Bro. Sam Johnson was Lyndon Johnson's grandfather.

Medina River 1880 – Bro. Benton reports Bro. W.J. Green and S.H. Oatman from Burnet, Tx. ecclesia have been visiting and gave 13 lectures. There were 11 members of the Benton family who were in the Truth.

1880 – Grape Creek – Bro. J.H. Haley writes there are 20 in their ecclesia. Grape Creek is close to Fredericksburg, Tx.

The Advocate question began to be discussed.

Naruna, Tx. – Bro. S.H. Oatman reports the obedience of Mrs. Mary Greer immersed on Oct. 30, 1882.

1882 Valley Spring, Tx – From The Christadelphian:

“Valley Spring (Texas) – Brother T. A. Gerdes sends an account of a seven days’ fraternal gathering, held some months back in Texas. The meeting place was an arbour made of poles, covered with green branches, and furnished inside with seats. About 75 brethren and sisters were present from various parts of the State. On the first day, Saturday, August 6th, Brethren G. W. Banta and H. J. Greer lectured on “The Signs of the Times,” morning and afternoon. At night, Brethren John Banta and A. R. Miller spoke on “The Necessity on the part of Believers to be prepared for the Lord’s Coming.”

On the second day (Sunday), a considerable audience were addressed at 10:30 a.m., by Brethren John Banta and A. R. Miller, on “The Purpose of God.” At 3:30, Brethren J. H. Campbell and S. H. Oatman spoke to the same hearers on “The Gospel.” Brethren W. H. Greer and J. Banta spoke on “The Breaking of Bread” at early candle—lighting. After the Lord’s Supper, the brethren and sisters sought repose at their camps near by.

On the third day (Monday), the meeting was called to order by Brother Kelley. After prayer, the chairman read, according to the Bible Companion, the 2nd chapter of First Book of Kings, Jer. chap. 3, and Mark chap. 3. The audience was then dismissed, and the rain prevented further proceedings till night, when we heard words of exhortation and comfort from Bros. John and G. W. Banta, and S. H. Oatman, and S. M. Magill.

On the fourth day (Tuesday), the Bible lesson, according to the Companion, was read, after which Brethren Miller and Green expounded the Abrahamic Covenant, at 6 a.m. At 3:30 p.m., exhortation from Bro. John Banta, after which the remainder of the afternoon was devoted to social intercourse. At early candle—lighting, Bro. F. A. Gerdes spoke, in the German tongue, on some of the first principles of Bible teaching, for the benefit of some Germans who lived near. On the fifth day (Wednesday), we had the usual Bible lesson, at 9 a.m. At 10:30 a.m., “The things concerning the Name of Jesus Christ” was the theme of discourse by Brethren G. W. Banta and S. H. Oatman. The afternoon was set apart for a lecture on “Obedience of Faith,” and to assist A. J. Johnson, (Menerva), McDaniel, and Ellen Sandrum, in the putting on of the saving name. At night, several of the younger brethren delivered addresses on “Duty.”

On the sixth day (Thursday), at 9 a.m., the Bible lesson was read; after which there were brief admonitions by various brethren. In the afternoon the time was again divided among several brethren; after which the assembly again repaired to the water, Mrs. E. Johnston, wife of Brother S. E. Johnston, having applied for baptism into the glorious name.

On Seventh Day (Friday) singing, prayer, and Bible lesson at 9 a.m., after which leave—taking began a touching sight that brought tears. Our great consolation was in the thought that we will soon meet to part no more, not only with those who were present on this occasion, but all the faithful, from Abel to the last one that will enter in at the eleventh hour to work in the Lord’s vineyard.”

1883 – Lampasas starts to be mentioned as an ecclesia. There was a gathering in 1885.

“Centre Point (Tex) – The cause of Bible truth has had a checkered career in Texas. First the immortal emergence heresy sent us in twain, leaving the advocates of the truth somewhat in the minority numerically, but as the battle went on the ranks of the opposition party were thinned down, until we now outnumber them about 15 to one. Next came the unpardonable sin question which gave us trouble for a time, but it finally came to an end by all acknowledging the truth.

Then came the heresy that Christ is not officiating as High Priest, and will not so officiate until he reigns as King. After a fierce contest this wind of doctrine was silenced also. Then arose another wind of doctrine, viz.: That none but baptised believers will be resurrected and brought to judgment. This has been a stubborn and boisterous gale, but it has now calmed down to a very weak breeze, which will not be tolerated longer than our next annual gathering. We have had some minor winds to blow for a while, such as the formula used at baptism, some claiming that unless the words “I baptize you into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,” were used by the administrator of baptism, it was not a valid baptism. This like the others has nearly subsided.

We have had some contention also over the question of marrying with the alien, but I believe all are now agreed that it is not right. We have always been one on the question of fellowship based on the pure truth as it is in Jesus, with very few exceptions, and a hearty compliance with the commandments and precepts of Christ, as a necessary prerequisite to a pure fellowship.

On the great questions which caused such widespread havoc in England and other places, viz., “Renunciationism” and “Partial Inspiration,” we have never been shaken; and by the help and favour of God we are determined to continue to “contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints” as long as we can use either tongue or pen. For well do we know that nothing short of the truth in its purity and unadulterated simplicity will save us from death, and equally well do we know that unless the truth is obeyed from the heart every day of our lives, we will fail of salvation. May God help us in our weakness is my fervent prayer through Christ. – John Banta.”—Vol. 24: The Christadelphian

“Garfield (Tex.). – Brother W. A. Oatman reports: — “The annual fraternal Christadelphian meeting for the year 1887, convened at the city of Lampasas, commenced Sunday, the last day of July, and continued from day to day, including the following Sunday, breaking up Monday morning the eighth day. It was well attended, but not so many as at some previous meetings, owing to many families of the faith leaving Texas, moving to Washington Territory. There were between seventy—five and one hundred brethren and sisters in attendance. Many coming fifty to one hundred miles, while one venerable old sister came near four hundred to attend this meeting. The greater part of the brethren came in wagons with their families, camping on the road and tenting on the ground: a cheap and very pleasant manner of conveyance and living.”

This reminds me of a story told by Emmitt Banta, my granddad, of coming to Hye in a covered wagon from Goliad, when he was a boy. The boys going before the wagon, shooting squirrel for supper. As mentioned here a group of Christadelphians left Llano and Mason and went by covered wagon to Los Vegas, New Mexico. They boarded a train and went to Tacoma, Washington. Among these was Bro. and Sis. John Banta. This was in 1887. Bro. Banta was asked to come back to Texas to help fight against a great schism in the body in Texas caused by a Dr. Reeves that came to the 1887 Lampasas gathering from Springfield, Ohio. Bro. Reeves taught that Christ was not a priest while on earth, that he was not interceding for us now as high priest over the House of God. A Bro. A.R. Miller from Lampasas agreed with him.

Bro. John Banta moved back to Texas in about 3 years from Washington State.

1894 – “Kerrville (Tex.). — Brother Banta reports favourable prospects in Texas for the triumph of the truth over false doctrine introduced some time back, to the effect that Jesus Christ is not now officiating as Deity's High Priest over the House of God; that saints are not now under the New Covenant, referred to in Jer. 31:31, and that the ecclesia of Christ is not now the House of Deity in its antitypical Holy place phase of manifestation, &c. Brother Banta was solicited to return from Washington and assist in the work of showing the truth on the points in dispute. He accordingly returned to Texas in August, stopping with the brethren and lecturing at Mossy Rock, Win., where on the way he had a four days' discussion with Mr. Clark Braden, a Campbellite preacher, at Blackfoot, Idaho, Denver, Col., and Axtell, Kan. Brother Banta and his sister—wife left Kerrville in a two—horse vehicle on the 8th day of September, and returning on December 1st. They travelled over six hundred miles, through 14 counties, namely, Kendall, Blanco, Hayes, Guadalupe, Caldwell, Bastrop, Milam, Williamson, Bell, Coryell, Lampasas, Burnet, San Saba, Llano, and Gillespie.

The brethren in Blanco Co. endorsed the views set forth in the copied extracts from Dr. Thomas works, which brother Banta took with him, and renounced the wrong views that had been introduced, expressing their willingness also to make the truth of the Bible as expounded in the writings of Dr. Thomas a basis of reunion and fellowship with those who had separated. The same is true of the faithful at San Marco 1, at Kingsbury 2, at Cedar Creek 3, at Garfield 8, at Elgin 7, at Taylor 4, at Thorndale 3, at Rockdale 2, at Granger 3, at Salado 3, at Killeen 2, at Nix and Nauruna 4, at San Saba 2, at Llano 4, at Ingram 3, at Medina City 4, at Rockspring 2, at Verde Creek 4, at Centre Point 2, at Bandera 3, including the writer and sister Banta at San Antonio 3, in Blanco Co. 7, and in Mason 3. Many more were convinced of the truth of the matter, but could not yet see that it was their duty to stand aloof from the advocates of the wrong views. The brethren are growing tired of so much jangling and bickering over unscriptural crotchets, and are anxious to put a stop to it and go on in purity and peace as before.” Vol. 31: The Christadelphian: Volume 31. 2001, c1894. The Christadelphian, volume 31. (electronic ed.). Logos Library System. Christadelphian Magazine & Publishing Association: Birmingham

I have a pamphlet Bro. John Banta wrote on this subject if anyone is interested in reading it. I have over 30 pages of correspondence in the Christadelphian, but time does not permit of going further.

There was a division in about 1900 in Texas over the responsibility question caused by Bro. J.J. Andrews and Bro. Thomas Williams. The majority did not leave. Then in 1923 the Berean Fellowship was formed because of those in the body refusing to disfellowship Bro. Strickler over the clean flesh question.

In 1952 and 1953 there was a division in which the majority all over the world except Texas went back to Central. The majority in Texas remained in the Bereans.

In 1972 there was a division over the divorce question and the 4 Points group withdrew from the majority. In recent years the Bereans divided over the divorce question again.

The History of the Truth has been a sad one in Texas and all over the world due to the weakness of the flesh. This history should be a lesson to us to hold steadfast and not be moved with every wind of doctrine. Let us hold fast to the one saving faith.

Will Christ find the faith on earth when he comes?

But through it all, there has been a small remnant that have held fast who will hear those wonderful words, “*Come Ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*”

Bro. Charles Banta

## Collapsing Around Us

The more things collapse around us, & in our affairs, the more important closeness to God is, and the more important it is realized to be, if we are of the right mind. This is the blessing of adversity. This is why Paul ‘rejoiced in tribulation,’ and James ‘counted it all joy’ when he fell into divers temptations.

IT is not possible to persuade people to be wise. Wisdom is not a POSITION we take: it is a CONDITION we are in. But it is possible to persuade people to take the course that will make them wise: prayer, & study, & meditation on the Word.  
*Thoughts from the Berean*

## Miscellaneous Thoughts

We are nearing the end of inspiration troubles, and may hope to settle down again in peace and love to the work for which the word of inspiration was given—to comfort the saints and enlighten the devout stranger...

We should “speak the truth love.” Now, love spares the feelings of its objects as much as possible. Some brethren seem to forget this. They are brusque while honest; irritating while faithful; disrespectful to their neighbours while zealous for their God. It is not thus that peace and love prevail.

A presiding brother should take the part of servant of the congregation for the time being, and never as master. He should not use the position as one of authority, but as one of ministration, for the comfort and benefit of all, kindly and deferential to all, ready if need be to open a window or close a door or hand round the bread and wine. Christ going round with the basin is the model.

It is well to be zealous for ecclesial purity; but if we are to abstain from ecclesial association till we find an ecclesia that is perfect, we shall never have ecclesial association at all. We must have compassion as well as zeal. We are all imperfect, and unless we practice some of the charity that “hides a multitude of sins,” we shall hinder and destroy instead of helping one another.

“Covering a multitude of sins” is not winking at them. To wink at them in the sense of conniving is to be a partaker in guilt. To cover them is to conceal them instead of either whispering or blazoning them; and to conceal them is lawful when they are the infirmities of the flesh which a brother would not defend.

The catechism referred to last month is now finished, and in the printer’s hands. It is to be called *The Christadelphian Instructor*, and will be useful in the general work of the truth as well as in the instruction of children. In addition to the 144 questions (now become 150) spoken of last month, there are 100 simple questions for very young children; and some remarks on the best mode of conducting Sunday Schools. It is a larger affair than at first contemplated. We shall be able to speak of price next month.

Those will have the sympathy of the spiritually—minded who decide that membership in Gentile brotherhoods is inconsistent with brotherhood with Christ; and who at the same time recognise freedom of contract with Gentiles or Gentile societies in matters of finance. This is what the Stockport brethren have done as will be seen. A man who has given himself to Christ cannot give himself to rival organisations which ignore Christ and propose objects that he alone can provide for. At the same time, he may buy and sell and exchange equivalents with the world in any lawful shape so long as he reserves his own control over his own actions and the results that may come of his traffic with them. The line that divides “may” and “must not” is discoverable with study of the Scriptures. We must not join in brotherhood with the world; but we may deal with the world.

Bro. Robert Roberts—1886

## 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 Sulley*—1902

## Positive Pain

The dialogues are not good enough for publication. Pray accept this opinion without offence. Our desire is to be able heartily to accept all matter contributed by worthy correspondents, but the law of intrinsic quality must govern the selection of matter, and this sometimes involves the sacrifice of feeling.

We fear to discourage or hurt contributors, who are the hearty friends of the truth; yet we cannot weaken the quality of the *Christadelphian*. In a strait betwixt two, we decide for excellence, trusting brethren to believe that the use of matter, where quality admits of it, is a real pleasure, which we are grateful for the opportunity of enjoying, while the disuse of that which is unsuitable, is, for the sake of the contributors, a positive pain.

*Bro. Robert Roberts*—1870

## The Tree of Life

We can only go by the record, which represents that by a putting forth of the hand, and partaking of “the tree of life,” Adam would have lived for ever.—(Gen. 3:22.) Had this meant that continual use only would secure continual life, there would have been no need for the guardianship of the flaming sword, which was designed to prevent an overt act leading to an established result; the ultimate removal of the tree by decay would have sufficed to prevent an immortality coming from continual use. The permission to eat of “every tree in the garden,” except the one forbidden, does not prove that the tree of life was eaten of before transgression, though it may seem favourable to such a conclusion. It may have been so much a matter of course that the tree of life was not to be touched, as not to require mention. It may have stood apart in express and understood reserve against a successful probation on the part of the Adam. The Mosaic narrative is too meagre to justify much stress being laid on an omission, especially to establish a conclusion against the narrative itself. It does not matter much. The question is not worth discussion. It is sufficient to know that Adam came under the sentence of death which we inherit, and that the antitypical tree of life is accessible to us in the gospel.

*The Christadelphian*—1870

## Jesus – Son of God

Jesus was made the Son of God in three stages: first, his begetting by the Spirit—(Luke 1:35); second, his manifestation to Israel in the proclamation—“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;” and third, his resurrection and glorification, when he was “declared to be the Son of God, by resurrection from the dead.”—(Rom. 1:2.) and “that day begotten.”—(Acts 13:33.) He was “PERFECTED” the third day.”—(Luke 13:32.)

What is true of his sonship is true of his Christship. It was a gradual development, beginning with the operation of the Spirit upon his mother, and culminating in his being “filled with all the fulness of the Godhead bodily”—(Col. 2:9). He was Christ all the time, but in different degrees. The middle stage was between his baptism and death, when the Spirit, without measure enswathed his mortal nature without changing it. He was not finally “made (perfect) Lord and Christ,” until he reached the last stage; and there was a moment, just before his death and immediately after his re—awaking, when he was “neither Lord nor Christ,” being forsaken of the Father in the one case, and unascended to Him in the other. These things are true, however discrepant unprincipled cleverness may make them to appear.

*The Christadelphian*—1870

## Ecclesia of Women

The professors of the truth in Paisley number fourteen. Only three of these are men—the women forming the major portion of the ecclesia. This, of course, will depress outward activity somewhat, but need not affect internal vitality, living power, or lively faith, hope and love. The language of the Psalmist, expressing the mind of the Spirit, desires that “our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace.” They will doubtless perceive the usefulness and importance of “corner stones,” without which the building could not stand. Having been hewn out of the quarry, in a natural, rough, unshapely condition, the process of polishing must be commenced, and continued, until the clear, smooth surface reflects the graces of truth, purity and love. Considerations of this kind should stimulate each one to put forth greater energy and more zeal in the work of building up the scattered portions of the household of Christ.

## The Holy Spirit Gifts

The Doctor went on to speak of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which ceased when the Christian body attained to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, rendered permanent in the writings of the holy Scriptures. These gifts were the word of wisdom, faith that would remove mountains, healings, etc. On the other hand, the fruits of the Spirit would abide. *Dr Thomas His Life and Work—1873*

## Analecta Apocalypticae (17)

### The White Pebble

Beside the promise that the victor shall eat from the hidden manna, it is said by the Spirit, “and I will give to him a white pebble.” To eat from the manna would be to rise from the dead; but when risen, what then?” “I will give him a white pebble.” This implies a blessing superadded to resurrection of life.

In the English version it reads, “I will give him a white stone.” In the original the word is greek *psephon* not *lithon*. The latter word is used in 1 Pet. 2: 5, where he says that the saints are the living stones of a building. It signifies stone in general as opposed to wood; while the former is something of a *lithic* nature which is small and receivable. The greek *psephos* was the pebble used by the ancients in voting, and which was thrown into the voting urn, or as we should say, into the ballot box. Hence it is used for the vote itself. But the voting by *psephos*, ballot, must be carefully distinguished from that by *kuamos*, or lot; the former being used in trials, the latter in the election of various officers. The *psaphoi* of condemnation or acquittal were sometimes distinguished by being respectively bored, or whole; but *kuamoi* never. In Acts 26:10, it is said of Paul speaking before Agrippa, “and when the saints were put to death, I paid down a pebble,” rendered in the E.V. [English Version]. “I gave my voice against them.” His was a pebble of condemnation. The nature of the vote was determined by the color of the pebble; a white pebble denoted acquittal, a black one, condemnation. A *psaphos* was also a token given to the victors in the public games.

Now it is written in Rom. 14:10,12, “We shall all stand before the judgment seat of the Christ; and every one of us shall give an account of himself to the Deity:” and in 2 Cor. 5: 10, “that every one may receive the things in the body according to what he has done, whether good or evil.” From this we learn, that after the life of Jesus is manifested in our mortal flesh (2 Cor. 4: 11) by resurrection, we are to appear bodily before the Christ for the purpose of giving an account of ourselves; and of receiving certain things. These things are of two classes — good things; and evil things. The former are apocalyptically represented by the excellent promises made by the Spirit to the faithful belonging to the seven ecclesias. The approved shall eat of the arboretum of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of the Deity; he shall not be hurt of the Second Death; he shall eat of the hidden manna, and receive a white pebble with a New Name engraved upon it; he shall receive power over the nations, and rule them; he shall receive the Morning Star; he shall walk with the Spirit in white raiment; he shall not be blotted out of the Book of Life; and shall be confessed before the Father and his Angels; he shall be a permanent pillar in the temple of the Spirit's Deity; the name of the Spirit's Deity, and of his City, New Jerusalem, and the Spirit's New Name, shall be inscribed upon him; and the Spirit will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with the Spirit, with whom he shall be enthroned. These are truly “exceeding great and precious promises,” which are all consequent upon the candidate receiving a white pebble with a New Name engraved upon it. If he were to receive a black pebble he would be black—balled from the society of the redeemed; he would be condemned as unworthy of the New Order of Things; and fit only to be expelled into outer darkness.

For the Spirit, then, to pray over a white pebble to a resurrected saint, is for him to give a verdict in his favour from the judicial throne. And this is the verdict, or pebble — “well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” Therefore, “Come ye blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom, having been prepared for you, from the foundation of the State:” possess it with eternal life (Matt. 25:21,34,46; 19: 29).

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

### The Vision HABAKKUK 2

The vision tarrieth not  
At the appointed time;  
It speaks, by man forgot,

God's purposes sublime.  
 Yea, though it tarry long,  
 And seemeth not to grow;  
 Let faith and hope be strong,  
 The word of God ye know.  
 That word in spirit—power,  
 Before the Father's face,  
 Awaits the promised hour,  
 To manifest the grace.  
 Ye weeping saints, rejoice,  
 "Redemption draweth nigh,"  
 Soon shall his glorious voice  
 Your mercy testify.  
 Ye watchmen of the night,  
 Anticipate the dawn;  
 Pray, pray for Zion's light,  
 Pray for Jerusalem.  
 Great peace have they who love  
 The city of "the King,"  
 Who to the throne above  
 For her pure offerings bring.  
 They shall obtain the rest,  
 And Paradise of God,  
 And evermore be blest  
 In sonship with their Lord.  
 The vision hath an end—  
 Yea, he who shall, will come;  
 The man, at God's right hand,  
 To build Jerusalem.

D. BROWN, 1867.

### What Does That Mean?

*"And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all."* (Luke 1:63)

What is this "writing table"? I always understood that ancient writing was done on scrolls of leather or papyrus.

Writing tables or tablets which were sometimes made into books were also common among many ancient nations. The prophet Habakkuk was told to use tablets for his prophecies. *"And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it."* (Chapter 2:2) Isaiah was told to make his tables into a book. *"Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever: That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD."* (Isa.30:8—9)

These tables were generally made of a common wood which they would cover with a thin coat of wax. A person could then take a stylus or any sharp instrument made of metal or bone and use it as a pen to form words into the wax surface. The edges of the boards were not covered with wax so one could hold them with their hands and not erase any writings. Also there was a thin, narrow ledge around each tablet so two or more could be placed together without having the wax surfaces come into contact with each other.

Several of these tables could be hinged together with wire to form a book of several "pages" but if a document was to be of any length that would require the use of a scroll. If the document was important and private the book could be sealed by using a string placed through a hold in the edges. This string would hold the pages closed and wax would be placed over the string to seal the book.

We, like Isaiah and Habakkuk are commissioned by God to have a similar book and to write certain things into it. Our hearts are as an open book to God and He sees what we are writing thereon each day. “Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; **write them upon the table of thine heart.**” (Prov. 3:3) We must take diligent care that He does not see on our tablets what he saw on the people of his previous kingdom in Judah. “*The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table of their heart...*” (Jeremiah 17:1)

*Bro. James Sommerville*