

“Metanoia”

First then as to “metanoia.” It is a word derived from metaneo which is itself compounded of meta, and noeo—the meta having the force of with, in the sense of on the same side with; also towards: while noeo has its root in noos or nous, signifying mind, understanding, intellect; comprehensive of its states or affections. Hence the verb noeo is expressive of the operations of the intellect, as, thinking, considering, attending, pondering, etc: to think with is therefore the radical idea of metanoia—so that if God, for instance, present a proposition to the intellect, metaneo is to think with that proposition, or to approve as true what God affirms is true.

Now, metanoia, being the verbal derivative, expressing what exists, it signifies a thinking in harmony with, say the thoughts of God, or with any other conversed with, as the case may be. When a sinner is exhorted to metanoia, a change of mind is implied; because the thoughts of a sinner and the thoughts of God are essentially antagonistic: but I do not find in the etymological analysis the radical idea of change. These things being admitted, it follows that no one is the subject of gospel metanoia whose thoughts are not the thoughts of God revealed in the gospel of the kingdom.

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The following illustration will perhaps express my meaning more clearly to the apprehension of the reader. A child who venerates its parents by whom it has never been deceived, is so mentally disposed that whatever they affirm it acquiesces in upon the authority of their assertion. However startling or improbable the assertion, the child will maintain against all denial that it must and can only be true, “because father and mother declared it.” It thinks with its parents, no matter what they say; it believes they cannot lie, and is therefore prepared for the examination of whatever testimony and reasoning they may submit to it for its approval. If they present a proposition to it, though it may not understand it, it thinks with that proposition, not against it, and approves it as true because they affirm that it is true. It is not fully persuaded in its own mind as the result of an independent examination of testimony. This would be pistis, or faith; but it is humble, teachable, confiding—prepared for believing with intelligence.

Now this childlike disposition is metanoia or that condition of the mind, understanding, intellect, or “heart,” which constitutes the moral foundation for a scriptural or justifying faith; so that the operations of the intellect and sentiments—the noi,—are on the same side with God and his truth, and not against them. No person is the subject of gospel metanoia who does not think with, towards, after God, and therefore against his former self in his ignorance. As I have said before, the thinking of a sinner and the thinking of God are essentially and totally different kinds of thinking. It is evident, therefore, that when a sinner comes to think with God, he must think against his former mode of thinking, which implies that he has turned from that condition of mind to God. —*Bro. John Thomas—Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come, 1854, p. 177*

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

We are aware of news throughout the Brotherhood that has not been sent in for publication. We would greatly appreciate this news being sent in to the magazine so that all may share in this information and that it will become a part of the ecclesial record. *“But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”* Hebrews 13:16

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

- 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

Strong Crying and Tears

“Jesus, being full of the Holy Spirit, returned from Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness” Luke 4:1 Matthew adds, *“to be tempted of the devil”* — the *diabolos*. He was led there for this purpose by the Spirit of God. This testing and trying and proving was an essential part and step in God's purpose in and through him. Now these things are written for our admonition. Temptation is our great problem. Paul felt this keenly — *“I find a law in my members that when I would do good, evil is present with me.”*

“O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?” (Rom. 7:21-24.

The more we learn about temptation, the better equipped we are to combat it.

In our reading today is the most important temptation that has ever occurred — the typical temptation, the typical defense, the typical victory — that of our great Forerunner and Example.

We *must* realize its *reality* — the realness of its effort, its attraction and appeal. The more we can see the basic principles and significance of this temptation, the better we shall be able to cope with all temptation.

We NOTE from ver. 2 that Jesus was tempted, or tested, not just at the end of the 40 days, but throughout the 40 days. We note, too, that this

confession of the demonized. They are not "in Christ," for they have neither "received" his doctrine, nor "heard," or obeyed it in the obedience it prescribes.

The promise of the Spirit, then, that He will confess in them in the Father's presence, and in that of his angels, is not to individuals clerically demonized. The promise is to those "IN" the Promiser. The testimony in Matthew and Luke was spoken primarily to the disciples in the presence of Jesus; and, secondarily, to all disciples in Christ in after times. In the discourse, he alluded to the persecution they would have to endure on his account. That it would be persecution unto death; which, however, they might escape, if they would deny him and the truth. But, being in him, he exhorted them to steadfastness; so that, if they should lose their soul or life for his sake, they should find it, in the Spirit's confession in them before the Father and his angels. Many in Christ apostatized, or "departed from the faith," when they were brought to the test of "confessing before men" in authority and power, at the risk of property, liberty and life. Like Demas, they forsook Christ, "having loved this present world;" and will, consequently, be denied hereafter.

It may not be amiss to remind the reader here, that to be in the Spirit who speaks to the undefiled in Sardis, is to have the faith which is "the substance of things hoped for, and the conviction of the things unseen;" and to have it so as to love it, that the faith may work in him by love, and purify his affections; and that being thus prepared, to be immersed into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. When he has been the subject of this transforming operation, by which his moral nature and state have been changed, the words of the apostle, in Gal. 3:26-29, are applicable to him : "Thou art a son of the Deity in Jesus Anointed through the faith; for as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ: and if Christ's then Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to promise." Such an one is "in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Anointed," and therefore in the Spirit (2 Thess. 2:1), and competent to confess in him before men.

Having shown this, it remains to define how the Spirit will himself confess such a confessor before the Father and the angels. "I will confess his name before my Father." This is the apocalyptic equivalent for "I will confess in him." In John 17:22, Jesus prays to the Father that all his brethren "may be one, even as we are one; I IN THEM, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect IN ONE." To be made perfect is to be raised from among the dead, and made incorruptible and deathless. Thus Jesus was "perfected the third day" (Luke 13:32; Heb. 5:9) and became the Author of aion-salvation to all who obey him. A saint made perfect in this sense is as much "spirit" as Jesus now is; for John, speaking of what the saints shall be when made perfect, says, "we shall be like him, and see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). Then the prayer of the LOGOS, ascending from the mouth of Jesus to the THEOS from whom it emanated, will be answered — that "I," the Logos, may be "in them," the saints. When he is thus in them, their names will STAND OUT CONFESSED exomologized before the Father of the glorified Jesus — "the Spirit" — and the angels. Hence, when this unity is established, whatever the Spirit confesses is confessed in them and in their midst; and he whom they have praised and honoured in word and deed, in the present state, will celebrate their excellency in the future.

Arranged from the writings of Bro. Thomas

Analecta Apocalypticae (26) Confessing His Name

It is promised to him who shares in "the victory," that he shall, not only "be clothed" with incorruption, and "his name" remain perpetually inscribed among the deathless; but that his name shall be honourably mentioned in the august presence of the Eternal Majesty of the Universe, and before His angelic hosts. This promise to the undefiled, whether in Sardis or elsewhere, at that time or in previous and after ages and generations, reads in the English Version, "I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." The word in the original is emphatic. It is not simply homologisomai, but the same word with the preposition *ex* prefixed "I will confess his name from out of" something. The import of this is, "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." This is the renewal of the promise given by the Spirit through Jesus, and found in Matt 10:32, and Luke 12:8. In these places, he says, "whosoever shall confess in me before men, in HIM will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven;" and "whosoever shall confess in me before men, the Son of Man also will confess in him before the angels of the Deity." These, it will be seen, differ from the English Version, which makes no account of the preposition *en*, twice repeated in both of the original texts. In these it is *en emoi* and *en au**, which I have rendered IN me and IN him according to the primary signification of the word. The Spirit in Jesus promises here to be also in all who are in him, on condition of their confessing him before men. This excludes the notion that the promise applies to men not in Christ who with their lips say, that they believe that Jesus is the Christ. Such a confession as this was made by the demonized; or men who, in the nomenclature of Luke, had each "spirit of an unclean demonion." Under the influence of this affection, they confessed that Jesus was the Christ, the Holy One, the Son of the Deity (Luke 4:34, 41). But this confession availed them nothing; for, he rebuked them, and put them to silence. This, nevertheless, was confession before men; but it was a confession that did not proceed from men of the right class, the class defined in the text. The demonized were not in the Spirit, nor was the Holy Spirit in them. The spirit in them was the spirit of their flesh insanely excited. They were madmen "in the flesh," whose confession the Eternal Spirit would not accept.

And to descend from the first to the nineteenth century, we find society almost entirely constituted of the demonized. The Spirit testifies this in the saying that "all the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of the Great Harlot's prostitution" (Apoc. 17:2). The people and their spiritual guides are thoroughly imbued with "an unclean spirit," by which they are bewitched in all their parts and faculties. They are all, as Paul predicted they would be, in apostasy "from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits, even to the teachings of Daemonia, falsely speaking in hypocrisy: their own conscience having been cauterized; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats" (1Tim. 4:3). Such are the DEMONIA defined by Paul. Society is full of them; for every occupant of a pulpit that does not preach the gospel of the kingdom which he proclaimed, is a deceiver teaching falsely, and therefore, as Paul styles him, "a deceiving spirit," or "Daimonion." When these, and the multitudes they call "their people," confess that "Jesus is Christ, the Son of God," it is the unsanctified

testing fittingly occurs at the beginning of his ministry, just after he had been announced to the nation as the Lamb of God, and had received the power of the Holy Spirit without measure. This temptation gives clear testimony and emphasis to a vital aspect of Truth — that Jesus was a real man, subject to human weakness, and not a "co-equal" part of an omnipotent divinity, as the doctrine of the "Trinity" teaches. *It is the very essence of the Truth that Jesus suffered under the burden of the same defiled nature, the same law of sin in his members, the same pulling of the flesh, as his brethren.* The whole meaning and value of his work and victory was his *real*, complete, perfect, continuous unyielding overcoming.

He never sinned. He never failed. Truly he was strengthened and helped for the tremendous work he had to do — the work of *completely* — perfectly — without one flaw or failure — resisting and overcoming and crushing, by the power of the Word of God, every moment—to—moment tendency of the flesh during every moment of his responsible lifetime. Truly he was strengthened, because what he accomplished is — as are all other things — in the ultimate, the work of God. Jesus said himself, *"I of mine own self can do nothing."*

Here, in this account of the temptation, are the inner workings of how he overcame. And we note that there was no prolonged or complicated argument — just the clear, simple and ideally appropriate quotation from the Word of God. *One passage of Scripture is worth more than all human writing of all ages combined.* There is a great lesson here in dealing with temptation. The closer we can get to the *simplicity* of the Word, the closer we are to the way of Christ and the mind of the Spirit. We are clearly warned that — *"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"* (Jer. 17:9). If we give the flesh any scope to twist and argue and confuse the issue, we are lost.

There is Scripture for every occasion. It is our wisdom and our life to devote ourselves intensely to seeking these and knowing them as a shield against all temptation. *"If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread."* The utter simplicity of this temptation is deceptive, for actually the principles involved are very deep and embody *all temptation*.

John speaks of the *lust of the flesh* — the desire to enjoy things; the *lust of the eyes* — the desire to get things; the *pride of life* — the desire to get power and admiration. He says these things are all of the world and not of the Father. We may be surprised to learn that the principle word for "lust" in the New Testament is translated "desire" when applied to the feelings of Jesus and the angels, and "concupiscence" and "covet" when used in a bad sense elsewhere. The point is, *there is no sin in desire or lust itself*; it can be good or bad. The sin is in *what* is desired and *why*.

The reason why the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life are of the world and ungodly is because they are all aspects of *selfishness* — desires to *get*, and to gratify self.

We must get at the *root* of the desire. Is it a desire to GET, or a desire to GIVE? — a desire to gratify ourselves or a desire to please God? We must desire to give, seek opportunity to give, center all our pleasure and satisfaction in giving, be thankful of any opportunity, however small and insignificant, of giving, for — said Jesus — it is more blessed, more happy, more satisfying, more enjoyable to give than to get. We must put aside all desire to get as evil, deceptive, self—destroying misdesire. Temptation, if traced to its roots, always works through the desire of getting something — wanting something — not being satisfied — not being willing in thankfulness to accept God's way and God's provision.

“If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.” This is so simple that it almost seems childish, but let us not be deceived. Here are the lessons of life. Remember the simplicity of the temptation of Adam and Eve. Like any other study, we must learn the basic facts of simple examples. All complications and secondary details must be eliminated so that the basic principles stand out. It is put in childish form for us because we are but children, for all our assumed maturity and wisdom. Only as simple children can we find the simple, childish way of life. *Worldly wisdom and knowledge and learning and education are a tremendous — almost an insuperable — obstacle in the discernment of the narrow, simple way of life.*

WE MUST first realize that Jesus was physically exhausted, and experiencing the continual pressure of the pangs of hunger in its extremest form. He had been 40 days and nights without food — 40 days and nights in a wilderness, among wild animals, sustained only by faith and prayer. We must endeavor to fully realize the reality, the extremity, the intensity of the temptations — not just as bald and obvious invitations to disobedience, but *subtle, disguised enticements* to deviate from the narrow path of faith and obedience and seek right ends by wrong means. Jesus was the Son of God, of quick understanding, yet these temptations were real and powerful. What then of ourselves, in our own waste, howling wilderness filled with all the pitfalls of the dark deceptiveness of the mind of the flesh? What safety or hope is there in any course short of constant prayer and study?

Hunger was a constant, gnawing pressure upon him, and he knew he had at his fingertips unlimited power to satisfy it — he possessed without measure the power that sustains the universe. Only a moment's effortless willing would have produced bread before him. *One small loaf of bread.* Was he being wise or foolish, reasonable or unreasonable, to just do nothing

personators of the Invisible and Incorruptible Substance, or Spirit, who is the real author of all they say and do.

On a certain occasion, the Invisible God spake to Job out of the whirlwind and said, “Where wast thou when *I* laid the foundation of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding. *Who* hath laid the measures thereof? declare if thou knowest. Or, who hath stretched the line upon it? Or, who laid the corner—stone thereof: when *the Morning Stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?*” Job could not answer these questions. He knew, doubtless, what the Elohim had done; but “touching the Almighty,” by whose Spirit they operated, “we cannot,” says Elihu, “find him out.” The Elohim were these Morning Stars and Sons of God. Jesus is styled “the Bright and the Morning Star,” “the Day Star,” and the Son of God. To say, therefore, that the Elohim are Morning Stars and Sons of God, is to speak in the language of scripture.

The relation of the Elohim to Him that dwelleth in the light in the work of creation and providence, may better appear by the following illustration. Experimental philosophers can form water, air, and earths; they can bring down lightning from the expanse; they can weigh, or rather, calculate the weight of, the sun, moon, and stars; they can speak by electricity; paint by sunlight; and outstrip the wind by fire. These are wonderful combinations of their genius. But what have these they did not receive? And from whom did they receive it? They subject certain substances to certain conditions. They do not originate a single principle. The elements, and the laws to which all simple and compound bodies are subject, are independent of the experimenters. They may say “Let water be formed;” and by passing the electric spark through the gaseous mixture, water will be formed; but it is the power of God that doth it, and not their's.

After a like manner, the Elohim gave the word, they brought the latent elements of the globe into play; they gave direction and application to power; and the Spirit of the Invisible God accomplished all they were commanded to arrange. The *Spirit* of the Incorruptible God through the Elohim *created* the heavens and the earth. *They* said, “Let there be light;” *they* saw that it was good; *He* made the expanse; *they* called it heaven:—He did it all through them; and they executed by His power what He enjoined. This power, or Spirit, being committed to them, it became “*the Spirit of the Elohim.*” Hence, in the beginning, *the Spirit of the Elohim* created; which being plainly indicated in the second verse of the first chapter of Genesis, needed not afterwards to be repeated; so that throughout the chapter, “Elohim” is written instead of “*the Spirit of the Elohim,*” and is found in connection with a singular verb, not as its nominative, but as the governed word of the nominative singular, *ruach*, Spirit understood. This is the solution I offer of this grammatical enigma. *Bro. John Thomas*

Elohim is a name bestowed on *angels* and *orders of men*. It is written, “worship Him all Elohim” (Psalm 97:7). This is quoted by Paul in the first chapter of Hebrews, as *a command of the Everlasting Father to the angels*, that they should do homage to the Lord Jesus as His Son, when He shall introduce him into the world again at the opening of the Future Age. It is also written concerning him, “Thou hast made him a little lower than the Elohim.” Paul applies this to Jesus, saying, “we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels.” He continued inferior to them a little upwards of thirty years, from his birth of the flesh to his resurrection; when he was exalted far above them in rank and dignity, even to the “right hand of power,” which is enthroned in light, where dwells the Majesty in the heavens.

Those to whom the word of God came through Moses are styled Elohim, as it is written, “I have said ye are Elohim; and all of you children of the Most High; but ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes” (Psalm 82:6; John 10:34). “Thou shalt not revile the Elohim, nor curse the Ruler of thy people” (Exod. 23:28); that is, thou shalt not revile the magistrates, nor curse the high priest, or king (Acts 22:5).

Furthermore, it is a well established principle of the sacred writings, that *what the Everlasting Father* does by His agents, He is considered as doing by Himself. There is a maxim in law similar to this which runs somehow thus, *Qui facit per alios facit per se*, what one doth by, or through, others, he does of himself. If this be borne in mind, many seeming incongruities will be harmonized. Thus, *the Lord* is said to have appeared to Abraham, as he sat in his tent—door (Gen. 18:1); but when he first caught sight of the visitant, he did not see the Lord, but “three men,” or Elohim, of whom one was the chief. Read the whole chapter, and to verse twenty—nine of the next, and it will be seen that *the Everlasting God talks and acts by, or through, these Elohim*, but chiefly through one of them, styled the Lord God.

In another place, God is said to appear to Jacob (Gen. 35:9), and in the second verse to say to him, “I am God Almighty;” and in the thirteenth, “God went up from him in the place where he talked with him.” He was then at Bethel, where formerly “the Elohim were revealed unto him.” On that occasion he dreamed that he saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, “the Lord standing above it, and the angels of God ascending and descending on it.” These angels were the Elohim, or “ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation” (Heb. 1:14). On one occasion they declared to Jacob the promises made to his father and grand—father in the name of the “Invisible God;” he wrestled with God in wrestling with one of them, &c. Hence, they speak in the first person as

for himself, and leave everything to God? Had not God given him the means of sustenance? Shouldn't he use it, at least put to the extent of bare necessity — just a little plain bread? Why all this fuss, this pantomime of self—denial about such a simple little thing? So the temptation would be presented — “*You are being stubborn, you are being foolish, you are being 'holier—than—thou' about trifles. You need the bread to do God's work. The Spirit was given for this work. If you follow this course, you'll be hurting and restricting the very work you were given the Spirit to do.*”

Jesus, a mortal man, a man subject to all the natural weakness of mortal flesh, had been entrusted with the Spirit without measure. He had to be perfectly clear in his mind and in his determination as to the use of this power. Carrying the burden and responsibility of this awful power, he had to work out his salvation with fear and trembling. He had to see the picture with perfect clearness and not deviate from it to the right hand or the left. He had to clearly discern the motions of sin and the deceptions of the *diabolos* in all their dark variety and confusion. He had to discern right down to the finest points the distinction between right and wrong — thou shalt and thou shalt not. We are, in all this, being taught *the absolute necessity of as much knowledge and comprehension and discernment of the Word of God as we can possibly acquire* within the limits of our capacity and opportunity. Jesus, the Head, required this discernment to the utmost degree for the work he had to do.

We have just finished reading together the 119th. Psalm. One hundred and seventy six times, in one hundred and seventy—six verses we have read the same message, in one hundred and seventy—six different ways — “*O how love I Thy Law!*” “*Thy Law is a light to my path.*” “*Give me understanding, and I shall keep Thy Law.*” “*Teach me Thy statutes.*” “*Through Thy precepts I get understanding, therefore I hate every false way.*” This same simple (yet profound) thought — over, and over, and over again. Our *only hope* lies in constantly seeking a FULLER UNDERSTANDING of God's Word. The answer, too, is repeated over and over — “*It is my meditation all the day.*” “*Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.*”

This is the beautiful lust of the Spirit, that lusteth against the flesh — the righteousness of God — the good and perfect gift from above — the lust to give — to give *love* — to give *goodness*, to give *comfort* and *help*, to give happiness and pure divine measure.

* * *

“*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.*” What bearing does this answer of Jesus have on the suggestion to make a loaf of

bread to satisfy legitimate hunger? The tempter did not suggest “living by bread alone.” Couldn't Jesus have found a scripture more to the point?

We know that this scripture must be the one above all others that is most truly and deeply to the point, and it is our wisdom and our life to try to find out why. What is the *background* of this scripture? On what occasion was it recorded? What does it apply to? We find that Jesus is quoting from the words of Moses in Deut. 8:2-3, and we note throughout how *perfectly* it applies to Jesus' circumstances, and the purpose of them. In fact, it helps to explain them. These two portions are providentially related as type and antitype — “*Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these 40 years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart.*” “*He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.*” And verse 5 — “*Thou shalt also consider in thine heart that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee.*”

* * *

“*He learned obedience by the things that he suffered.*” Wasn't he obedient before? Did he have to *learn* obedience? He was never disobedient, but he had to learn by trial and testing and experience the full and beautiful depths of faithful, trusting obedience under tribulation and suffering. How — in the face of this clear picture of the loving purpose and operation of God — how could Jesus presume to make bread on his own by the Spirit—power, and spoil the whole arrangement of God's operation?

This whole chapter 8 of Deut. is so much to the point. See verse 18 — “*Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is He that giveth thee power.*” Jesus must never forget that the power he had was of direct divine gift and for divine use only. Dare he then use it to sustain himself directly, and thus cut himself off from the sweet dependence upon God that he shared with all his brethren? “*It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.*” — And Jesus was the steward of an infinitely greater treasure than any man has ever held. How careful, then, must *we* be, as faithful stewards, to 'Render to God that which is God's.' And *all* is God's except for the little which — for the present — He instructs us to give to Caesar for the accomplishment of God's purpose. Caesar's part is very specifically defined by the law of the land in which we live, and we must take care in the sight of God that we give it honestly and in full measure. Beyond that, all must go to God.

* * *

though in my opinion Messrs. Wilson and Parkhurst have widely mistaken the intention. They imagine that it was intended to reveal a trinity of *persons* in one *essence*, or, as some express it, “society in God.” Dr. Wilson observes that “*Let us make man* is an expression of consultation, and marks a difference in man's creation from that of other creatures in point of importance. ‘Let us make *man*,’ regards the animal nature; ‘in our *image*,’ denotes his spiritual nature, which alone could resemble the Deity. ‘Let us make,’ *etc.*, ‘in our image, after our likeness.’ Here is the plurality three times expressed, and that in the first person; a manifest agreement with, and proof of, the scriptural doctrine of a *plurality of the Deity*, to which, as God is one in essence, we give the name of *persons*.”

Elohim “a name,” says Parkhurst, “usually given in the Hebrew scriptures to the ever—blessed Trinity.” He wrote a pamphlet against Dr. Priestly and Mr. Walkefield to prove a plurality of Elohim in Jehovah! If the reader understand who the Elohim are, this will appear an extraordinary instance of learned ignorance and folly. It is equal to undertaking to prove, that there are three princes in one king; or three angels in an archangel. In one thing, however, I agree with him entirely, that a *plurality of agents* is denoted in the Mosaic history of the terrestrial creation. By faith we understand that the spirit, or word, operated in, by, and through them, in the formation of all things terrestrial; but that all these agents were in the divine essence, constituting “society in God,” is too great a camel for my power of deglutition.

A first principle with me in all reasonings upon this subject is, that “there is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all” his spiritual family. Another axiom is, that “He is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who ONLY hath immortality, dwelling in *the light which no man can approach unto*; WHOM NO MAN HATH SEEN, *nor can see*” (1 Tim. 6:15: 1:17). And again, “God is spirit” (John 4:24); and He is “incorruptible” (Rom. 1:23). THE INCORRUPTIBLE SPIRIT DWELLING IN LIGHT is the scripture revelation of the undefinable essence of the self—existent Eternal One, who is from everlasting to everlasting, God. What His essence consists in, He has not revealed; He has made known to us His name, or character, which is enough for men to know: but to say, that, because He is a spirit, He is therefore “immaterial,” is to speak arrant nonsense; for immateriality is nothingness; a quality, if we may so speak, alien to the universe of God.

“No man,” says Jesus, “hath seen God *at any time*;” but Adam, Abraham, Jacob, and Moses, saw the Elohim and their Lord; therefore Elohim and the Everlasting Father are not the same.

system, that kept the life blood throbbing through the arteries and veins of its body politic. Obedience to the laws of Yahweh, delivered to them by the hand of Moses, was, therefore, necessary to its continuance; disobedience resulting in internal disorders and external disasters, ultimating, unless arrested, in utter corruption and death. Ezra and Nehemiah understood this well, hence their earnest and unwearying efforts to bring the people back to the observance of the Mosaic institutions from which they had grievously declined. These faithful men strove to inculcate that confidence in God's promises and devotion to His service of which they themselves were notable and shining examples.

—Bro. William Smallwood

The Blessed And Only Potentate And His Elohim

THE principles of universal grammar require in general, that a “*verb agree with its nominative in number and person;*” as, the spirit moves, the waters roar. Here, *the spirit* is of the singular number, and third person; and so is the verb *moves*; hence they agree in number and person: “the waters” is of the third person plural, and so is *roar*; hence they also agree. But, in the first chapter of Genesis, this rule appears to be disregarded by the Spirit, under whose guidance Moses wrote. In the first verse it reads, *Berayshith bara Elohim*—i.e., in the beginning Elohim created. In this sentence *bara* is the verb in the third person singular, and *Elohim* a noun in the third person plural; so that they do not agree according to the rule. For an agreement to ensue, either the noun should be *Eloah*, or *El*, in the singular, or it should remain as it is in the plural, and the verb should be changed to *barau*; as, *barau ELOHIM (they)* created. But it does not stand thus; it reads literally (the) Elohim (he) created.

Speaking of Elohim, Dr. Wilson says, “that this noun, which is not unintentionally here joined with the singular verb *bara*, is, nevertheless, really plural, appears not merely from its termination *im*, but by its being frequently joined with adjectives, pronouns, and verbs in the plural. *Vayyomer Elohim nashah adam betzalmi—nu*, i.e., Elohim said, ‘Let us make man in *our* image.’” Mr. Parkhurst, in his lexicon under the word *alah*, cites many passages where Elohim is associated with other plurals. Upon close examination there will be found no good reason to question the conclusion, that Elohim is a noun plural, and signifies “*gods*,” and ought to be so rendered throughout this chapter.

But, why the plural Elohim, gods, should have been associated with a singular verb in this chapter, Hebraists have been much perplexed to answer satisfactorily to themselves, or others. Grammar failing, they have had recourse to dogmatism to explain the difficulty. Dr. Wilson truly remarks, that “Elohim is not unintentionally here joined with the singular verb;”

THE ORDER of the next 2 temptations is different in Matthew and Luke. There must be a reason. We know that God does not make mistakes. We know He does nothing without a reason, and we know that this is the Word of God.

It has been suggested that this variation of order is to indicate that there was a doubling of the temptation series, and that actually there were six — first the 3 recorded by Luke, then the 3 by Matthew. This is not unreasonable, for we know the whole 40 days was a period of temptation.

And there is a certain fitness in this suggestion, for doubling is a significant aspect of important divine things, to signify certainty and establishment. It would lay, at this vital crisis in Jesus' ministry, a broader basis to his victory, showing that he was unmoved and unshaken by repeated assault. It would introduce, too, the very fitting symbol of 6.

* * *

“*And the devil (the diabolos) taking him up into an high mountain, showeth him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and saith, ‘All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore will worship me, all shall be thine.’ The ‘diabolos’ is sin—in—the—flesh, in all its forms and manifestations — from within, from without, personal, social, national, political.* The particular identity of the diabolos — tempter — deceiver — in Jesus' case is not revealed, and it is not in the very similar case of Job. Therefore it is not important that we know. The value of the record for us lies in other aspects of the matter, and God leaves out the unimportant parts that our attention may not be distracted from that which is important. Bro Thomas and bro. Roberts were both firmly convinced that there was an external, personal tempter, whoever he may have been. We believe that the more we study the matter scripturally, the more we will be convinced that this is the soundest and safest view. When God's purpose requires it, He can make sure that the necessary adversary is in the right place, as in the case of Adam, and Moses, and Job and so many others.

We know Jesus had to battle and overcome the diabolos *in himself*. This was the whole essence and power and meaning of his victory. Bro. Roberts points out that the mere impulse to do something God had prohibited is not in itself transgression. But the slightest entertaining of, or giving in to, that impulse — even only in thought — *is* transgression. And Jesus was absolutely sinless in thought, word and deed. That basic fact we must preserve inviolate, and *no interpretation can be entertained which even hints at undermining it*. The idea is abhorrent that Jesus would ever voluntarily entertain, or toy with, or soliloquize within himself upon a course of sin, even for a moment. To his pure mind all sin was repugnant and hateful,

immediately upon recognition. He had to examine all suggestions and desires and impulses in the light of God's Word, immediately rejecting them without thought of compromise, as soon as their unscripturalness was perceived — *“Get thee behind me Satan, for thou savorest not of the things of God, but of man.”*

* * *

WHAT a jump from a loaf of bread to all the glory and authority of the kingdoms of the world! What a vast range temptation covers! The *first* was the desire of the flesh in its simplest and most harmless—seeming form. *This* is the pride of life in its fullest and highest possible attainment. The first was plausible, but we may wonder how this offer of the kingdoms of the world could in any way be a temptation to him who knew the mind and purpose of God so well.

Let us fully realize that there is much we do not understand, much we shall never understand during this day of weakness and of *“seeing through a glass darkly.”* But *this does not bar us from getting the practical guidance and instruction and comfort and warning and mental transformation that these things are designed to give us.* Even Paul said: *“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”* Let us extract the utmost value we can from the vast amount that *is* revealed, and not speculate or be troubled about what is not revealed. There is always danger and division in hazy speculation in the secondary areas, where the light shines only dimly. Let us keep our minds out in the safe bright middle of the beam.

Let us consider a few facts that will help us understand this temptation a little better — help us realize that the battle Jesus fought and the victory he won were very real indeed.

First consider some of his sayings during his ministry: *“I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how am I straightened till it be accomplished!”* (Luke 12:50). (“Straightened” here is the same word as “sick” in “sick of a fever” — Acts 28:8. It means to be “pressed down,” continuously distressed and afflicted). Jesus said (Matt. 26:39) — *“Father, save me from this hour”* (John 12:27). *“Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.”* Again we read (John 11:33) — *“Jesus groaned within himself, and was troubled.”* *“In the days of his flesh he offered up prayers and supplications with strong cryings and tears”* (Heb. 5:7). *“My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Why art Thou so far from helping me?”* *“I am a worm, and no man, a reproach of men and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn”* (Matt. 27:46; Psa. 22:1-7).

and selling in the markets of Jerusalem suffered no interruption. The Levites were not supplied with their lawful portions, so that they were compelled to seek their living as laymen. Tobiah, who had poured insult upon Nehemiah, was in alliance with Eliashib the high—priest, who had allowed him to occupy a chamber in the temple. Marriages with foreign women were common, and the children of such marriages spoke a corrupted language. This utter disregard of the law of their God, which a short time before they had solemnly pledged themselves to observe, culminated in one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, marrying a daughter of Sanballat, Nehemiah’s bitterest enemy.

The report of these evils must have caused great distress to Nehemiah, and no doubt impelled him to return. On his arrival, he set about the necessary reforms with unsparing vigour. Tobiah’s belongings were cast out of the temple, and it was restored to its proper uses. The law was enforced regarding the payment of tithes for the support of the Levites and other temple officials. The people were compelled to strictly observe the sanctity of the Sabbath, and the gates of Jerusalem were ordered to be closed during the whole of that day; and buying or selling, within or without the walls, was sternly interdicted. The men who had taken foreign wives were compelled to put them away, and the people put under oath to discontinue this violation of the law, the arch—offender, Eliashib’s grandson, being banished from Jerusalem.

The narrative abruptly concludes with these words, *“Remember them, O my Eloah, for the defilings of the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood, and the Levites. Thus cleansed I them from all strangers, and appointed the wards to the priests and the Levites, everyone in his business; and for the wood offering at times appointed, and for the first—fruits. Remember me, my Eloah, for good”* (13:29–31).

So great was Nehemiah’s ability, influence, and force of character (the hand of his God being upon him—2:8, 18), that such a relapse, and such a state of things could scarcely have occurred had he remained in Jerusalem. His first administration seems to have extended from 445 to 433 B.C. (Usher’s chronology), and his second began after an unknown, but not very long interval (13:6, 7). Probably he was a young man in B.C. 445, and in his second period of administration at Jerusalem, it is probable he lived to be a very old man. Josephus says, “he came to a great age, and then died.” According to Nehemiah (12:23, 26) his “days” would appear to have extended “to the days of Johanan, the son of Eliashib,” who became high priest between 380 and 370 B.C.

The Jewish state was essentially a theocracy, the recognition and worship of Yahweh, its founder, being its central feature—the pulsating heart of the

rejoiced: for God had made them rejoice with great joy, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off” (12:27–43).

This imposing ceremonial was followed by seven days of feasting and rejoicing (Feast of Tabernacles), culminating in a solemn assembly on the 8th day for confession and worship, supplication, thanksgiving, and praise; Ezra, at the head of the Levites, saying to the people, “*Stand up, and bless Yahweh your Elohim for ever and ever: and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou, even Thou, art Yahweh alone; Thou hast made the heavens, the heavens of the heavens with all their host, the earth and all things that are therein, and Thou preservest them all; and the host of the heavens worshippeth Thee.*”

This introductory recognition of the greatness, majesty, beneficence, and power of Yahweh their Elohim is followed by a review of their wonderful history, a confession of their sinfulness and rebelliousness as a nation, and the justness of the punishments that had been meted out to them by an offended Deity (chap. 9.) They afterwards pledged themselves, under a solemn obligation, “to walk in the law of the Elohim, which was given by the hand of Moses, the servant of the Elohim; and to observe and do all the commandments of Yahweh our Adonai, and His judgments and statutes” (10:29). This determination on their part shows that the precepts and institutions of Baal had not yet entirely steeled them against the influences of Heaven; and that, consequently, the burning words of Ezra and Nehemiah had brought them back to a recognition of Yahweh, their benefactor and friend.

Nehemiah had now been successful in repelling attacks from without, and in healing dissensions within; had reformed abuses, redressed grievances, and evolved law and order out of anarchy and chaos. Having accomplished the purpose for which he visited the land of his fathers, Jerusalem being once more a city without reproach, and arrangements instituted to prevent, if possible, the recurrence of similar disorders by the appointment of faithful and competent judges and magistrates with authority to maintain the state of things which he had been chiefly instrumental in introducing, and Nehemiah’s leave of absence expiring, he returned to the Persian court.

Notwithstanding Nehemiah’s precautions, after his departure the Jews speedily relapsed into their former state of disobedience, which resulted in internal disorders more difficult to cope with than the external enemies whom Nehemiah’s wariness and vigilance had checkmated. The 13th and closing chapter of Nehemiah’s narrative informs us of the consequences of this relapse, from which we learn, that the law regarding the Sabbath was disregarded, work going on in the fields on that day as usual, while buying

Truly we must realize the greatness of the struggle. *He learned obedience by the things that he suffered.* And these 40 terrible days in the wilderness stand out with his crucifixion as the beginning and ending of his sufferings for men, two great crises of struggle and affliction. He was the second Adam, being tested to the uttermost. Once again mankind stood at the crossroads of life and death, and all their destiny was laid upon the shoulders of this one man, alone in the wilderness, famished and physically exhausted after 40 days and nights and privation.

The tempter suggested an *easier way* of establishing the kingdom — of beginning Christ’s reign on earth. The essence of the temptation seems to be the questioning the necessity, yea, questioning the rightness and justice of the struggle and sorrow and suffering involved in *God’s* appointed way. *Why* must this terrible suffering be? Let us not forget that even 3 years later in Gethsemane, on the eve of his crucifixion, he pleaded — “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.” These things are recorded to show us the terrible reality of the struggle and the glorious magnitude of the victory and sacrifice. “*And Jesus answered and said, Get thee behind me Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.*”

* * *

“*And he set him on a pinnacle of the Temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: for it is written*” — “*He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee.*” “*It is written.*” Here was a new and subtle approach — “*It is written.*” We can always find Scripture to justify anything that the flesh wants to do.— “*Shall we call down fire from heaven as Elias did?*” (Luke 9:54). “*We have a law, and by our law he ought to die*” (John 19:7). *They quoted God’s law to condemn God’s Own Son.*

* * *

WHAT IS the temptation in this case? Why should it be a temptation to Christ to cast himself down from a great height? We get light on this from the answer Jesus made — “*Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God*” The Revised Version has “*Make trial of.*” From the beginning, men had said in their weakness and frailty — “*Whereby shall I know this . . .*” “*How can the thing be? . . .*” “*We trusted that it should have been . . .*” “*Art thou he that should come? . . .*” God is patient and gentle with weakness of faith and perception, but Jesus tells us that — “*Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*” And — “*Where much is given, much is expected.*” Jesus too, must be tested, and made strong in the testing.

* * *

“Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.” What is the lesson for us? Do we tempt God? Put Him to the test? Question anything He does? Presume to force His hand? Set conditions for Him to meet? This is a common presumption, rooted in the pride of life, as if He were our private God, bound to do our private bidding. How common it is for men to question His ways, and set their own standards to measure Him by! Judge Him on the basis of what *they* think He should do!

“Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.” *“A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh a sign, and no sign shall be given it.”* The signs that God Himself has provided according to His own judgment and wisdom are all—sufficient. If they cannot stir us to obedience and zeal, nothing could. *“If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.”*

“Moses and the Prophets” — there is the key. All the power of salvation is there, if we will make the effort to acquire it. We cannot expect God to work a special miracle for us, and save us from the final *“casting down,”* if we do not lay zealous hold on the means He gives — constant study of His Word.

* * *

“The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom.” The Jews wanted something spectacular to glorify their nation, and lead them to triumph. They laid down the course that God should follow, instead of humbly seeking God's way. They wanted to put God to their test. This casting himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple would be just the kind of thing that would have appealed to them and impressed them. Should he use some means like this of gaining notoriety and favor? It would be so easy! The Greeks, on the other hand, wanted everything explained to their satisfaction, to gratify *their* philosophy and glorify their wisdom. They set down their rules for God. But, says Paul, *“We preach Christ crucified in weakness,”* the scorn of the worldly wise, *“unto the Jews a stumbling—block, and to the Greeks foolishness, but to them that are called, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.”* *“Christ tempted, Christ suffering, Christ mocked, and rejected, Christ crucified — the power of God, and the wisdom of God, and the love of God, and the righteousness of God, and the salvation of God!* —*Bro. G.V.Growcott*

The Death and Resurrection of Lazarus

The 11th chapter of John brings us near to the end of the ministry of Jesus. The raising of Lazarus was a stupendous and unforgettable climax to his great work.

the temple to avoid assassination. “For,” said he, “they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night they will come to slay thee. And I said, should such a man as I flee? And who is there that being as I am would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in. And, lo I perceived that God had not sent him; but that he pronounced this prophecy against me; for Sanballat and Tobiah had hired him, . . . that they might have matter for an evil report, that they might reproach me. My God, think thou upon Sanballat according to these their works, and on the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear” (6:10–14). The most hateful and poisonous calumnies were disseminated with the deliberate intention of encompassing his destruction, but Nehemiah's vigilance and precautions, and trust in his God, proved equal to every emergency.

By the month Elul (August—September), the wall was finished, having been built in the remarkably short time of fifty—two days. “And it came to pass, that when all our enemies and the heathen heard thereof, that they were much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work was wrought of God” (6:16). Thus was Jehovah exalted, His people vindicated, and their enemies circumvented and discomfited, albeit on a small scale, as an earnest of the time when He will be sanctified in the eyes of many nations, and His people Israel triumphant over all their enemies under the leadership of Jesus their Saviour and King.

The wall being built and the doors set up, Nehemiah made arrangements for the protection of the city from external enemies, and for the internal administration of its affairs, and the proper observance of the temple rites. He also numbered the people according to their genealogies, which, he says, “My God put into my heart to do” (7:5). The numbers given in chap. 7. total about fifty thousand male adults, including servants—a number which, though representing a considerable population, was but a feeble remnant compared with the days of David and Solomon, when the kingdom of Israel was in the zenith of its (past) splendour and renown, when Judah alone possessed nearly half a million fighting men; while the disparity in point of numbers was the least striking indication of their political inferiority as compared with the past, before their God delivered them into the hand of the Assyrian, because of their disobedience and rebellion against Him; and for this wickedness, “left them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them” (9:28).

The completion of the walls was fittingly celebrated by a great dedication and purification service, *“the priests and the Levites purified themselves, and purified the people and the gates and the walls.”* Two processions were formed to march around the walls in opposite directions, the two companies *afterward assembling together in the temple to give thanks and praise unto God.* *“Also that day they offered great sacrifices and*

slaves. The rich among them had taken advantage of the necessities of the poor in order to obtain possession of their property.

Nehemiah was very angry when he learned of these things, and promptly called the nobles and rulers together and rebuked them. He contrasted his own generous course with theirs, saying, *“We, after our ability, have redeemed our brethren the Jews, who were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even sell your own brethren? Or shall they be sold unto us? It is not good that ye do; ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?”* (5:8, 9.) He compelled them to restore to the people “their lands, their vineyards, their oliveyards, and their houses, and to remit a part of the debt which they were unable to pay. What a contrast is here presented between these avaricious nobles and Nehemiah. The latter seemed to be devoid of selfishness. He expended his strength and substance freely in behalf of his brethren, entertaining 150 Jews at his own table, to which any who returned from captivity were welcomed, and refused to receive the remuneration due to him as governor, because of the poverty of the people. His oft repeated petition shows wherein lay his hope and his strength. *“Think upon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people”* (5:19).

Despite the almost incredible difficulties and dangers, the walls were at last finished, and all that remained to make the city’s defence complete, was to set up the doors in the gates. But Nehemiah’s enemies were still active. Having failed to intimidate him by threats, or discourage him by ridicule, or surprise him by force, they now resorted to cunning. Four times they invited him to meet them in the plain of Ono, ostensibly for the purpose of conferring with them, thinking thus to get him into their power. Nehemiah replied, *“I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease whilst I leave it and come down to you?”* (6:3.) A fifth messenger was sent by Sanballat, with an open letter in his hand (an open letter in Eastern countries is said to be expressive of the sender’s contempt), stating that it was reported that Nehemiah aspired to the kingdom of Judah and had appointed prophets to proclaim him, and warning him that this rumour would be certain to reach the ears of the king. Although Nehemiah must have known the danger to himself of such charges being believed should they ever reach the court, he rested secure in his integrity, trusting to his God to protect him from the machinations of those who sought his destruction. He therefore said to Sanballat in reply, *“There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart”* (6:8).

Failing himself to get within reach of the brave but wary leader, Sanballat set his agents and emissaries to work in Jerusalem itself. A traitor named Shemaiah, a false prophet, counselled Nehemiah to shut himself in

In the 10th chapter, we left him and his disciples beyond Jordan in the place where John at first baptized. Now in this 11th chapter, we come to the time when he received an urgent message from his ardent and affectionate friends, Mary and Martha. He had gone there to escape capture by those Jews who sought his life. The two sisters must have been advised of his whereabouts, or they could not have sent the message concerning the serious illness of their brother.

Before we proceed further with the narrative, let us become better acquainted with the persons and Bethany the place where they lived. Bethany is an Aramaic name signifying ‘house of the poor or afflicted one.’ It is also thought to mean ‘the house or place of unripe figs.’ It is a small town on the east slope of the Mount of Olives, about 1 ½ miles from Jerusalem on the road to Jericho. Today it is a small village, but its fig, olive, and almond trees give one at first a pleasant impression. It is now called Azariyeh, *“the place of Lazarus.”*

Jesus often lodged there, for it was the home of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, as well as of Simon the Leper, who was apparently given that appellation from having formerly been afflicted with leprosy. The 12th chapter opens with the record of the feast he provided, at which both Jesus and Lazarus were present, as well as Martha and Mary.

Another important reference to this town is recorded by Luke in 24:50—51 – *“And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.”*

Lazarus was a member of the family of Bethany, and brother of Martha and Mary. He was an object of deep affection not only to his sisters, but to Jesus, which speaks well for his character. He was chosen for the notable honor of being raised from the dead. As we mentioned briefly, he was present at a supper given in honor of Jesus by Simon the leper at Bethany six days before the Passover. The extent to which his restoration to life tended to bring new followers to Jesus so irritated the Jewish authorities that they plotted to put him also to death. This is the last mention of Lazarus in Scripture. The plot to take his life does not seem to have been carried out, for no mention is further made of it. His name is Latin, which came from the Greek, and is the equivalent of Eleazar in the Hebrew.

Now let us meet Martha. Her name is Aramaic, and is supposed to mean ‘lady.’ Luke records an interesting and noteworthy incident in 10:38-42,

“Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. (What a glorious privilege and divine honor that was—to have

Jesus as a guest in her home!) *And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.*"

Nothing is said of Martha's reaction to this rebuke by Jesus, but she must have taken it in the manner stated by Solomon in Prov. 9:8,

"Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee."

Much has been said about this illuminating event. Some have taken Martha's part as only being reasonable with such an honored guest, and that Mary should have waited until after the meal to talk to Jesus. Then there are those who sympathize with Martha and say that she was a practical and sensible serving woman, and Jesus was too severe with her. But we must remember that Christ's life was a teaching life, and he always took every opportunity that arose.

It is well, therefore, to look at the teaching he employed. The position of the Martha class is one of social interest. She was interested in Christ's presence in her home, and wanted to show her appreciation by a lavish display of hospitality.

Mary's was a spiritual interest—an interest centered in the Truth—an interest in what Christ had to say about his mission, and the things pertaining to salvation.

They were both right in what they were doing. It was necessary to provide food for Jesus, but Martha was too careful and troubled about it, and I think we would all be exercised in the same manner if he should be our guest. But it should not be overdone.

Mary, sitting at the feet of Jesus, is representative of those who choose the one thing that is needful, and place it above all other things. It is that good part that will not be taken away when all temporal things will vanish like a dream.

Mary's name is the Latin Maria, and comes from the Greek, and is equivalent to Miriam in the Hebrew. We will not repeat what we have already said of her.

The characteristics of the two sisters comes out strongly at the supper held in the home of Simon the leper. In John 12:2, it is stated that *"Martha served,"* but in verse 3, John says,

Ammonites, and Ashdodites, realized that prompt and vigorous action was necessary if the rapid progress of the wall was to be stopped. They, therefore, conspired to march secretly against Jerusalem to stop the restoration by force of arms, saying, *"They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst of them and slay them, and cause the work to cease"* (4:2). Nehemiah, learning of the intended attack, made preparations to repel it by arming the people for resistance, encouraging them to trust in their God, while doing their utmost in defence of themselves, their homes, and their families. He was acting in accordance with the authority vested in him by the king, and also in harmony with the law of the Mosaic—arranged Kingdom of God. His enemies, on the other hand, were violating the *"law of the Medes and Persians."*

When Sanballat and his allies, who had counted upon a surprise, found the Jews armed and determined to defend themselves, they had not the courage to attack. *"And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one to his work"* (4:15). Great vigilance had to be exercised, however, to guard against a sudden attack; so that, while some worked at the wall, others held the weapons of defence, and for some time *"every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other held a weapon"* As the workers were necessarily divided—some being situated at one part of the wall, and some at others—Nehemiah arranged for the blowing of a trumpet to give warning of the point of attack. *"In what place ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us; our God shall fight for us"* (4:20).

Meanwhile, the people were enduring great hardships. The laborious occupation of building a stone wall under high pressure by men unaccustomed to such labour told severely upon them. To add to their distress, their enemies were by this time so active that the people were obliged to remain in the city at night, as Sanballat and his allies held possession of the surrounding country, and the city could not be left for a moment without vigilant defenders. The time was so critical that both Nehemiah and his people were compelled to sleep in their clothes.

In addition to these harassing perils without, internal troubles now demanded the leaders' attention. The poor among the people who were labouring at the walls, in abandoning their usual occupation to do so, had necessarily deprived themselves of their ordinary means of subsistence. Many had left their homes and fields in the country districts, which were now exposed to the ravages of the enemy, who over ran the surrounding country. Supplies had run short, so that they had been obliged to mortgage their fields and houses and vineyards to pay the king's tribute or to procure food. Many had pledged their children for debt, and these were sold as

Nehemiah

Calling the leaders of the Jews and the people together, Nehemiah said unto them, *“Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem that we be no more a reproach. Then I told them of the hand of my God which was upon me; as also the king’s words that he had spoken unto me.”* There were a few faithful men among them who were of one mind with Ezra and Nehemiah, their faith being the seal of their unity, and the fervour and zeal of the few was communicated in measure to the many, their burning words awakening the smouldering fires of national enthusiasm, and arousing them to a common loyalty to their country and their God, and a determination to share, each of them according to their strength, in a common burden. They therefore said, *“Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work.”* But their enemies laughed them to scorn and despised them and said, *“What is this thing that ye do? Will ye rebel against the king?”* (2:17–19). So has it ever been since the “children of men” obtained the ascendancy in the earth. God’s people have been despised and reproached. The answer of Nehemiah has, in substance, ever been the answer of the faithful, *“The God of heaven, He will prosper us; therefore we His people will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial in Jerusalem”* (2:20).

The charge of rebellion neither intimidated Nehemiah, nor checked the zeal of the people. Recognising the value of the opportunity presented, and responding to the urgency of Nehemiah’s appeal, the whole population of Jerusalem set vigorously to work, men of every class working with their own hands, the work being divided up by Nehemiah among the various groups.

Their enemies were active and vindictive, and determined to prevent, if possible, the closing of the breaches in the wall. Finding that his insinuation of rebellion had failed to produce the desired effect, and that the Jews were evidently serious in their determination to remove Jerusalem’s reproach, Sanballat tried to obtain the assistance of the army stationed in Samaria, but without success. Tobiah the Ammonite vented his hatred and vexation in taunts and scoffs, mocking at the idea of the Jews being able to accomplish Nehemiah’s purpose, saying, *“What do these feeble Jews? If a fox go up, he will even break down their stone wall”* (4:2–3). Nehemiah reviled not in return, but prayed to his God: *“Hear, oh our God, for we are despised; and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity”* (4:4).

The people, unheeding the scoffs and taunts, continued their work with a will. When the breaches were closed with a wall half its proper height, Sanballat and his friends, augmented by marauding bands of Arabians,

“Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, (in present value about \$45.00) and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the fragrance.”

Mark gives more detail regarding this event, and adds in 14:8—9,

“She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.”

What a beautiful and eloquent tribute! It was an act of rare devotion, testifying both to her gratitude and to her sense of the high dignity of him whom she honored.

But regardless of the difference in character of these two sisters, it is worthy to note in John 11:5 that *“Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.”* The close attachment that Jesus held towards this family is emphasized in the message the two sisters sent to him when Lazarus was taken seriously ill. In verse 3 we read, *“Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.”*

There was no request that he come at once. We would therefore surmise that because Jesus loved him, they must have thought that the mere statement regarding his illness would be sufficient. But Jesus did not go at once. He remained two days where they were staying. Then he suggested that they go again into Judea. This must have seemed strange to the disciples, because they had fled from Judea to escape danger because of the continued persecution. They reminded him of this fact but he answered,

“Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.”

This reminds us of the words of Jesus in John 9:4, *“I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.”*

And the words of Paul in 1 Thes.5:5-6, *“Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober (circumspect).”*

Brother Roberts explains this parabolic answer in the following manner:

“A man’s day is his appointed time. Some men have no appointed time, like the cattle; but where there is a time appointed, he is safe till it is past. His day has 12 hours.

Christ was several times in danger, as we have seen, but it came to nothing *'because his hour was not yet come.'* So it is with all who belong to him. They cannot be prevailed against till their work is done. This gives peace in the presence of danger."

It is not recorded whether the disciples understood this statement of Jesus, or whether he explained it to them. However, it was characteristic of him to speak to them in this manner. After that he saith unto them,

"Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him."

Prior to this Jesus had said, *"This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."*

Here again Jesus was speaking in language of figure. Why did he speak thus? It was apparently his method of causing the disciples to think for themselves. The death of Lazarus was not a finality, for it was to be interrupted shortly, and that is why Jesus spoke of him sleeping. And that is why Paul spoke in the same manner in 1 Thess. 4:14,

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

The fact is that Jesus deliberately waited for Lazarus to die. But why did he say that he was glad that he was not there? Is it not true that if he had been there, he would have been requested to cure Lazarus? Then he would not have died, and he would not have had the opportunity for displaying God's mighty power of resurrection which later followed.

But why did he say he was glad for their sakes that he was not there, to the intent they might believe? Did they not already believe from the great works he had done in their presence many times? Yes, they did, but there were thousands who did not. And not only that, but as Jesus approached the end of his ministry, he began to do unusual things for the disciples in order to build up their morale for the great trial that lay in store for them.

When they arrived in Bethany, they found that Lazarus had been in the grave, or tomb, four days, and that many of their friends had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them. At this point it is interesting to note the action of the two sisters when they heard that Jesus had arrived.

"Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house."

standard which God requires in us, and which He is pleased to accept—a condition of humility, of reverence, of hope, of faith in what He has promised, of love and submission to what He appoints or permits in our experiences now, in full trust that He is moulding our naturally wayward nature to His own pattern; that He is purging away the dross, that the pure gold may remain with the impress of His image; and that, as precious stones cut and polished, He may find pleasure in us and use for us in the coming age as reflectors of His glory.

Beloved, *"Let us be doers of the Word, and not hearers only."* The Lord said to his disciples, among his last words, before his death, *"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."* *"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit. As the branch cannot bear fruit, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me; severed from me, ye can do nothing."* Our faith must be a living faith, made manifest by our works; for faith without works is dead. Abraham's faith was counted to him for righteousness, and our faith is counted to us for righteousness, if, as in Abraham's case, our faith is perfected by works. We cannot profit God, or enrich Him by our obedience; but we can give Him pleasure. *"The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy"* (Psa. 147:11). How gladdening to think that, although encompassed with this mortal, earth—cleaving and imperfect nature, God is pleased to regard and accept our obediences and constant desire to do His will, and in Christ will at last account us righteous. Our righteous actions will remain on record when all our sins are blotted out, and remembered no more for ever by God.

Here then is our hope, *"Let us abide in him, that we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming"* (1 John 2:28, 29:4:17–19). *"In him is no sin,"* and in him our sins are covered. If we do continue to abide in him we shall be found of him in peace. It will be the meeting of mutual friends—of one heart and mind; and let us remember, that not only are we, as constituents of his Bride, longing for the coming of the Bridegroom; but that he also is looking forward with intense desire to the day when he shall rejoice over his ransomed Bride, and lifting her from the dust, will glorify her with salvation, and put a new song into her mouth—a song of victory and thanksgiving to God for ever.

Beloved, let us hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of this blessed hope, firm to the end. At the same time let us not forget to mingle our joy with the reverence and godly fear, without which our services will not be acceptable to God.

Your sister and fellow—pilgrim, Zionwards.— *Sis. Jane Roberts 1902*

Temple at Jerusalem (Psalms 18., 118)? It was this joyful anticipation of the coming glory, the outcome of unwavering faith in what God had promised, constantly renewed by prayer and meditation, that enabled him to endure the contradiction of sinners, to which he was all the time subjected, and to bear the privations to which he willingly submitted, while he ministered the word of life to the multitudes who thronged him—healing their sick, and compassionately supplying food in desert places, that the people might not faint for hunger when far away from the ordinary avenues of obtaining sustenance and refreshment.

Such was the manner of man who is our forerunner—the captain of our salvation. My dear sisters, what an incentive we have to study the mortal life of such a great personage as the Lord Jesus will be when he returns as King and Conqueror of the whole earth, seeing that he is given to us as our example—our model, that we may take on his spirit of humility and loving service, and so be conformed to his image; for such is the Father’s will concerning us, and that there is for those who are imitators of Christ, the joyful assurance that, as they have shared his sufferings, so shall they share his glory and honour—even the glory and honour of being the living, visible manifestation of Jehovah upon earth.

Do we sufficiently realize the love of God in giving His beloved son to die for us, that we might receive forgiveness of sin and eternal life? Do we fully realize the love of Christ in laying down his life for us, that we might live for ever, and enjoy his friendship and love throughout the coming and endless ages, in the closest companionship—sharers in his glory, co—rulers with him, his trusted and honoured representatives in all the earth? Not always; the stress and the burdens of daily life often obscure the comforts and joys that are ours, in the blessed hope to which we are called by the gospel. We are so beset with weakness, and so conscious of our shortcomings, that we are apt to feel that we are not worthy to look forward with the confident hope of being accepted. We would like to be perfect; we yearn for perfection; we are trying to perfect ourselves. Our shortcomings are a distress to us, for we read from the word of life the exhortation many times, “Be perfect” (Gen. 17:1; Matt. 5:48; 1 Cor. 13:11; Heb. 6:1); and some are spoken of in the Bible as perfect—Job, for instance. Also the apostle Paul, while acknowledging that he had not at the time of writing fully attained the perfect standard which he had in view, and to which he was “reaching forth,” and “pressing towards,” yet included himself among the perfect, saying, “Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded” (Phil. 3:8–17).

From this we must conclude that there is a sense in which we are called upon to be perfect even now; not that we can ever be absolutely perfect during mortal life, but there is a measure of assimilation to the divine

And now the situation was reversed with regard to Martha and Jesus, for it was she who reproved Jesus for not coming sooner.

“Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.”

This was quite true, and Jesus understood it well, for his delay in coming was planned, but Martha did not at this time understand the situation. It is apparent that Martha did not mean that death would not have occurred if Jesus had been there; but if he had come sooner he would have healed her brother’s illness. But let it be noted carefully that Martha did not despair, for she added *“but I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.”*

However, she did not yet know that her brother was to be raised within an hour, for when Jesus said, *“Thy brother shall rise again.”* Martha replied,

“I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

But Jesus had intended that she would comprehend his statement in the same manner as when he spoke to his disciples, when he had said,

“I go that I may awake him out of sleep.”

Jesus tried again to clear the situation regarding Lazarus, by saying,

“I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?”

Martha’s confident response was typical of all who believe as she believed, and it is essential that we all hold the same confident faith, for says Paul in Heb.3:14,

“For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.”

What was Martha’s response?

“Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.”

Even up to this point, she did not grasp the idea that Jesus was leading up to with reference to her brother. The conversation all took place somewhere outside of the town of Bethany, for we read in verse 30, *“Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.”*

Martha then hastened home, and called Mary to one side, and spoke to her secretly, saying, *“The Master is come, and calleth for thee.”*

Mary hurried away, and said nothing to those who were with her, and they thought she had gone to the grave to weep there, but she was on her way to see Jesus, and when she reached him, she fell at his feet and repeated Martha's greeting;

“Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.”

While she was speaking, she was weeping, and so were those who had followed her. In such circumstances, no one can console the bereaved who have lost the association of a loved one. All they can do is what Paul said in Rom. 12:15, *“weep with them that weep.”*

It was too much, even for the Son of God who loved these people, so that he, too, wept with them. But this sad drama was nearing its end, and Jesus asked them where they laid him. The answer was brief—*“Come and see.”*

On the way to the grave, some one said, *“Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?”*

They were right—he could have done so, but as we have seen this situation was planned, and they were about to witness the glory of God, by which the Son of God was to be glorified thereby.

When they reached the grave, Jesus requested that they remove the stone that covered the opening of the cave. Martha, still unable to grasp the significance of the momentous event that was transpiring, said to Jesus, *“My brother has been dead four days, so there will be a bad odor.”*

The answer of Jesus must have thrilled Martha when he said,

“Did I not tell you that if you have faith you will see the glory of God?”

When the stone was taken away, Jesus prayed briefly;

“Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard me. And I knew that Thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent me.”

His words were few and expressive, reminding us of what Solomon said in Ecc. 5:2, *“God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.”*

This reminds us of what brother Roberts said in the Ecclesial Guide about prayer in our meetings:

“Let prayer be to God alone—one brother leading the rest in thanksgiving and supplications to His Name. And let the subject matter

instructed his disciples during his sojourn among them. Our duties may be commonplace, and oftentimes irksome; but if performed and persevered in because it is duty, they will bring a rich reward. There is no service rendered to Christ in the spirit of loving obedience too small for his notice and acceptance. If the servant with one talent had used it faithfully he would have had his reward along with his more highly—endowed fellow—servants. We do not at present stand related to great things. It is mostly among those who are of little account in the estimation of the world that God is preparing His jewels. *“Not many wise, not many noble are called.”*

The remembrance of this, makes even mortal life honourable and noble, being as the Apostle Paul terms it, *“a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God,”* and a *“reasonable service.”* Surely it is a most reasonable service, when we consider who it is that asks it of us. We must go through life somehow. How shall we choose to go through it? We can go through it nobly, though only related to very ordinary circumstances, and finish our course with the prospect of joy everlasting, by working to the high standard, whereby this vain life may be redeemed.

Some people think the standard too high for human attainment, and truly, if in our own strength alone we had to rely for success, no mortal could reach it. The Lord Jesus is our example in all things, and we are asked to follow his steps. *“He trod himself the vale of tears;”* he was in all points tried as we are. His faith never failed; for he had ever before him his Father's will. It was his meat and drink to do those things that please God. True, he had the Spirit of God resting upon him without measure, so that he was enabled *always* to resist sin. How otherwise could he have been an acceptable sin—offering and bear away in himself the sin of the world? But his resistance of sin was not without voluntary agonizings—involving *“whole nights in prayer to God,”* with *“strong crying and tears”* (Heb. 5:7), and resisting even unto blood, in the garden of Gethsemane, when the prospect of the approaching agonies of the cross overwhelmed him. It was in love to us as well as to His beloved Son that God sent an angel to strengthen him to *“drink the dreadful cup of pain,”* in the firm conviction, that life to him and to his multitudinous Bride, would be the glorious result of this crowning act of loving obedience.

Upon the Lord's own authority (Luke 24:44), we are able to discern in the Psalms much that reveals to us his mental distresses during the days of his flesh, and the source of his comfort and strength in trouble. We perceive that his anticipations of *“the glory that would follow,”* filled his heart ever and anon with joyful praise and exultant thanksgiving to God for the hope of ultimate deliverance from all his tribulation, when he should see (the outcome) of the travail of his soul, and in the Kingdom of God, surrounded by his brethren, pay his vows and worship Jehovah in the courts of the

“It is the divine promise of national life which sustains them, and is the message they deliver to their suffering brethren. From Zion they had been exiled, and to it they were restored; from it again they are exiled, to it again they are to be restored.”

Thus far we see the preadventual work in progress. It is most cheering, and we feel impelled to lift up our heads and rejoice; because all these signs indicate that the Kingdom of God will shortly be established, and that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

But there is much to be done, after the Lord has descended from heaven, and after he has judged and appointed his household; before he permits the world at large to know of his presence in the earth, in the way of preparing the nations,—by supernatural and mysterious operations in the neighbourhood of Palestine, for the astounding sequel, even the overthrow of all the kingdoms of the world, and their transfer to the All—Conquering Invader of their dominions and His invincible hosts. This being so, it is more than probable that his secret message to his servants may come as a surprise; for they may be still looking for further signs of his coming, when the announcement is angelically made to them that HE HAS COME, and is gathering unto him the members of his household, and all who in any way stand related to the covenants of promise—both acceptors and rejectors of the gospel, living and dead, for judgment and approval—or otherwise (2 Tim. 4:1; John 12:47, 48; Luke 19:12–27; Acts 17:26–32; Rom. 2:9, 16: 3:9, 29, 30).

The Lord has well warned us that he will come “suddenly,” so that we may be ready and not wishing we had a little longer time to “get ready.” “In such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh” (Matt. 24:42, 44).

To sit down idly, with folded hands, and await developments, would be a very unwise way of spending our day and opportunity. We know that busy occupation is the way to make the time fly quickly, while mere waiting is tedious, and makes time hang heavily.

The Lord himself prescribes this antidote. He knew that many generations had to roll past before he would return from heaven to bless his household, and that each successive generation would require patience and courage to go through their portion of the waiting time, and he gave much valuable counsel to guide and cheer them in their dark and difficult surroundings, so that by faith in him and his sweet assurances, though absent at the Father’s right hand, he would be ever with them,—an unseen helper and intercessor, they also might overcome the world, as he had done, and at last, when he should return, share in the glory which the Father had prepared for him from the beginning of the world. “Occupy till I come,” “Be busy in my service,” is the lesson of many of the parables by which he

of each prayer be appropriate to the occasion; so that God may be glorified, and all may be edified.”

During my travels, I have been made conscious of the fact that many brethren are not giving sufficient thought to the subject of prayer. At one gathering, a brother was requested to give thanks for the food. He talked for several minutes, but never mentioned the food. In one ecclesia, when I was a visitor, the brother requested to give thanks for the bread, spoke a long prayer that had no relation to the bread, until he was closing, and then mentioned the bread. The brother giving thanks for the wine, spoke a longer time and giving a general prayer, and when closing briefly mentioned the wine.

It would be well for us to refresh our minds occasionally on what Jesus said about prayer in Matt. 6:5-13,

“When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him.

“After this manner therefore pray ye: “Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”

Surely, that example is a master guide.

Going back to the grave, we hear Jesus say with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth.” It was not the loud voice that restored life to him, but the power of God operating through Jesus. It was the work of a moment, or as Paul expressed it, “*In the twinkling of an eye.*” Therefore, Lazarus awoke finding himself alive and better, and came forth in his grave clothes, and his face tied with a napkin as was the manner in effect at that time.

“Loose him, and let him go,” said Jesus. This great work of God in restoring Lazarus to life produced a two—fold result—

“Many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.”

But there were some of a different type, who went and told the Pharisees what things Jesus had done. This roused their merciless anger to such an

extent that the chief priests and Pharisees convened the council, and agreed together to put him to death.

“Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city call Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.”

In the meantime, Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary, returned home with rejoicing. It is therefore our earnest prayer that the consideration of this chapter will leave such an impression on our minds that we too will return home *“as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.”* —Bro. George Gibson

While We Are Waiting

TO MY DEAR SISTERS IN CHRIST AT HOME AND ABROAD.—Greeting. Beloved, while we are waiting for the heavenly Bridegroom, who still tarries, and the time seems long, there are many things about which we can commune, one with another, that will help to sustain and comfort, and prevent undue weariness during our midnight watching for the dawn.

It is always cheering to note the signs of the times, as we watch with increasing interest, how unmistakably their unfoldings indicate the approaching culmination of our hopes in the advent of the Lord Jesus. The warlike spirit grows more and more active everywhere, and among the Powers that at present rule in the Gentile heavens, notwithstanding protestations of friendship and goodwill, we see the fermenting elements of jealousy, rivalry, secret combinations and alliances that will surely lead up to the predicted conflict and final struggle for supremacy; and side by side with this state of things—yea, even amidst the din of battle—we hear the latter—day cry of assured “peace and safety.”

There is also much travelling to and fro in the earth, as was foretold, and knowledge is being increased, though the true wisdom, which is rooted in the fear of God, and leads to the keeping of His commandments, is less and less in the ascendant; so much is this the case that earnest minds, even in orthodoxy, lament the decay of spiritual life in their midst, and are agitating for a grand national REVIVAL in Godliness. Shall we of the household be less vigilant? seeing we are constantly recruiting from outside elements, and have among us many young members of the body who require nurture and admonition in the things of God? And is there not with us all—old and young, and middle—aged—the constant need for tuning—up to standard pitch in the ways of righteousness? We are being bereft, one after another, of those who were towers of strength in our midst as guides and counsellors. May not God be putting us to the proof, that we may make it manifest that

we are rooted in Him? We have His word, and we have left with us the writings of those whom He raised up to exhume and exhibit afresh the long—hidden treasures of His word of truth. Let us see to it, that we fail not of His grace.

Above all the signs that are gladdening our hearts, towers the unwanted stirring of the dry bones of the house of Israel, and their universal drawing together with the hope of returning to occupy the Holy Land once more as a nation, according to the promises contained in the writings of the Hebrew prophets. This is, indeed, a notable sign. ZIONISM is forcing itself upon public attention to such an extent that it cannot be ignored. It is canvassed, remarked upon, opposed, criticised, sympathised with, and referred to in the daily press, and on the public platform.

Its leaders are imbued with an enthusiasm that imparts itself to the Jewish multitudes who are in exile and poverty, and who hail with joy the prospect of returning to the land of their fathers, a free and united nation. We can perceive in this latter—day reviving, the preliminary work being inaugurated of making the Jews willing. Its climax will not be reached until the long—expected, but to them unknown, Deliverer appears on their behalf, and rescues them from the hands of the King of the North, who, desirous of capturing for himself the recently—formed and unprotected Colonies of Jewish settlers in Palestine, invades the land, and the city of Jerusalem, and meets with his overthrow at the hands of the Lord Jesus and his brethren.

We know that only a small beginning can be made in the way of Colonization before the Lord comes; probably only a tenth of the land being grazed, or cultivated before that event (Isa. 6:13). Dr. Thomas remarks upon this subject in *Eureka*, Vol. iii. 554–66, and Vol. iii. 596, 597–602. And certainly none but the Lord himself can cleanse the land of its abominations, and clear from Mount Zion its superstitious idolatries, in order to prepare it by earthquake and re—organisation for the erection of that glorious Temple which he shall build for the true worship of Jehovah. By its present agitation, Zionism is drawing public attention to the land of promise, and stirring up the scattered nation of Israel to a revival of the hope of a speedy restoration to, and an everlasting inheritance in the promised land.

A Jewish writer, commenting upon the widespread agitation, exclaims, “Our whole nation is in travail;” and he claims Bible authority for the belief that the nation is to return and possess the land. He says, “On the land, the Bible is clear. Palestine is to be the eternal heritage of the Jewish race, and the future of that race is to be bound up in that of the Land. The prophets repeat the promises in the darkest hours; it is to be the consolation of fallen Israel, that they will repossess it, and in it have a great and glorious life. It is no ‘spiritual’ Zion over which the prophets mourn, but Palestine; and it is an ornate, well—built Temple, concerning which they dream.”