

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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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

DETROIT, Michigan – S.S., 10:00am; Memorial, 11am; Wed. Night Class, 7pm; Bro. Fred J. Higham, 20116 McKishnie, Clinton Twp, MI 48035, 586-790-2156

Loving greetings to all our Brothers and Sisters in the Hope we share,

We enjoyed the company and fellowship of Bro. Jim Rankin of the Holladay Tenn. Ecclesia. He gave us words of comfort and exhortation. His visit was a great source of joy and strength to our little isolated ecclesia to press on in these last days as we await our Master's return.

We look forward as we watch and pray for the soon coming Kingdom when Jesus will reign as king. We sing, "Oft in danger, oft in woe, onward brethren, onward go! Tho opposed by many a foe, Christ's true brethren, onward go!"

We welcome any Brothers and Sisters that are able to come and visit us and we send you all our fraternal love in the bonds of the Truth.
Bro. Fred J. Higham

Houston, Texas

To All My Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus,

Words cannot thank all of you enough for the loving care in cards and prayers for our well beloved Brother Max.

He was very touched by each one as I read them to him.

Evidently, our prayers for his recovery was not according to God's will and we must learn to accept it even though it is hard to do.

We had the blessing of his loving sweetness and kindness for 25 years for which we are truly thankful.

We may never know why God removed him from our midst, but we must be assured it is a good and wise one.

One comfort is that he is resting now from any sorrows or cares.

With deep love in the hope we share of eternal life,
Sis. Carolyn McLaren

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

NORTH CAROLINA—VIRGINIA STUDY WEEKEND.....May 24—25, 2008

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

LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING.....June 6—8, 2008

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

HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING..... July 21—27, 2008

Bro. Curtis Hurst, 250 CR 517, Mullin, TX 76864, USA. 1-325-985-3868

Study Class Topic: Hebrews 1-13; Bible Readings

CANTON ECCLESIAL PICNIC..... Aug 23—24, 2008

Bro. Don Miller, 6695 Carriage Lane, North Canton, OH 44721 1-330-494-7717

CANTON FRATERNAL GATHERING..... Oct 11—12, 2008

Bro. Don Miller, 6695 Carriage Lane, North Canton, OH 44721 1-330-494-7717

GOLDTHWAITE STUDY WEEKEND..... Nov 28—30, 2008

Bro. Curtis Hurst, 250 CR 517, Mullin, TX 76864, USA. 1-325-985-3868

Every Man Perfect in Christ Jesus (Continued)

COLOSSIANS 2:5 to 3:5

“I am with you in spirit, joying and beholding your order—your mutual godly discipline and harmony—and the steadfastness of your faith”—Colossians 2:5.

“Order” is a very beautiful thing, provided it is not just stiff and mechanical, but is based on a free and essential harmony and oneness of mind and purpose. **All God's works, from smallest to greatest, manifest the beauty and wisdom of order.** Disorder and confusion are incompatible with godliness.

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him” (v. 6).

If ye have taken on Christ—recognized him as the only way of life—then **take care to continue to walk within him.** There is a certain area of conduct that is described as *“in Christ”*—a certain frame of mind—a certain course of action—a certain range of thought and interest. Other than this is *out of Christ.* Christ is the covering, so any activity outside this narrow path that is *in him* is described as *“walking naked and in shame.”* **That is how God regards it.**

“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, and not after Christ” (v. 8).

It is almost inevitable that we shall be influenced by the thinking of the world. The world puts on such an imposing show of knowledge and learning in its science and education.

Much, of course, of what it teaches is true. This is where the great difficulty arises, for **theory and presumption and the thinking of the flesh are so inseparably mixed with fact in all the world's educational system.**

“Philosophy and vain deceit”—subtle reasoning and plausible arguments. He bids us beware of the thinking of the natural mind. **The human mind unaided has not the capacity for sound reason.** Apart from direct divine guidance and revelation there is no restraint to the foolishness the most respectable intellect will accept.

The Scriptures are very strong in their warnings against the deceptions of the world's wisdom, teaching us that the only safety is measuring everything by the rule of Christ (v. 9)—

“In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”

This term *“Godhead”* does not carry a very clear meaning. It is used by the churches of the world for the Trinity, and therefore many thoughtlessly take this to teach the Trinity, but the word really means *that which is related to God. All that is godly—all that God is—dwells in Christ.* God is manifested in him in perfection.

It is God's purpose and desire to be **manifested in perfection in a multitude.** This is the essence of His eternal plan.

Christ is the Head of that multitude—the Forerunner and perfect Example—the great Pattern for all to follow.

“And ye are complete in him” (v. 10).

Literally this is: *“Ye are filled full”*—the whole thought is:

“In him is the full manifestation of God, and ye are filled full in him.”

He is the reservoir and medium of transmission. He is the golden bowl of the Zechariah lampstand, containing and transmitting the golden Spirit oil to the seven-fold ecclesial lamp.

“Buried with him, in baptism, wherein ye are also risen with him” (v. 12).

How beautiful a symbol baptism is of the complete change effected by the union with Christ—of the death to all the old, and a birth to newness of life **completely and safely in him:**

“You being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with him” (v. 13).

In our natural state we are *dead*—dead in sins, and dead in our Gentile separation from the Abrahamic covenant which is the keystone of the world's destiny.

As we look out upon the sea of humanity—all are dead in God's sight—a vast multitude of dead.

We *must* get the scriptural viewpoint; we *must* see them in this light; we must be constantly aware of the complete separation of our position as *made alive* in Christ—not in pride but in the deepest humility of constant self-examination; not in indifference, but in deepest sympathy and benevolent desire.

“Having forgiven you all trespasses” (v. 13).

In Christ, *all* is washed away. How infinite is the graciousness of God! How free and unrestrained the operation of His mercy—nothing measured or meted out, but boundless forgiveness! *We* must be the same. We dare not be small and calculating like the petty little hoarders of the world.

“Having forgiven you ALL trespasses.”

—having swept them all away with one glorious motion of transcendent love. Can we give less than everything in return? Can we give *limited* service in return for such *unlimited* grace?

“*Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us*” (v. 14).

The handwriting of ordinances was the Law of Moses—not just the Law of Moses as such, but that Law as it stood for all “Thou shalt” and “Thou shalt not” ordinances.

The Colossians were in danger of slipping back into a religion of ordinances, living under the rule of “*Thou shalt not*.” They forgot that the purpose of the Law was to bring all flesh under condemnation—to show all men that it is impossible for them to *earn* life on their own merits by obedience to a law—because of the weakness of the flesh. The better the Law, the more impossible the obedience.

Law is a schoolmaster—a “pedagogue”—a “child-leader”—to *bring us to Christ*—to lead the Jewish nation, to lead mankind, to lead every individual—up to Christ.

How vividly this principle is manifested in the growth of children! When we have completed the slow, painful, but glorious transition from the *rule of Law* to the *rule of Love*, then we have finally reached maturity and manhood—the full stature of the perfect man in Christ Jesus.

That is the great lesson Paul is teaching here. “*Thou shalt*” must give place to “*If ye love me*.” All the “*Thou shalt*s” were nailed to the cross—all the hopelessness of man’s weakness and failure. V. 15—

“*Having spoiled*—the word means ‘stripped,’ ‘laid bare’—*principalities and powers*” (governments and authorities).

Having laid bare—exposed—the powerlessness of the rule of law to lead man to life—having shown it to be but a ministration of death to teach men humility—he triumphed over it *in Him*—in God: not Jesus alone as a man, but *God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself*.

“*Let no man therefore judge you in meat, drink, holyday, new moon, sabbaths—which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ*” (v. 16).

Paul, of course, is speaking of the Law of Moses, but the lesson is just as vital for us. We cannot find life by a rule of external regulations—the flesh hasn’t the power to do it, and if it could, it still would not change the *character*. It must be “If ye love me” or nothing. Nothing else has the power of spiritual transformation.

“If ye do *not* love me (Christ)” there is no point in trying to be good just because you love *yourself*. We can only attain to life *through* Christ, *by* love.

“*Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels*” (v. 18).

Inventing forms and objects and methods of worship has always been a great religious danger. “Voluntary humility” includes everything we self-pleasingly impose upon ourselves and others that is not part of the *basic simplicity in Christ*.

Our one great duty in Christ is the overcoming and complete transforming of our character, but our natural tendency is to seek an easy satisfaction in self-imposed tasks, which cater to the pride of humility but do not touch the basic problems of real character.

“*And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God*” (v. 19).

All the Body, from the Head, increaseth with the increase of God! What a beautiful treasury of truth is contained in that verse! How fitting is this divine symbol of the people of God as One Body all harmoniously knit together in One Perfect Man—all parts interdependent, with the unifying power of life and health freely coursing through the whole, all acting in perfect conformity with the will and guidance of the Head!

How wonderfully this teaches us of our dependence upon one another, and above all, upon Christ!

“—the **Head, from which** all the body increaseth with the increase of God.”

Modern versions have rendered this in all sorts of ways in an attempt to bring out the meaning better, but none seem to express it as well as the common version.

Are we, brethren and sisters, parts of this glorious body—inseparably bound up with Christ in all our thoughts and actions—constantly *increasing with the increase of God?* V. 20-21—

“Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why as though living in the world are ye subject to ordinances, as: ‘Touch not, taste not, handle not’?”

Why do you act like *ordinary* people—why do you depend on the *old*, useless methods of self-discipline when you have by union with Christ—completely *died* to all such things, and taken on a completely *new way of righteousness* as *part of him*.

“Which are to perish with the using” (v. 22).

That is, they are not matters of eternal value; they do not affect the basic issues of godliness and holiness. The ordinances of the Law were *shadows* of the true—the cleanlinesses of the Law were *types* of the true cleanliness of the heart—the sacrifices of the Law were *symbols* of the true living sacrifice that the love of Christ requires.

Of themselves they all accomplished nothing but the teaching of lessons and pointing to what must be done to the character and life. *External* regulations and ordinances do not go *deep* enough—they do not transform the *heart*.

“Which things indeed have a **show** of wisdom in will worship and humility and neglecting of the body” (v. 23).

We think of Paul’s words—

“Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not **love, I am nothing.**”

How *easy* to be *self-deceived!* How easy to create in *man’s* sight an impression of godliness and self-sacrifice when actually in *God’s* sight it is all a self-gratifying form of fleshly pride. Truly the heart of man is “*deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked!*” (Jer. 17:9).

How great the need for constant self-examination, constant searching of the Word, constant prayer for deliverance from the deceptiveness of our own hearts!

“Not in any honor (but) to the satisfying of the flesh.” (v.23).

A comma after “honor” would make the sense clearer, or the insertion of “but,” as indicated. All these self-pleasing labors and devotions have no divine honor or virtue, but are simply to the satisfying of the pride of the flesh.

Instead of *mortifying* the flesh and really *improving* the character, they are actually *pleasing* the flesh, as when men—in violation of God’s law—seek worldly wisdom and worldly wealth on the plea of desiring to “use it in God’s service.”

“If then ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above... for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God” (Ch. 3, v. 1).

All the affections of the True Bride of Christ are fixed on the things of God, on her glorious Bridegroom, and on their future, eternal joys together.

Present things hold no interest for her, except as they are related to the divine purpose. No true brother of Christ can have his heart in any *present* things—they are all but passing shadows of the night. V. 5—

“Mortify therefore your members which are upon earth”

—mortify—put to death—all that is earthy in you. We notice that among other earthy things, he mentions one that is universal in the flesh—*covetousness*—greed—the desire to have—the universal urge to possess desirable things.

What is wrong with that? Just this: any attachment to *earthy* things is to that extent a hindrance to affection for *heavenly* things. Covetousness is, therefore, one of the greatest and commonest stumblingblocks to godliness. Covetousness—the desire to have and enjoy the nice things of the world—pulls the heart down and shackles it to the earth, dimming and obscuring the joy and glory and keen desire for the future. It is, in its very essence, the very opposite of self-denying godliness.

COLOSSIANS 3:9 to End

“Ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him Who created him”—Colossians 3:9-10

“Renewed in knowledge”—

“This is life eternal, that they might KNOW Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent” (Jn. 17:3).

Do we truly *know* God and Christ? To know in this sense is to be united with Him in harmonious understanding—to be of one mind, and interest, and character.

We do not know God when we are interested in passing, worldly things. To know God we must keep our minds set on the things that God is interested in, as He has revealed them to us in His Word.

“Renewed in knowledge.” The natural man is based on ignorance—a creature of darkness, influenced only by natural things. But the new man is built on knowledge and light. He is instructed in the wisdom that is from above. By the light of the Word, lovingly and constantly studied, his mind is drawn upward to rest in heavenly things, and his character is made gentle and pure after the example of Christ.

“Put on therefore as the elect of God, mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering” (v. 12).

“As the elect of God.” Are we the elect of God? There MUST be such, for the Scriptures so often speak of such a class, in language of great beauty—a glorious, separated few, knit together in divine holiness.

“The elect of God, holy and beloved.” It seems like tremendous presumption to consider that we, of all the earth's millions, may be such.

But if we fulfil the simple requirements that the love of God has specified, we *are* the “elect of God, holy and beloved.” This honor is free and open to all, yet it is very exclusive, for so few seek it with *all* their heart, and only such can ever find it.

Many seek it with *part* of their heart—sometimes a *large* part—but that is not enough. God's elect are those few who give God *all* their heart—who yield themselves *completely* to Him.

“Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, even as Christ forgave you” (v. 13).

A divine, mutual kindness is one infallible mark of the True Bride. Where that is lacking there is no spiritual life.

“And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness” (v. 14).

Above all these things—*beyond* these things—*over* all this mutual mercy, kindness, humbleness, meekness, long-suffering, forbearance, forgiveness—put on *love*.

The only true love in all the world is that divine oneness of heart and mind that unites the elect of God in pure and perfect affection—the bond—binding together— *of perfectness*.

“*We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren*” (I John 3:14).

Have *we* passed from death to life? Is *love for the brethren* our distinguishing characteristic? Love has infinite patience and kindness—even toward all men—but *above all* to the *brethren*. Faithfulness often makes rebuke necessary, and sometimes separation, but even this **MUST** be done in love, with meekness—a true sympathy, recognizing the mutual weakness and limitations of poor, fallen human nature—and above all, not a hypocritical, self-righteous, lip service “love.”

“*And let the peace of God rule in your hearts*” (v. 15).

Let it rule—*permit* it to—God desires His peace to preside over us. We are exhorted to *allow* it to do so. It is a blessing that He is anxious to bestow. Perhaps, of this whole epistle, this is the one thought to keep uppermost in our minds, as the crowning blessing of all—

“*LET the peace of God rule in your hearts.*”

Give yourself over to its healing and relaxing influence. Let us try to remember to say this to ourselves from time to time during the course of each day—“*LET the peace of God rule in your hearts.*”

This word “rule” is very interesting. It means to arbitrate, to preside, to be an umpire, to settle questions and problems, to determine who is the winner, to award the prize. This is the only place the word occurs, though the related noun occurs twice as “prize.” The apostle urges us to permit God’s peace to rule supreme in our hearts, presiding over all issues and settling every conflict, awarding the joyful prize of godliness.

Are we opening our hearts to Him and allowing His peace to work its marvelous work within us, or are we in fleshly blindness missing this transcendent comfort? — “*careful and troubled about many things,*” when only one is needed—a discernment of the beauty and value of the “peace of God.”

“*And be ye thankful*” (v. 15).

It is a sad commentary on human forgetfulness that we should need to be constantly reminded to be thankful. But we *do* need it. **We entertain so many moods and desires that are utterly incompatible with thankfulness.** We cannot be thankful and *irritable* at the same time—or thankful and *discouraged*, or thankful and *impatient*.

Thankfulness is a pleasant and joyful mood—a recognition of eternal and all overshadowing goodness. It is inseparably linked to God’s peace. It is not the little passing *flashes* of thankfulness that is meant—like that of a dog for a scrap of meat—but the calm, cheerful thankfulness that is a consistent, all-pervading frame of mind and way of life.

“*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.*”

Here again—*let* it, *permit* it. Is the acquiring of wisdom from the Word as easy as that—just *let* it come?

Yes, **IF WE CLEAR THE WAY** and set our whole hearts upon it. But we cannot fill our minds and interests with other things and still expect the word of Christ to force its way in. It requires effort, and study, and application—not just because God wants to make it hard and discouraging, but because He will only open Himself up to those who love Him sufficiently to give their whole lives to seeking to know Him.

Unless the love of God, *desire* to know Him, *desire* to please Him, dominates our whole lives, the word of Christ will never dwell in us richly in all wisdom, and all our talk about “poor memories” and “inability to understand” is but a pitiful evasion. **The problem is not memories, but hearts.**

“Teaching and admonishing one another in hymns and psalms and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (v. 16).

This is a beautiful instruction and worthy of deep consideration. It is far more significant, in terms of basic principles, than we are apt to realize.

Do we associate the spirit of song with our teaching? This is the kind of teaching that gladdens and transforms—

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings!” (Isa. 52:7).

Our teaching and admonishing—even our **ADMONISHING**, we note—must never be harsh, or cold, or merely technical and intellectual, but in the gentle, joyful spirit of singing with grace in our hearts.

“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to our God and Father by him” (v. 17).

He is not just speaking of things to do with the Truth—he is speaking of *everything* we do. This is clear from v. 23, where, concluding his instructions to servants, he says—

“Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward.”

Our weekly paycheck is *“of the Lord.”* He is our true employer. All others are incidental. All we do is actually just between Him and us direct. Therefore every word, every deed, should be done with the consciousness that it is *unto God*. *“Do it heartily”*—give it everything you have.

Does this seem an extreme and impossible command? It all depends *where our heart is*, as to whether this is an insufferable burden or a joyful delight. The apostle goes even further in writing to the Corinthians (2:10:5)—

*“Bring into captivity every **thought** to the obedience of Christ.”*

No man can serve two masters. No man can give his heart to a divided allegiance. All the power and joy of the service of God is in its all-embracing *completeness*—its utter and intense singleness of heart and soul.

* * *

Chapter 4 is principally occupied with sundry greetings to and from the brethren. We know so little about these earnest and faithful men, and yet these personal sections add so much to the living power and beauty of Paul’s epistles.

Think of what a loss the omission of these parts would be—

Tychicus—a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord.

Onesimus—a faithful and beloved brother.

Aristarchus—Paul’s fellow-prisoner.

Marcus—nephew to Barnabas, whose youthful failure of courage years before was the cause of the sad rift between Barnabas and Paul.

The Colossians have a special commandment to welcome him if he comes to them. Why? The circumstances of the separating of Paul and Barnabas would be bound to be known throughout the brotherhood. Even years later it would be remembered. It would create a very difficult path for Mark to tread, wherever he went. There would often be embarrassment on both sides as he met the brethren.

But he seems to have overcome, and established himself as a worthy and useful brother. In Paul's closing days he wrote to Timothy that Mark was profitable to him for the ministry, and there were few who stood by Paul at that time.

We cannot help being saddened by the incident that separated Paul and Barnabas, after they had endured so much together. We never hear of Barnabas again. He drops right out of the story, his place taken by a new companion—Silas.

But right at the end of Paul's life, he speaks with appreciation of the help and support of Mark, so we can feel assured that Paul and Barnabas were fully reconciled.

And there was a brother with Paul called Jesus. How strange it seems for a brother to be called Jesus—though this is the Greek form of Joshua—a common name among the Jews.

These, said Paul, were his fellow-workers unto the Kingdom of God, who had been a comfort to him. How wonderful is the comfort afforded by faithful brethren!

Epaphras, a servant of Christ, always laboring fervently in prayer.

Luke, the beloved physician. Why does Paul mention him in this way—"the beloved physician"?

From Luke's *first* appearance in the record, at the time Paul saw the vision of the man of Macedonia—right to the *end of Paul's life*, Luke seems to have attached himself to Paul.

Wherever we see the word "we" in the Acts, we can discern the faithful Luke attending Paul in all his travels.

And in Paul's very last epistle (2 Tim.), when he was old and about to be put to death, he said—

"Only Luke is with me."

Can we not see one who, in love to the Truth and to the apostle, had given himself as a constant companion to minister to Paul in all his trials—"Luke, the beloved physician."

The terrible hardships and maltreatment that Paul constantly endured would affect the health of the strongest, but there are several indications that Paul also suffered from physical disabilities.

A gentle minister of healing would be a great comfort to one whose life was composed of such labor, pain and distress, and who gave every ounce of his strength in the service of his brethren—

"Pressed out of measure, above strength, despairing even of life."

—that is how he himself describes the path he trod for Christ.

"And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it" (v. 17).

Who Archippus was we do not know. Whether this is a reproof or an encouragement we cannot tell. But its value lies in its lessons for us—

"Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received."

Like Archippus, we too have a ministry of the Lord. We have work to do—principally within ourselves, but also in relation to all with whom we come in contact—to manifest to them the beauty of the divine pattern of godliness and holiness.

The apostle concludes: *"Remember my bonds."* We are told to remember many things. Remembrance—keeping in memory—holds the issues between life and death.

Why "Remember my bonds"? We are taken back to his words in the first chapter—

“I REJOICE in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind in the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his Body’s sake.”

In all that you do, *remember my sufferings for you, and the suffering of Christ*. Let the remembrance of them soften and purify your hearts, and raise your minds to higher and more noble things than your own selfish desires and interests.

“Grace be with you.”

Do we have a clear idea in our minds what *“Grace be with you”* means? Grace is a broad inclusive word, a balanced combination of many beautiful characteristics. It is the sum-total of graciousness. It includes both the attitude and operation of God *toward* the believer, and the manifestation of godliness *by and in* the believer.

It is defined as loveliness, favour, kindness, goodwill, thankfulness, pleasantness, friendship, beauty of character—

“Grace be with you . . . Amen”.

Bro. G.V. Growcott

Sardis

Sardis was once a great and splendid city. Located on the banks of the Pactolus River, Sardis was 60 miles inland from Ephesus and Smyrna. It has a long and impressive history. It was the main city in the kingdom of Lydia, under its richest king, Croesus. Saracens, Turks, and natural disasters, such as earthquakes, have brought this once opulent city to a state of utter ruin. Arundell in his book *“Discoveries in Asia Minor”* wrote, *“If I were asked what impressed the mind most strongly in beholding Sardis, I should say its indescribable solitude, like the darkness of Egypt—darkness that could be felt. So the deep solitude of the spot produces a corresponding feeling of desolate abandonment in the mind, which can never be forgotten.”* As we shall see, there is a great lesson for us in this natural aspect in the removal of Sardis. Among the ruins there now stands a small village called Sert, a corruption of its ancient name.

While the Apostle John was in Patmos, the Apostasy in Sardis was working to corrupt the teachings of Christ and the Apostles. As in our day, there were two classes of people who came to a knowledge of the Truth—those who were Jews inwardly and those that said they were Jews but were liars. In Philippians 4:3 we read of Clement whose name was written in the book of life. *“And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow laborers, whose names are in the book of life.”*

Profane history also tells of a Clement who was at Sardis. Those who know not God consider him to be one of their early church fathers. Whether the two Clements are one and the same is a matter of speculation. We do know that the Clement of profane history lived during the time of the apostles, A.D. 30—100, and appears to be of the stamp who said he was a Jew inwardly, but was a liar.

There is a record of the letter he wrote to Corinth for the purpose of resolving a conflict in the church. He wrote of Peter and Paul, *“But not to dwell upon ancient examples, let us come to the most recent spiritual heroes. Let us take the noble examples furnished in our own generation. Through envy and jealousy, the greatest and most righteous pillars [of the Church] have been persecuted and put to death. Let us set before our eyes the illustrious apostles. Peter, through unrighteous envy, endured not one or two, but numerous labours and when he had at length suffered martyrdom, departed to the place of glory due to him. Owing to envy, Paul also obtained the reward of patient endurance, after being seven times thrown into captivity, compelled to flee, and stoned. After preaching both in the east and west, he gained the illustrious reputation due to his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world, and come to the extreme limit of the west, and suffered martyrdom under the prefects. Thus was he removed from the world, and went into the holy place, having proved himself a striking example of patience.”*

Brother Thomas says of this paragraph, “There is a paragraph in this epistle, much approved by “the evangelists” of our day, which if taken in the sense they put upon it, place him in fellowship with the class in Sardis, termed by the Spirit “dead.” Whether it is taken in the evangelical sense or not, when his letter is read the corruption occurring in his day is obvious. Clement is arguing for the resurrection and with that the return of Christ, which is one of the most apparent scriptural first principles. It is clear things have not changed between their day and ours. The “truth” will always be under attack by the woman sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast.

Before going on with the continuing corruption of the Truth in Sardis, where the works of the dead in the Truth overcome those who love the name, there is one more quote from Clements epistle to Corinth that is interesting to consider. After many scriptural quotes he turns to nature to prove his point, “Let us consider that wonderful sign [of the resurrection] which takes place in Eastern lands, that is, in Arabia and the countries round about. There is a certain bird which is called a phoenix. This is the only one of its kind, and lives five hundred years. And when the time of its dissolution draws near that it must die, it builds itself a nest of frankincense, and myrrh, and other spices, into which, when the time is fulfilled, it enters and dies. But as the flesh decays a certain kind of worm is produced, which, being nourished by the juices of the dead bird, brings forth feathers. Then, when it has acquired strength, it takes up that nest in which are the bones of its parent, and bearing these it passes from the land of Arabia into Egypt, to the city called Heliopolis. And, in open day, flying in the sight of all men, it places them on the altar of the sun, and having done this, hastens back to its former abode. The priests then inspect the registers of the dates, and find that it has returned exactly as the five hundredth year was completed.”

Herein is the lesson. When we attempt to (1 Thess. 5:21) “*Prove all things;*” we should “*hold fast that which is good.*” The best source that can be used is the Word of God, for it “*is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*” (2 Tim. 3:16). Man’s knowledge changes but the “Word” is unchanging.

Those in Sardis did not see themselves as God saw them. God saw them as ready to die. This Sardian state, then, is characterized as the death state. And we only have to look a couple centuries later to see how dead they were. It is worth remembering that it is only slightly less than 150 years since brother Thomas wrote the third volume of *Eureka*. A mere 150 years after the death of the Apostle John, a man named Valerian came to power. For a short period, approximately three years, he was able to be a friend and protector of the Christians. During this time of peace and safety an assembly was held in Africa, by 66 bishops, with Cyprian at its head. There was a huge debate on whether infants should be immersed within the second or third day of their birth. A minority thought that should be done on the eighth day after the ancient law of circumcision. But a majority of the 66 were of a different opinion. They decided infant baptisms were “spiritual circumcision” and ought not to be impeded by the law of carnal circumcision. This is a striking illustration of the spiritual death or Sardian state. From this council we learn five interesting points. They had a belief in—

1. The immortality of the soul according to Plato.
2. Immersion without knowledge or faith imparted remission of sins to infants.
3. The soul of an infant two or three days old would be lost if they were not immersed.
4. Baptism in the case of infants was not for the remission of their own sins but for that of another, Adam.
5. Infant immersion was spiritual circumcision.

Interestingly enough Milner commends them and pronounces them Christians of a holy and vital sort.

The mechanical holiness of the tabernacle and its service had been misapplied in the ecclesiastical corruption of the gospel that set in after the apostolic age. The first century believers included (Acts 6:7, 21:20) “*a great company of the priests,*” which may have influenced the Judaizing corrupters that arose.

It is a practice of “the church” to “consecrate” buildings, cemeteries, water, vestments, bells, and many other things. It is a tradition of the people that such things are “holy” and can not be used casually without desecration. The mechanical and ceremonial holiness of the law have been applied in customs that result in disastrous effects to the saving work of the Gospel. We could go on and on with historical examples showing the corruption of the vital principles taught by the apostles and Jesus, but this is sufficient to show how those in Sardis had allowed themselves to be corrupted and lost those things that are most precious. The light of the Word became dim through apostasy and men became enthralled in a ritual system as lifeless and superstitious as the worship of the heathen.

Looking at the opening verses that were written to Sardis we find they were written by “*he having the Seven Spirits of the Deity and the Seven Stars.*” We realize from the writings of brother Thomas that seven is a symbol of perfection and the “he having the Seven Spirits” can only be the resurrected and glorified Christ—He who was filled with the Spirit and has become “*the image of the invisible.*” What was done with the Seven Spirits and the Seven Stars? “*The Seven Spirits of God were sent forth into all the earth*” that ecclesial light stands proclaiming the Truth might be set up. This is a reminder to the Sardinian ecclesias, as well as all others that they go forth, not of their own volition, but they are under the orders of Christ. The Spirits are fitly represented by “Seven Stars,” and as they were sent forth to the Seven Lightstands, as well as elsewhere. Continuing on, we are hearing the proclamation of judgment on Sardis and all similar communities wherever found.

In a quote from Philippians earlier it was stated that Clement’s name was written in the Book of Life. Just as every baptized brother and sister has their name inscribed in that very same book. We realize that knowledge brings responsibility but the most knowledgeable man in the world will not have his name written until he fulfills that important act of obedience. Having your name inscribed in the Book of Life does not guarantee eternal life. That would require having your name inscribed in the Book of **THE** Life. Only those whose garments are undefiled have their names written therein. Their names written therein since the foundation of the world. These are brought out by the Spirit in writing to Sardis where Christ says, “*Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garment.*”

We might also point out that *garment*, as a figure, clearly represents character. It is our duty to keep our character unspotted from the cares and corruptions of the world around us. As we have seen earlier, there was a very general corruption and departure from the first principles at the close of the first century. The perversion started in the first century and continues on today.

The words written to Sardis are an example of the difference in the judgment of God and of men. With the flesh reigning supreme, the general population felt they had a flourishing spiritual life. It was the same then as it is now. All the denominations of Christendom regard themselves as being in high favor with the living God. The flesh wants to glorify itself rather than realize how weak and dependent on God it truly is. Those who have their names written in the Book of Life must continually strive to overcome the natural, fleshly, self-indulgent desires. As the world goes so we should not go. God does not require massive edifices built by man’s hands. His requirements are far simpler but so much harder to do, as evidenced by those few who are continuing to do them.

The warning given to those in Sardis, as well as to us, “*thou shalt not know what hour I shall come upon thee,*” shows that retribution could come at any moment. This is not referring to the judgment seat where we shall stand at Christ’s return. That will be open and visibly recognized by all who are there. This is referring to a retribution in which the hand is not visible. The wrecking of an ecclesia, or the separation of several brethren through some apparently human issue may be the result of this type of intervention. Esau’s case is a fair illustration of God’s coming upon a man as a thief. He took away his birthright in a way, and at a moment, when Esau was unaware of the operation. God is unchanging, and He will do things His way. Our only safety lies in the attitude of constant watchfulness over our tongues and our hands that word and deed may be in harmony with the will of God. Practically, this is to be accomplished in the daily reading of the Word, and at all times, continuing instant in prayer. Pleasure, and

too much business, frustrate the operation of these, and leave us a casualty to indifference and neglect, wherein we may fall from our steadfastness and lose our birthright.

Not only is it promised to him who keeps his garment undefiled that he will be clothed with incorruption, his name forever inscribed among the deathless, but also his name shall be honorably mentioned in the presence of the Deity and His angelic hosts. This is an awe-inspiring thought. Brother Thomas brings out in *Eureka* that the portion of this fifth verse of the third chapter which says, “*I will confess his name,*” is emphatic. It has a much stronger import than appears in the English version. He says it should be translated thus, “I will connect myself with his name as one selected from among others whom I reject because their works have not been found perfected in the sight of the Deity.” The name that will be confessed before the Father is one that is honorable, excellent, and holy.

The ecclesia at Sardis had a name that it lived. They call themselves Brethren of Christ, but in Christ’s estimation they were equal to the Pharisees. This is apparent because they are exhorted to become vigilant. Examples of the corruption that brought spiritual death to Sardis are still at work today. If we are not vigilant we will succumb to the same toxic effect, become deluded, and blind. We must continually examine ourselves so that when we are at the judgment seat we will not hear the words, “thou art dead,” having deceived ourselves into thinking that we are alive and well.

“*Be watchful*” is rendered by Brother Thomas as “be vigilant,” which could only be said to those professing to watch but who were slack in their duties. They were watchmen who had ceased to watch and fooled themselves into thinking they were fully alive and safe. They were not fully performing the works required to bring them into perfection, being slack in the application of the principles and commandments of the word committed to their trust. Their indifference to these principles had caused them to lose understanding and forget that life can only be manifested in those who incorporate Divine values. The duties of the watchmen are given in Ezekiel 3:17 — “*Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.*” And from Ezekiel 33:6 — “*But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman’s hand.*” These are left on record for all those who would keep their garments clean.

Brother Roberts wrote of the duty of watchmen, “One of the especial requirements of a watchman is to keep an eye to the movements of the enemy, and sound the alarm when danger is near. Satan, as the great adversary, sometimes appears as a roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8); sometimes he transforms himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14); and sometimes he assumes men’s persons in admiration because of advantage (Jude 16). The work of the watchman is to detect this foe, whatever disguise he may wear, and put all on their guard against his wiles.”

We would additionally include, the active watching under prayer, as given in Luke 21:36 — “***Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.***”

All these lessons Sardis received, and therefore they were commanded by Christ to remember. If the warning was not observed, then they would lose through darkness of mind what knowledge and gifts they had. We can see with our own eyes they were taken away, although their successors, to this day, claim to have possession of them.

The one body in Sardis receives this solemn assurance, “*I know thy works.*” Here is something that every person and ecclesia should reflect upon. Jesus, our High Priest and Judge, is not one that has to depend on what he sees and hears. He knows! What did he know of the Sardian ecclesia? “*Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.*” If, in the days of John with the gifts of the Spirit still visible, an ecclesia could be dead, should we not worry 20 centuries later? What type of an ecclesia do we live in? One like Sardis? If so, what is our position in the ecclesia? Are we one of the few with clean garments?

We often hear of battle cries in the ecclesia, but how often do we hear of true love? Jesus tells us in John 13:35 — “*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*” There is a tendency in connection with the Truth in our day to exalt knowledge over the love of God and His service. Many times we hear people speaking of a brother’s excellent knowledge of the Truth. How often do we hear comments on how great a love the brother had for the ecclesia? Or for the “Truth”? Love is a requirement to having our name written in the “Book of The Life.” If it is a requirement for that Great Ledger, then it must also be a requirement for an ecclesia of God. Love is self-sacrifice in action and demonstrates the Divine attitude. The love I am speaking of is like God: long-suffering, forbearing, patient, compassionate, kind, considerate, affectionate, merciful, gracious, sympathetic, concerned and tender-hearted; the very essence of benevolent goodness, loving-kindness and tender mercy.

Sardis was to “*remember therefore how thou hast received and heard.*” They were to hold the truth in an unadulterated form. This can only be achieved by constant study. Take a moment, and consider, what is your favorite book? When you are traveling, what do you bring with you to read? Is it something by a current novelist? Is it a book by Brother Thomas? Maybe an exhortation by Brother Roberts? What is brought to read for pure enjoyment? How often do we pick up the Bible to read for pure enjoyment? Are there favorite sections we like to read when happy or sad, or for comfort? If we do not read the Bible for the sheer joy that we can find between the pages, then how can we expect to remember what we have received and heard? Can an ecclesia maintain sound doctrine and teach the Gospel without a loving desire to constantly peer between the pages of Scripture? Titus writes in chapter 2 verse 1, “*But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine.*” We are commanded to make our main topic of conversation about the things concerning the Name and the Kingdom. Can this be done if the Scriptures are not our chief joy in life?

The ecclesia should be a light to the world around it. It is written, Matthew 5:14 — “*Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.*” Our light should shine forth in our conduct and proclamation of the Gospel. It is the duty of each and every brother, sister, and ecclesia to have an active role in the proclamation of the Word. If we could save a life, would we not do it? Preaching is an opportunity not only to save a life but to obey the will of our Heavenly Father. Preaching the Truth helps us to remain focused on the first principles and assists us in realizing what is truly important in our lives.

It is our duty to be of service to one another. The apostle Paul left us with this commandment, in Galatians 6:10 — “*As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*” This verse is not saying that we should do good only to the household of faith. It says to do good unto ALL men, especially to the brethren and sisters. Service to the household of faith comes first, but then the rest of mankind is included. Preaching is an important service to the rest of mankind. An ecclesia must make the effort to expound the Truth to the world and to do good whenever and wherever possible. If an ecclesia is not making this effort, it must be prepared to bear the name of Sardis in that day of judgment when the Master shall proclaim, “I know thy works.”

Jesus said of the ecclesia at Sardis, “*Be watchful and strengthen the things that remain.*” Here again is our responsibility for others and for the body as a whole. Is our purpose in life to strengthen, to help, and to serve our brothers and sisters?

We are to bring up our children “*in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*” (Ephesians 6:4). As one brother put it, “Children are the gifts from God, entrusted to us to raise to God’s honor and glory.” We should make the ecclesia an oasis from the world for the children. It is felt that many children have left the Truth due to the behavior of an ecclesia. Members letting the flesh reign supreme in anger and bickering during ecclesial meetings is not a nurturing environment. Making a child comfortable with the Bible and allowing them to see a high moral standard, with true Godly love, is how the ecclesia should help raise the children in the Lord. Children are keen observers. They know when an ecclesia is warm and welcoming. They see how well an ecclesia handles problems.

The Bible contains many commands on how to handle problems. Many ecclesias refuse to address problems when they should be tackled head on. If they can be anticipated and worked on in love and understanding, they could be resolved long before it becomes a major issue. Problems should be met with friendship, insight, and sensitivity. Anyone can brandish the sword of destruction in zeal for the Lord. This can be very satisfying to the flesh. But it is not healthy for the ecclesia and will not help solve the problem. The flesh finds it easier to cast blame and point fingers than do true self-assessment as to what the actual problem is. No ecclesia in the proper state of spiritual life gives place to error, but it is possible to argue from aggression, so the flesh may perceive itself as knowledgeable and powerful in the Word. It is possible to enjoy attacks on or refuting the opinions or principles of another. This can be done even in the depths of spiritual death. The ecclesia at Sardis was torn by schism and false teaching. They were unable to make an honest self-assessment—unable to fix the problem because they could not identify it. The history of Israel and the history of the first century ecclesias show time and time again that unless a problem is resolved in a righteous, just, scriptural manner, it will fester and destroy the life of the ecclesia.

These few thoughts may help us determine how our ecclesia stands in the manner of having a name to live or being dead. Let us try ourselves by the Word of God. We realize God is patient with the erring and gives plenty of time for repentance. This is illustrated in the parable given in Luke 13:6-9, *“He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why encumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.”*

There are few, relatively speaking, who have been called to a knowledge of the Truth. Fewer still heed the call to God’s kingdom and glory. And of those, an even smaller number keep their garments unspoiled from the world. It is hard to put away the flesh and walk in light. We tend to act as though our salvation is assured, and we can engage in all sorts of unnecessary activities and still easily pass the scrutiny of the judgments seat. Are we that sure of our salvation? Does not common sense tell us, our efforts to obtain life eternal ought to be the most important thing in our lives and receive all our efforts? Is that not the only way to achieve a goal? Not 50, not 90, but 100 percent of our efforts focused toward life eternal. *“The righteous shall scarcely be saved”* (1 Peter 4:18). And Christ said, *“So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do”* (Luke 17:10). Can we ever feel that we have done enough? Those in Sardis must have felt they were doing extremely well.

A man may be socially agreeable, extremely friendly, and not have any spiritual life in him. We should not therefore, flatter ourselves because we shake hands and smile and ask after each other’s well-being and think that we are full of spiritual life. I do not strive to lessen our friendliness to one another. We should strive to stand out in this, as in every other good work. But let us not mistake the manifestation of natural friendliness for a state of mind that the Lord would pronounce as “a name to live.”

The human mind is a very flexible thing and adapts itself to various pressures. The pressure of the Truth continually brought to bear on the mind would change the condition into a state required. This state of mind is so opposite to that of the natural man that it scarcely receives recognition from the world. The people of the world are not attracted to such a mind, they naturally shrink from it. The favor of God and the favor of man are founded on such totally different mental conditions that they do not by their nature mix.

The Spirit gives us indication that in Sardis there were a few, who by diligent daily application of the teachings of the Word, kept their garments undefiled and were accounted worthy. With their character being pure and unstained, their nature must be made to correspond. Thus they received the promise that they should walk with Christ in white, symbolizing the immortal state that they will be elevated to.

Jesus gives guidance to those “*that hath ears to hear*” so that they may be clothed with raiment pure and white. The counsel is to hold fast. There is no good to be done by giving in to failure. Sometimes we are inclined to say, “Why go on?” Repetitive failures drain the life from us and cause us to want to lie where we fall. This is a mistake. We must continue, our efforts redoubled, to be obedient. When Adam committed his offense he had no high priest. We do have and are invited to make confession of our failures and to try again. We are not to lose hope, but we must put ourselves on guard that we fail not. If we overcome our struggle with the flesh, letting our light shine forth in this age of darkness, Christ is well pleased. If on the other hand we abandon hope and give ourselves over to the world, we are doomed. We must hear what was said to Sardis, “*If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.*”

Christ will come upon us, undetected, and bring about our downfall. Remember the lesson of Sardis, that ecclesia which is now gone from existence. We do have comfort in the realization that this message from Christ is addressed to his brethren. We are commanded “*to hold fast and repent.*” We can be comforted by the thought that God would not command us to do the impossible. We are invited to renew our ways before God. We have this day the opportunity to be renewed, strengthened, and encouraged while looking at the sacrifice we will present in ourselves when our Lord and Master returns. Let us never give in. Let us die fighting!

—Bro. Beryl Snyder

Signs Of The Times

November 2007 marked the 60th anniversary of the UN Partition Resolution of Nov. 29, 1947. It is sometimes forgotten that this was the first ever blueprint for an Israel-Palestinian two-state solution. While Jewish leaders accepted the resolution, Arab leaders did not, and by their own acknowledgement, declared war on the nascent Jewish state.

Yet the revisionist Mid-East narrative continues to hold that there was only one victim population, Palestinian refugees, and that Israel was responsible for the Palestinian *nagba* (catastrophe) of 1947.

The result was that the pain and plight of 850,000 Jews uprooted and displaced from Arab countries—the forgotten exodus—has been expunged from the historical narrative these past 60 years.

The UN also bears express responsibility for this distorted narrative. Since 1947, there have been 126 UN resolutions that have specifically dealt with the Palestinian refugee plight. Not one of these resolutions makes any reference to the plight of the 850,000 Jews displaced from Arab countries. Nor have any of the Arab countries involved expressed any acknowledgement, let alone regret. *Nat'l Post*, 11/07

In the covenant made to Abraham, God said, “*I will make of thee a great nation . . . And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee*” (Gen. 12:2-3). Is it not justice that as the Arabs have done to the Jews, so they now find themselves subjected to the same conditions? Surely a small retribution upon the enemies of the Jews is but a harbinger of that which is to come soon.

Full justice for the Jews, persecuted by their enemies over so many centuries, demands retribution upon all nations that have troubled themselves with God's people and His Holy Land.

Dr. Thomas wrote—“It is said in Joel 3:2, 12, “*Yahweh will gather all the nations (that is, the forces of the nations) into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there.*” Yehoshaphat, in Hebrew, signifies the judgment of Yah. Joel also styles the glen, the Valley of Threshing: “*Multitudes, multitudes in the Valley of Threshing*”. Apocalyptically, the same locality is styled ARMAGEDDON—“And he gathered them together in a place called Hebraistically, Armageddon.”. Yahweh gathered them there together without their perceiving the Hand that led them on to the slaughter . . .

“Micah says, “*Yahweh shall gather many nations as sheaves into the floor, that the Daughter of Zion may arise and thresh them*” (ch. 4:11-13). The floor of threshing of which they are to be made the chaff (Dan. 2:35) is this Valley of Jehoshaphat. Under this aspect of things, they are a heap of sheaves, upon the

threshing floor; and this idea is represented by the word, Armah, the first two syllables of the name: the third indicates where this heap is to be, namely, in the gai, valley; and the last syllable, for what purpose the heap is there, namely, for down, judgment Arma gai-don, which in a Greek dress, is, Armageddon.

‘The reason why the text states, that the place, or valley, is “Hebraistically” called, is to give us to understand in what country the place is situated—in the country, to wit, the native language of which is the Hebrew tongue.’ (Eureka vol. III).

Dr. Thomas wrote this exposition before there was a nation of Jewish people situated once again on the banks of the Mediterranean. It is utterly remarkable that the prophecy he dealt with should be so specific and emphatic on the fact that Armageddon would be identified “Hebraistically.” Even in Dr. Thomas’ day, as he considered this prophecy, Hebrew was no longer widely spoken, nor had been for centuries, not even by the Jews, let alone in their Land.

* * *

In the annals of language, the revival of Hebrew counts as a singular achievement, a feat unequalled in all the millennia that have stuttered past since humans first began to speak.

“I don’t know if there’s any other language not spoken for so long and then revived as a spoken language,” says professor Frieden of Hebraic studies at the University of Syracuse.

Little more than 100 years have passed since Hebrew first began to rediscover its tongue. Last spoken in Old Testament times, it now is firmly established as the primary language of about 5 million Jewish Israelis, not to mention some 2 million additional Hebrew speakers scattered through the world.

The transformation is extraordinary. A parlance last used in oral form by biblical prophets has accommodated itself in only a few decades to a world of six-lane highways, TV and the Internet.

It would not be going too far to say the memory of Eliezer Ben Yehuda is invoked just about every time an Israeli opens his or her mouth to speak. Born in 1858, Ben Yehuda arrived in the Holy Land in the early 1880s as a pilgrim from czarist Russia.

At the time, not a solitary person on Earth used Hebrew as a means of communication for daily affairs. In fact, barely a soul had done so for more than 2,000 years.

Depending on where they lived, Jews in modern times spoke a variety of languages, ranging from Yiddish, Ladino and Arabic to an array of European tongues.

Inspired by the early stirrings of Zionism, Ben Yehuda decided that what Jews really needed in order to become a nation—apart from a land of their own—was a common means of communication.

Quixotically perhaps, he settled on Hebrew, which had ceased to be the spoken language of the Jews several centuries before the birth of Christ, according to Frieden. By the time of the Romans’ destruction of the second temple in 70 AD—the event that sparked the flight of the Jews into the Diaspora—those fleeing souls mostly spoke Aramaic.

Nonetheless, on his arrival in Jerusalem in the years of Ottoman rule, Ben Yehuda convinced his wife that they should converse exclusively in Hebrew, both between themselves and with their children. Their first son, Yitzhak, is credited with being the first child whose first language was Hebrew in two millennia.

Other Jews were moving into the Holy Land, many of them inspired by the Zionist dream, and Ben Yehuda managed to persuade neighbouring families to take part in what quickly became his life’s central project.

Although not a linguist, Ben Yehuda set about coining thousands of words to describe daily phenomena—articles and activities missing from Hebrew’s ancient vocabulary.

“There wasn’t a vernacular in Hebrew,” notes Frieden. “How do you speak a language that only exists as a religious language?”

Against great odds, Hebrew began to catch on among Jews as a means of conversing about their day-to-day affairs.

In 1914, eight years before Ben Yehuda's death, an association of Jewish teachers in the Holy Land decided to make Hebrew the official medium of instruction in their schools. By the time Israel was established as a state in 1948, it was home to 600,000 Hebrew speakers.

The language's revival has come at some cost, for it coincided with—and likely contributed to—a corresponding decline in two other languages once widely spoken by Jews and now barely used at all. “Hebrew is not at risk,” says Frieden. “Yiddish is the one at risk. And Ladino.”—Toronto Star, 1/08

Not only the restoration of the Jews to their land, but also the revival of their language from the dust of epochs—the tremendous and incontrovertible Sign of our age that Christ is at the door, and the seventh vial is about to open. What is left but for the saints to sing, “Arm of the Lord, awake, awake! Put on thy strength, the nations shake; And let the world, confounded see—Triumphs of vengeance wrought by Thee!”—

Wisdom

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 a course that will make them wise: prayer, and study, and meditation on the Word. —Bro. G. V. Growcott

Argument

By what means shall a community, based on the Truth, preserve the Truth in purity in its midst?

Obviously by the means indicated by Paul and John, that is, by exacting of all who are in an implicit adherence of the things, facts, principles, points, tenets, or whatever else they may be called, which go to make up the Truth in its entirety, and by refusing to associate with those who oppose or refuse to endorse any of those elements.

Some recommend in opposition to this the employment of argument with those who may be in error...But if an ecclesia is to go no further than argument, how could its existence continue?

An effort should doubtless be put forth to reclaim those who are in error; but, where those efforts fail, dissociation by withdrawal is natural and inevitable.

The ecclesia is not the place for argument; it is for worship in agreement. When a man requires to be argued with, his natural place is outside, and if he will not go outside, separation must be enforced by withdrawal on the part of the rest.

Division is the inevitable concomitant of an uncompromising adherence to the Truth. Peace purchased at the cost of compromise is doubly dangerous. The Truth is the standard and must alone be allowed to rule. All doubt ought to be solved in its favor.

The action of separation is not an act of judgment against those from whom we may separate. It is an act of self-vindication; an act by which we discharge a duty and wash our hands of evil. The Truth has gradually emerged from the fables in which for centuries it had been lost, and only an inexorable policy on the part of those receiving it will preserve it from the recurrence of the disaster which drove it from among men shortly after the days of the Apostles. Bro. Robert Roberts—My Days And My Ways

Psalm 133

*“Behold, how good a thing it is,
And how becoming well,
Together such as brethren are
In unity to dwell.” Hymn 4*

A superficial reading of this verse might lead to the conclusion that it contains an exhortation to brotherly love. The context of Psalm 133, of which the hymn is a paraphrase, shows that it is to be understood prophetically. It portrays the unity which will exist among the spirit-anointed company of the

redeemed. “It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard : that went down to the skirts of his garments.” (Verse 2.)

The holy anointing oil (ointment) is described in Exodus 30. 22-33. Its unique features make it a fitting symbol of the spirit with which Jesus was anointed when he was made “ Lord and Christ” (anointed one) at his immortalization. Similarly, all his brethren and sisters found worthy, are to be anointed with spirit. God has promised that He will pour out His spirit upon His sons and daughters, servants and handmaids (Joel 2. 28-29). In the possession of spirit nature, Christ and his brethren will dwell together for ever in unity. They will be the One Body manifested in spirit. This glorious consummation will be complete, after the type of the ointment which enveloped Aaron from his head and beard, to the very fringes of his garments.

But the Psalmist adds, “As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.” (Verse 3.) On two outstanding occasions, the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. Abraham stood on a prominence between Bethel and Hai, after Lot was separated, from him; “Look from the place where thou art northward, southward, eastward and westward.” What did he see? Thirty miles distant in the far northeast corner of the promised land, was towering Hermon, 10,000 ft. high, with its snowclad summit shining in the sun, and its dewy slopes providing water for the Jordan, coursing southward towards the Dead Sea. In a manner, the river enveloped the land, descending in its water-courses from north to south, embracing the slopes of the mountains of Zion. As a figure, the dew of Hermon is analogous to the ointment which enveloped Aaron and his skirts. With the scene before him, Abraham heard the words, “All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed for ever.” In speaking of the blessing thus commanded, the apostle Paul says, “That the blessing . . . might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ that we might receive the promise of the spirit through faith.”

The other notable occasion was in the life of the Psalmist himself. Having captured Zion from the Jebusites, David removed the seat of his kingdom from Hebron to Jerusalem. He purposed to build a house there for God, but God promised that He would build David an house. “Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee.” This was again a “commanding of the blessing even life for evermore.”

In referring to its fulfilment, the Psalmist says, “*Thy nation shall be willing in the day of thy might ; in the splendours of holiness the dew of thy birth shall be to thee from the womb of the dawn.*” (Psalm 110. 3, Bro. Thomas’ translation.) In that day, the unity between Christ and his followers will be perfect, after the type of the perfect married state. “We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church.”

The Song of Solomon contains a reference to the beautiful figure suggested by the words of the Psalm paraphrased in the hymn under consideration. The bridegroom’s invitation to his dearly beloved is expressed in the words, “Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon ; look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon:’ And what to behold ? God’s land like Eden, the garden of the Lord; Jerusalem the holy city, and living waters issuing from the Temple precincts, significant of the Water of Life which will ultimately encompass the whole earth, peopled by an immortal population.

The unity in which the saints will “dwell” was the subject of Christ’s memorable prayer recorded in John 17. “The glory which thou gavest me. I have given them, that they may be one even as we are one.”

Perfect fellowship will exist between the Father, Son, and all the children of God in fulfilment of the prophecy contained in the memorial name Yahweh Elohim, “He who shall be Mighty Ones.”

If The Foundations Be Destroyed

*“If The Foundations Be Destroyed, what can the righteous do?”
Psalm 11:3*

Foundations can be undermined in a manner that is not apparent to outward observation, until, suddenly the structure falls, and its fall is blamed on a slight gust of wind that just happened at the same time.

The defense of the foundations is the first and most urgent duty. Unity is the cement that makes the foundation strong.

To achieve unity, there must be an agreed standard, and that standard must govern. The natural minds of men vary to the four winds, but the Word of God is one.

The scriptural standard is perfection—“*Be ye perfect.*” We shall never in this life attain to perfection, but we must agree upon it as the standard, and constantly strive toward it.

Unity can never be built on compromise, but only strict and humble submission to the Word of God in all respects, large and small. There is no large and small with God’s commands.

A Christadelphian’s Rights

Abimelech having requested Isaac to remove from him, “Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar” (Gen. xxvi. 17). Here Abraham had been before him, and had dug wells which, on Abraham’s death, his Philistine neighbours had enviously stopped. These stopped wells Isaac now restored. His servants, while so engaged, struck a spring; but they were not allowed to enjoy it. The men of the neighbourhood said it belonged to them. What did Isaac do? He gave way to the unrighteous intruders. He allowed them to take possession of the spring, and ordered his servants to dig in another place.

They succeeded in finding another good supply of water. But, here also, the herdmen of Gerar—loutish fellows, who owe their memory with posterity to their boorish encroachments on the patient son of Abraham—claimed the well as their own—by what law it would be hard to make out, except by that law of prior occupation which worldly folks think very dignified and indefeasible, but, which will be effectually ignored, and dissipated to the winds, when Christ arrives to eject all prior occupants from the soil. Isaac had recently arrived on the ground. Still his father Abraham had lived there before him, and he might have insisted on his rights, so far as that gave him a right; but, he was a stranger and sojourner in the land which was his by promise. Therefore, his servants for a second time, gave way. They allowed the men of Gerar to have the well, moved to another spot, and dug another well, of which they were allowed to remain in unchallenged possession.

In this matter Isaac left an example to the household of faith—an example emphasized by the precepts of Christ. He “gave place unto wrath”: he “resisted not evil”. He meekly gave way before the sons of pride. The brethren of Christ occupy precisely the position of Isaac. They are strangers and sojourners in the very place of their promised possession. The “rights” are all on their side, for there can be no true right except that conferred by God, the original Proprietor. Nevertheless, for a season, they are called upon to submit to unrighteousness, exactions, and encroachments, like sheep among wolves, who try to escape their pursuers, but, do not turn upon and try to retaliate on them, or attempt to enforce the restitution of a torn ear. — *Bro. Robert Roberts—Ways of Providence*

“Why Stand Ye Here All The Day Idle?”

(Jesus—Matthew 20:6)

If you are too weak to journey
Up the Mountain steep and high,
You can stand within the valley
As the multitudes go by.
You can chant in happy measure
As they slowly pass along —
Though they may forget the singer,
They will not forget the song.

If you cannot in the harvest,
Garner up the richest sheaves,
Many a grain both ripe and golden
That the careless reaper leaves;
You may glean among the briars,
Growing rank against the wall,
And it may be that the shadows
Bear the heaviest wheat of all.

If you have not gold and silver
Ever ready at command;
If you cannot to the needy
Reach an ever open hand,
You can visit the afflicted,
You can o'er the erring weep,
You can be a true disciple
Sitting at the Saviour's feet.

Do not, then, stand idle waiting
For some nobler work to do;
For your heavenly Father's glory
Ever earnest, ever true.
Go and toil in any vineyard,
Work in patience and in prayer:
If you want a field of labour,
You can find it anywhere.

(The Berean October 1938 by an Anonymous Author)

As We See the Day Approaching

May his own truth animate us. May communion with him cause the fountains of compassion for those around us to gush forth. May men be gathered to his arms of mercy. May his people be stirred up to pray, and watch, and labor. May we humble ourselves, and stir up and exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching!

Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come, August, 1861

Christ In The Psalms

No formal rule can be given, other than that defined by Paul as "*having senses exercised by reason of use to discern.*"—(Heb. 5:14.) The Psalms are mostly Messianic. They doubtless originated in the first instance in David's individual experiences and impulses towards God, and were primarily the expression of these; but David was a prophet. The spirit was upon him from the day he was anointed by Samuel, (1 Sam. 16:13,) and guided the utterances of his tongue.—(2 Sam. 23:2.) Not only a prophet, David occupied, under the first and typical covenant, the position of the son and Lord of David under the new covenant, viz., warrior and king in the earth for God. Hence his experiences were typical and representative of those to which he stood related as the shadow; and by the Spirit, his utterances of them were rendered prophetic of that most marvellous of all human experiences, the history of God manifest in the flesh. Close reading and meditation brought to bear on the word as a whole, will bring discernment of the import of the Psalms without the formal definition of rules of interpretation.
—*Bro. Robert Roberts*

Christadelphian Splits

Dr. Welch writes:—"Your remarks in the July number Christadelphian, in relation to so-called splits in Christadelphianism, strikes a responsive cord in the heart of every true and faithful Christadelphian. There is no split, for what it was in doctrine in the beginning it still is. The so-called splits are the parings off of its excrescences, the getting rid of elements that were no part of it. Christadelphianism can no more change and split itself up than the truth can, for it embodies the truth in its very being. There may be the casting off of withered branches, the paring away of unhealthy excrescences in purification of itself, but no split in the body. Departures from the truth by those who once were in fellowship with Christadelphianism, and their reorganisation under the same name has given the idea to the unenlightened of splits in Christadelphianism. We cannot prevent their taking the name, and must therefore bear the odium of their act, whilst at the same time preserving our purity in doctrine and practice by the only Scripture means at our command, that of disfellowship and discountenance.

True, Christadelphianism is as true and pure in doctrine and practice at this day as in the day when the Lord, by the instrumentality of Dr. Thomas, recovered His truth from its burial in the mountain of tradition, and once more presented it to perishing man as a thing of beauty and saviour of salvation in Christ Jesus. From that day to this, not a single cloud of doubt or false teaching has cast a shadow upon it in true Christadelphianism. No, bless the Lord, there are those who are, and who will still continue to be, faithful to His truth which He has brought to light again in these last days of the times of the Gentiles. Whatever of reproach is caused to rest upon the truth because of these so-called splits lies at the door of those who are unfaithful and disobedient of the light, not with those who seek to preserve the truth in its purity and unity." —*The Christadelphian 1893*

Militant Christadelphians

Christadelphianism is essentially militant in character: it is set for the defence of the Gospel and wars unceasing warfare against the Apostasy which has changed the Truth of God into a lie. There can be no truce between the true Christadelphians and the exponents of clerical theology. —Bro. Frank G. Jannaway

Analecta Apocalypticae (24) The Scroll of the Life

Even the few names in Sardis had to save themselves by their perseverance, upon the principle that "he who perseveres to the end shall be saved." Hence, the Spirit saith, "the victor, he shall be clothed in white garments." This is positive. But in order that he may be assured of the perpetuity of his clothing, that it shall never wax old, as garments are accustomed to do, it is added, "And I will not at all obliterate his name from THE SCROLL OF THE LIFE." In the English Version, this is rendered "book of life" without the definite article; but in my translation I have prefixed it to life as in the original. It is the scroll of THE life, that is, of a special life.

The first place in the New Testament where this phrase occurs is in Phil. 4:3. Here Paul mentions certain "whose names are in a book of life;" among whom is Clement, one of his fellow-labourers; but, whether the same Clement, who wrote about "the due place of glory," can only be conjectured.

It next occurs in Apoc. 13:8 and 17:8. In the former it is styled "the Scroll of the Life of the Lamb slain;" and in the latter, simply "the Scroll of the Life." It is next found in ch. 20:12,15. In the former of these verses, it is termed "another Scroll which is of the life;" and in the latter as elsewhere. In ch 21:27 it is "the Scroll of the life of the Lamb;" and in ch. 22:19, the phrase is "a Scroll of the life," the article the being omitted before "Scroll." These are all the places where it occurs in the New Testament.

This is the most important of all books; for if a man's name have not been inscribed upon it, he cannot possibly be saved; for it is written that whosoever of the dead, small and great, standing before the Deity at the opening of the Scrolls, shall not be found written in the Scroll of the life, shall be cast into the lake of the fire. These are those who worship the Beast, by whom the saints have been overcome.

From these testimonies there would appear to be two scrolls, — the one styled A scroll of the Life, and the other THE Scroll of the Life. These two scrolls are opened at the setting up of "THE GREAT WHITE THRONE" of judgment, at the epoch of resurrection. Certain things having been written in these scrolls, the resurrected are judged from them. These things are their works. One of these scrolls will present a

very unseemly aspect — a sort of EVERY-DAY BOOK OF LIFE, in which names of believers are inscribed with very disreputable mementos appended to each. These will find no admission to “the other scroll, which is of the life” — THE LEDGER OF THE LIFE, to which those names may be supposed to be transferred from the Every-Day Book, that are not condemned to obliteration. The dead constituents of the Angel of the ecclesia in Sardis, together with the few undefiled ones there, had all been written in the Every-Day Book of the Life; and their works inscribed under their respective names: and the general record of this scroll is read in the writing penned by John. He shows that the works therein recorded resolved themselves into two classes; the one signalized by the words “thou art dead” after their names, and the other by the sentence, “their garments undefiled.” Now of these classes, the names of the latter alone will be transferred to the Ledger; while the names of the former will be obliterated or excluded. The confession of names in the presence of the Father and in the presence of his messengers, will be read, not from the Every-Day Book, but from the Ledger of the Lamb’s Life, which contains the register of names inscribed there, from the foundation of the order of things extant.

This is styled the scroll of the life in allusion probably to the custom of oriental monarchs, who, as they had several books for the record of things, so they had a peculiar book, in which they entered the names and actions of all those who did them any special service, that they might reward them in due time. See Esther 6:1-3, where it is styled “the Book of Records of daily affairs.”

The Scriptures make very early mention of the existence of such a book before the Lord. Moses refers to it in Exod. 32:32, saying, “If thou wilt, forgive thou Israel’s sin; if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And Yahweh said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.” The Spirit in David says, “Are not my tears in thy book?” that is, “Are not my sorrows in thy remembrance?” Hence “book” and “remembrance are associated in Mal. 3:16, where it is styled “a book of remembrance;” as, “They that feared Yahweh spake often one to another; and Yahweh hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared Yahweh, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith Yahweh of armies, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will have compassion upon them as a man hath tender affection for his own son that serveth him.” This is evidently the book of the life, or the Ledger; for all written in it are precious with God in a day when the wicked are trodden down. Daniel also refers to the same book in testifying that, in the time of trouble when the books shall be opened, “every one of his people (the Saints) shall be delivered that shall be found written in the book” (12:1).

The Ledger book of the life is styled apocalyptically “the Scroll of the life of the Lamb slain” (Apoc. 13:8: 21:27). It is contrary to the law of symbol-writing to regard this as a book in the vulgar sense. There is something in the real thing to which a book of record has some resemblance or analogy. Such a book is for remembrance of deeds. Hence the name given to the book of life in Malachi (which in the Old Testament includes both the Day Book and the Ledger), “a Book of Remembrance.” Scroll, then, in this relation, is symbolical of remembrance by whatever system of means it may be compassed. “I will remember their sins no more,” which is equivalent to, “I will blot out the record of their sins from the book of my remembrance;” or I will pardon them. Hence to pardon is equivalent to inscribing the name of the subject in the Day book of the life; or to placing him in God’s remembrance for resurrection unto life even for the life procured by the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, if found to be “worthy.”

But, how is a man’s name inscribed on the memory of God for resurrection? In answer to this, it must be remembered, that the spirit of THE INVISIBLE ONE is the remembrancer of His dominion. Whatever the Spirit remembers is written, so to speak, in the book of remembrance before God. “God is Spirit; and they who worship him must worship him in Spirit and truth “ (John 4:24). Pardon is the result of Spirit-and-truth worship. Now the relation subsisting between the Spirit and the Truth is one of intellectual and moral identity; so that he who hath the truth hath in him the mind, the thinking, and teaching of the Spirit: but he that hath not the truth, is destitute of the Spirit, and not a true worshipper. It is the Spirit-Word that quickeneth; and therefore Jesus says, “It is the Spirit which is life making; Spirit is and life is the words which I speak to you” (John 6:63). And again, he says, “The Spirit of the truth proceedeth from the Father” (6:26); and, “The Spirit of the truth shall guide you into all the truth” (16:13); and bring all things to your remembrance” (14:26); and John, the beloved disciple of Jesus, adds, “the Spirit is the truth” (1 John 5:6). We are considering things mental, not physical. The Spirit in its physical relations is the divine power that creates, fashions, and sustains all things; and will raise the dead, and subdue all things to God. But in opening men’s eyes, and turning them from ignorance to knowledge, and from the service of the adversary to God; and in recording them in his remembrance, it is the truth believed and obeyed that is the agency employed. The Spirit is the Remembrancer; or symbolically, “the Scroll or Book.”

It is by the truth, called “the word of the truth of the gospel of the kingdom” (Acts 20: 24,25; Col 1:5), believed and obeyed, that relations are established between men and God. This is the spiritual

connecting medium that links them to his throne in their present state; and, though men in the general think very little of "the truth," because they are natural liars and ignorant of it; yet His eyes are ever upon it, and he has "magnified it above all his name." "Sanctify them by thy truth; thy word is truth" (John 17: 17); and, "Ye have purified your souls in the obedience of the truth through Spirit." Hence, the truth is sanctifying and purifying; and, as the truth is God's, and precious to him, and always before his mind, the sanctified are his peculiar treasure. Their names are therefore inscribed in his book of remembrance by their union to the truth in the obedience it enjoins.

Paul styles the baptized believers in Corinth, "an epistle of Christ written with spirit of the living God." The writing, he says, was done through him and Timothy, as the instruments. God, Paul, spirit and Corinthian hearts held a similar relation to each other in the writing of the epistle (and all similar ecclesias collectively, made, as it were, a Book of Epistles) that head, pen, ink, and paper, do to an ordinary letter. The mentality of God was by the process stamped upon Corinthian hearts, so that they became part of His thoughts; and while He is written upon their memory, they are also written upon his, who is the way, the truth, the resurrection, and the life. Hence, to be written in the scroll of the life, is to be "in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ," and they in him by the Spirit-truth dwelling in their hearts (2 Cor. 3:3; 1 Thess. 1:1; Eph. 3:17; John 6:54,56).

God, or the Father, manifested through His Sons by the Spirit, which is the one God-manifestation to us (see 1 Cor. 8: 5, 6), is the Arboretum of the lives. Wherefore, to be in the book of the life is to be part, and to have part, of the tree of life, as it is styled in the English Version. This understood, will account for a various reading in the Greek text of Apoc. 22:19. Book of Life and Tree of Life are different symbols related to the same thing. The oldest manuscripts extant read, "God shall take away his part from the tree of life;" but more recent ones, "out of the book of life."

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

What Does That Mean?

"He that hath not, it shall be taken away even that he hath".

We just recently read the parable of the talents. There is a part of that speech by Christ that has always been a bit of a puzzle to me: *"He that hath not, it shall be taken away even that he hath"*.

Now you can't take away where there is nothing, can you? So what is he getting at? You might say that he is saying that the man that has made no gain will have the one talent taken away, and it will be given to one of the others, which is correct. But maybe we could understand it a little better.

You can't say the servant who had one talent "had not". He had one talent. I think the key is to think about who is saying he had not. We all feel our limitations. When it comes to doing a certain thing in the ecclesia, we may feel that as far as ability is concerned, we "have not". But we need to remember that we are not judged on our accomplishments, as man would judge, but on what effort we put into using the "talents" we have. If we are consumed by the "have not" mentality, we may have within us undiscovered talent and continue to think we "have not". If we have a knowledge of the truth, we are "haves" and need to invest our energy to do something with that to further the purpose of God. If our God given knowledge and talents are unused, over time, we will lose them. Our minds will cease to grow, and will in fact shrink in terms of what useful knowledge we are able to call on if the occasion requires. We will lose some or most of our knowledge, or be unable to put it together for anyone else's, or our own edification. What a shame that would be! The parable is saying "use it, or lose it!"

We may not all be able to do the same things as the next person, but if we are alive, and have a knowledge of the truth, we have been given a portion to do something with. What ARE we able to do? Part of the job is to work at discovering the answer to that question, and then take the talent and use it. It's the first step to true happiness!

Bro. Sid Jones

Worry

Worry is an attenuated form of unbelief. —Bro. Bob Widding