

THE BEREAN CHRISTADELPHIAN ECCLESIAL NEWS

A monthly magazine devoted wholly to the Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial welfare, with the object of providing Ecclesial news, exhortations, articles and information of fraternal interest to the Brotherhood. Defending the original, foundation principles upon which the Truth was uncovered from darkness and upon which the Christadelphian movement was developed. Opposed to the dogmas of papal and protestant christendom. Upholding the Truth as The Berean Christadelphians since 1923.

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God Willing, The Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial News will be published monthly as an avenue of providing information of Ecclesial interest to the Brotherhood. Ecclesial news and correspondence, Fraternal Gathering notices, special activities and upbuilding exhortations are encouraged. This is an effort to upbuild and prepare us in heart and mind for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

DETROIT, Michigan –Memorial, 10am; S.S., 11:15am; Wed. Night Class, 7pm; Bro. Fred J. Higham, 20116 McKishnie, Clinton Twp, MI 48035, 586-790-2156

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In January we had a visit from Bro. Jim Rankin as he was driving through while working. Then in February Bro. Lynn Osborne visited us while working as well. We were glad of the visits of those coming and going by this way.

In May we had the company and fellowship of Sis. Lisa Readman, of London, Ontario, as she spent the weekend with us. We enjoy the company of those around the table of our absent Lord.

We were able to attend the study weekend in Windsor, North Carolina. The talks on the Beatitudes, covering Matthew 5 through 7, (the foundation of the Truth), all were very edifying. Due to an alternator problem we spent a wonderful week with Bro. Mike and Sis. Joyce in Newton, North Carolina and enjoyed their kind hospitality. On the way home we were able to stop and visit Bro. Beryl and Sis. Becky Snyder and have the company and fellowship of the Canton Ecclesia.

We have been greatly encouraged by the fellowship of so many who, like us, are looking forward to Jesus soon return. We pray we will all be in the coming kingdom.

Love in the bonds of the Truth,
Bro. Fred Higham

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING.....June 12–14, 2009

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

RICHARD FRATERNAL GATHERING.....July 3 – July 6, 2009

Sis. Christine Jones, RR# 1, Richard, Sask, S0M 2P0, Canada, sc.jones@sasktel.net

HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING..... July 20–26, 2009

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

TENNESSEE FRATERNAL GATHERING.....Oct 3–4, 2009

Bro. Jim Rankin, 115 Sherwood Dr., Camden, TN 38320 USA. 1-731-584-6039

The King

“Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah that sittest on the throne of David. I spake to thee in thy prosperity, but thou saidst, I will not hear. If ye will not hear, I swear by Myself, Surely I will make thee a wilderness.” (Jeremiah 22)

For over 400 years the prophets had been bearing this message. A few had heeded it, but the many had not. Now the end was very near, but the many warnings and repetitions had dulled their perception, and they mistook God’s patience for indulgence.

“Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil” (Eccl. 8:11).

The root of the evil, as Jeremiah reveals, was covetousness and pride—the desire for possession and position. As these are indulged, they gradually stifle every other consideration. And they bring no satisfaction. It always seems that just a little more is necessary—just one step higher.

But saddest of all is the one who reaches the highest pinnacle and finds it is but ashes in his mouth, and yet there remains no higher goal before him to lure him on and maintain the elusive deception of happiness just around the corner.

Jesus said, *“Having food and raiment, therewith be content.”* As we study the teachings of Jesus, we come to realize that they are not a set of restrictive rules for self-discipline, but the instructions of wisdom for a fuller life, the only way to happiness.

“I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly.”

It is not necessary to wait until we die. The “living more abundantly” can start immediately if we will only let it.

Jesus was an efficiency expert, and his specialty was life.

“Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

He was not only meek, but also lowly. Meekness was his character, lowly was his position in life. The two go together. Lowliness is very galling to those who are not meek. Meekness is well nigh impossible to those who are not lowly. Jesus was both, and recommends them highly as the recipe for peace and rest.

There’s another peculiar advantage in these attributes. He said:

“It is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.”

He was very sorry for the rich young ruler. He loved him and pitied him because he was rich and unhappy.

But the point is this. Most sins (and sin is the root of discontent—*“There is no peace to the wicked”*)—most sins are very difficult and unattractive to the truly meek and lowly. These qualities are an automatic insulation against most of the soul-disturbing vices, for they are the antithesis of pride and covetousness, and these are the root of evil.

Pride and covetousness—they fortify themselves stealthily and secretly within us until they grow strong, like an incipient revolution; then they openly and insolently challenge our most vigorous efforts to dislodge them.

Pride and covetousness destroyed the house of David and the kingdom of Israel. It is hard for a ruler to maintain meekness. Forty years in the wilderness brought forth Moses as *“very meek above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.”* Forty years ruling Israel only broke this down once—a remarkable and unique record showing the greatness of Moses and the thoroughness of his preparation.

But the common run of the kings of Israel and Judah were not equal to the task—not big enough to be and remain meek. See how well Saul began . . . but how miserably he failed! And therefore the kingdom was swept away until a king should come who would show them what a king should truly be. A king who, like Moses, must first learn to rule himself for that is the basic requirement of rulership.

* * *

Paul’s letter to the Romans carries us forward another 600 years. The scene has again changed, and Israel has suffered many things, but the age-old problem is still the same.

“I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart for my kinsmen according to the flesh.”

The king had finally come to them, meek, and riding upon an ass. God’s conception of a king, adorned with the personal majesty of godly self-control, and invested with the indisputable authority of a perfect example. A king in his own right who could be stripped of all the common, meaningless, external trappings of royalty and still remain a noble, awe-inspiring figure of majesty.

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy king cometh unto thee. He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass”

But he was not their idea of a king. They wanted a king like the nations around them, a proud, despotic figure of outward show and pride. It never occurred to them that a king’s duty was to enter into their lives

and show them how to live—not to cater to their pride and desire, but to teach them how to overcome it. Their long-expected, hoped-for God-given King and Deliverer came, and dwelt intimately among them, doing wondrous, heavenly things that no man had ever done before—a man utterly unique in all the world’s history—and they knew him not!

“He shall speak peace unto the Gentiles: and his dominion shall be from sea to sea... How great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!” (Zech. 9:9-10, 17).

What a strange, almost unbelievable thing! How easy it is proven to be to have eyes, and yet to be stone-blind! Briefly, the brilliant light of the gracious invitation shone forth upon them—and then the long, dark night closed over Israel. They had heard, but missed, the royal call—and must wait 2,000 long, bitter, wandering, persecuted years to hear it again.

—Bro. G.V.Growcott

“I Am My Beloved’s, and His Desire Is Toward Me”

Song of Solomon Chapters 6 & 7

Let us begin by exploring a bit, the man who wrote this Song of Songs. For some reason when growing up, I always felt that Song of Solomon was, “Oh, so hard to understand.” I felt at home in amongst the pages of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, but in the Song of Solomon, I was, to say the least, confused if not totally lost at times. How could we see so clearly in the book of Proverbs what was being spoken of, but yet be so confused and disorientated in Song of Solomon by the same writer? Perhaps just a brief look at the man Solomon himself would lend a view to what may have perplexed me and maybe others.

“God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding ... Solomon’s wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east ... and his fame was in all the nations round about ... And there came of all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all the kings of the earth which had heard of his wisdom ... When the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions ... And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom ... Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made He thee king to do judgment and justice ... So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom. And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom which God had put in his heart” (1 Kings 4:29-31, 34; 10:1, 6, 9, 23-24).

Solomon was certainly a man of great renown, enriched with wisdom like none before him, and after him -- only the Lord Jesus Christ excelled above him in wisdom.

Which brings one to wonder, we all know beyond the shadow of a doubt that all Scripture is given by inspiration of our heavenly Father, and is profitable for doctrine, correction, reproof and instruction in righteousness. We are told that holy men of old spoke as they were moved by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is God’s words that are recorded and not those of the individual that He so chose to pen them. We have the instance in which the apostle Paul stated that he spoke with permission and not by command. He also states that he was rude in speech, which to me always meant straight to the point and very easily understandable, as few words as possible so that no likelihood of possible confusion could be entertained in regards the statements put forth, and to myself his technique seemed to work remarkably well. He was all things to all people; he brought himself up to those of high intelligence and condescended to those who were not as blessed as the aforementioned. My query would be this, how much of a personal character or trait is allowed by the Almighty to shine forth by the individual whom He has so chosen to pen His holy oracles? Did I have a strenuous ordeal with some of Solomon’s writings because at his

time of record, he may be like the apostle Paul could no longer, if he ever could, be all things to all men?

But be that as it may, there can be no doubt regarding the seriousness of Solomon's sins, not only in the building of high places for the use of his foreign wives, but also in what can be considered a monumental failure of worshipping those false gods himself. His strange wives, foreign and outside the house of Israel, "*turned away his heart after other gods . . . Ashtoreth . . . and Milcom . . . his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel*" (I Kings 11:4, 5, 9) to a state that one would have considered impossible for the wisest man on earth to be beholden of. This in and of itself, just as the failures of David and Moses, are a lesson placed before you and I, so that we may endure to the end with a hope that is real.

Two out of the three just mentioned are guaranteed a place in God's kingdom. The sins of David, which were worthy of death, were put behind him. And Moses, though not allowed to enter that goodly land, but view it only from his final resting place, was possibly raised 1000's of years later to partake in the transfiguration of Christ with Elijah, symbolizing his entrance into this glorious future age, for which we so impatiently wait.

Scripture is very clear that Solomon first of all compromised for the convenience of his wives and then actually turned his own heart to idolatry. This was a grave violation of the first commandment: "*Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*" Yahweh is a Jealous God, and will not give His glory to another. It is visibly stated in Scripture that no "*idolater hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*" Idolatry is a severe mistake and sin, but nowhere in Scripture are we told that it is such an act that cannot be repented of and no longer pursued.

But Solomon had started off so well! He loved God and God loved him; he put the well-being of the nation ahead of his own; he was favored with wisdom above any living person (1 Kings 3:3; 1 Sam. 12:24; 1 Kings 3:12). Some have thought that Ecclesiastes reflects his final years, possibly spent in intense consideration and repentance. This, as explained to me by another brother, is a viewpoint of sentimental value, which through the words of our heavenly Father penned by the prophet Isaiah, "*He (Yahweh) will abundantly pardon.*" Without this promise extended to mankind by the Almighty, we would of all men be most miserable. We hope and pray that God's mercy will be extended to Solomon. Moreover, what good is done by wishing Solomon out of the Kingdom? The judgment is Christ's! Who are we to judge another man's servant?

All these are fine and possibly compelling points. But the Bible records are all written in a deliberate manner as exhortations that we are intended to see as powerful warnings to ourselves. Is Solomon perhaps put forward as one who did not persist faithful unto the end? The warnings to the saints in this regard are very prominent—

"Let us not be weary in well-doing . . ." The promise is to "*He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end . . .*" (Rev. 2:26).

This is most assuredly a very suitable point. Early conviction and effort can be for naught if not continued as commanded. Years of sacrifice can be shattered. The race must be run, as those in the Olympics run a race for a crown, so do we run a different type of race for another type of crown—a crown of eternal glory that fadeth not away. But the race must be run in its entirety. No matter how immense our talents, wisdom, or status, we can tumble and lose the blessing of glory, and jeopardize our chances to take part in that blessed day in which "*eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things that God has prepared for those who love him.*"

Solomon was warned to serve God with a perfect heart, as did his father David. In this, unfortunately enough, he fell short, for it is recorded that “*his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God*” (1 Kings 11:4). In addition, a very big if is contained here: “*If thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever*” (1 Chr. 28:9). In 1 Kings 11:33 the very same word for “*forsake*” occurs in a condemnation that includes Solomon: “*They have forsaken me and have worshipped Ashtoreth . . . Chemosh . . . and Milcom . . . and have not walked in my ways. . .*”

Contained in 1 Kings 11 are the passages, which document the divine assessment of Solomon’s life. There is a remarkable correlation between them and the conditional promises we have come to know, understand and hold so dear to our hearts. Solomon’s failure to meet the standard of his father David is stressed in verses 4, 6 and 33.

The wayward state of his heart is so forlornly described in verses 4 and 9 (compare 1 Chron. 28:9; 1 Kings 2:4; 9:4). This most important quality—sincerity of heart—is most clearly described over and over throughout the narrative in Kings and Chronicles. A *perfect heart* is without question the key phrase in denoting a faithful disciple of the Most High’s laws and ordinances. Solomon was told or warned that he must strive to perfect his (1 Chron 28:9), and the divine assessment was that he did not.

The extraordinary sin of Solomon’s idolatry is repeatedly referred to in each of the six conditional passages where direct reference is made to the “*commandments of God,*” or the “*statutes charged through Moses.*” The very first of the commandments is to worship God alone, and this even with the wisdom he was granted, we are sometimes deeply astounded how this man, we know as the preacher, directly violated.

When the pertinent passages in Kings and Chronicles are considered in this manner, the example of Scripture seems clear. Solomon is set before us with unmistakable view as one who was loved of God and selected for a great blessing. For numerous years he loved God and gave himself to His work. But as the years moved forward, he forsook God and gave himself in the oh so important quality of heart to others. Once again we see the intent of the heart and action to ways of the world. His breakdown provides a clear caution to all who follow, including ourselves. The race must be run to the end; we must not weary in well-doing but remain unyielding unto the end, if we are to share in the eternal blessings promised by God for all those who diligently seek him.

One can only hope that having more of an idea on how deep a thinker Solomon was that we might be able to slowly digest his thoughts in these 2 chapters that are before us this evening. He states in verses 1-3—

“Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? Whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee. My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies. I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.”

The bride’s acquaintances are interested in what she tells them of “*the altogether lovely,*” and they ask for opportunity to associate with him. So they naturally ask where they may seek him.

The Beloved is to be found in one spot alone, once desolate, but now cultivated by him. Tended and watered, its owner delights to stroll therein amongst its beautiful and serene atmosphere. These are his brethren, whose association is with the Father and Son. This is a destination that you and I petition for daily through prayer.

It is the perfect love that casteth out fear that reassures us his words have finally come true. They are his who forsake the world and are baptized into him. *“Behold I and the children which God hath given me.”* And God has freely given unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and finally he says, (Heb. 2:13) blessed indeed are they who can vociferously proclaim: *“I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine.”*

Verse 4 – *“Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners.”* This opens a beautiful description of the Bride, which is continued throughout the chapter. The specifics before us show that the illustration deals with what is shortly to come, not only as regards the perfected nature of which we pray to be part, but also in the work that lies ahead for us in the purpose of God.

“Beautiful, as Tirzah.” Tirzah is mentioned in Josh. 12:24. It was the royal city of the prior kings of Israel after the split, until the building of Samaria. The village that now occupies its site lies in a high and authoritative position. Tirzah signifies “pleasant,” which doubtless accounts for its use here. *“Comely as Jerusalem.”* *“Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth,”* as prophesied throughout God’s entire holy inspired Word, has finally settled in Mount Zion.

Verse 5 – *“Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me: thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead.”*

This is an extremely difficult, and it is questionable whether even a fairly accurate meaning is presented to us in the translation. Some would portray it, “Turn thou thine eyes against me for they swell my heart with pride.” The only gesture implied in the passage is in the Hebrew word for “turn thou,” which hints at the proposal that the Christ would have his Bride, who is standing opposite him turn her eyes so as to directly meet his. It would seem as if some such a rendering were accurate, because of the description which pursues.

Verse 6-10 – *“Thy teeth are as a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them. As a piece of a pomegranate are thy temples within thy locks. There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her. Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?”*

Here in verses 8-9 a picture is being painted for us of the Bride, a multitude and the chosen of he who is now among us. All those who have finished the race are one with him as partaker of his glory and throne in that great day when all nations shall serve the Lord from the least even to the greatest. Kings and queens shall bow down before him; all who come up to worship the King in Jerusalem shall behold his chosen, and call her blessed.

In verse 10, the Multitudinous Christ is portrayed at a time when the Bride and Bridegroom are the ruling powers over all the mankind, or as it is described by symbology in Scripture, when they comprise the new heavens. The Bride, the moon, to whom the sun Christ Jesus shall impart the brightness of his glory, and as a “combined host” they shall be deeply feared by all nations who do not fall in line with the laws that go forth from Jerusalem, but those who turn unto righteousness shall be healed and blessed by him who reigns over all the earth. Then will the heavens declare the glory of God, until that day His glory covers the earth as the waters cover the sea.

Verse 11 – *“I went down into the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded.”* This shows us the growth, or the prosperous conditions of the Kingdom, and assures us that Christ is in complete control.

“The garden of nuts” – Nuts are hard and unpalatable as regards their outward appearances, but the inside is of a satisfying taste and bursting with nourishment. So Christ judges not according to the outward appearance, but according to the heart, the inner man, which should bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, and when this task is whole, it is pleasing unto Him.

He went to see if the vine flourished and the pomegranates budded. Christ said, comparing his followers to the vine, *“I am the true vine and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit...I am the vine, and ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me ye can do nothing... Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.”*

“Pomegranates” are a fruit so vastly cherished in Palestine. They are mentioned numerous times throughout Scripture. The Tabernacle was embroidered with attractive work of golden pomegranates, and they were also included in the embroidery of the High Priest’s robe.

Verse 12 – *“Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib.”* In verse 12, we have confirmation that the Lord is not slack concerning His promise. Though absent, he is desiring his return, and it will be accomplished without question.

He states, *“Or ever I was aware, my desire set me among the chariots of my people”*—which we are told is the correct rendering of the name Amminadib. The chariots of the Lord are the multitudes of angels. The chariots used in this sense remind us that Elisha called Elijah, *“the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.”* And King Joash addressed Elisha by the same title, meaning that these men of God had been to Israel what chariots are to an army. So in the day of Christ will be the Saints of God who have been refined throughout the ages.

Verse 13 – *“Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies.”* The word or name, *“Shulamite”* is thought to mean, peace-laden. The name is derived from the same root as Solomon, but while Solomon means “peaceful,” Shulamite is peace-laden. The name stands for conflict as well as victory, and is peculiarly appropriate to those that overcome, who *“are more than conquerors through Him that saved us.”* And what shall we see? As it were the company of two armies, or Mahanaim. This reminds us of the two hosts of Jacob’s prophetic dream. *“Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God’s host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.”* Those chosen and glorified saints of the two olive-trees, are natural Israel and spiritual Israel. Here then we see the Bride as God’s host in the day of Christ, laden with peace for the whole earth, fulfilling the promises made to Abraham that *“in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”*

Chapter 7 begins with the Beloved speaking, praising the exquisiteness of the Bride—not as she was in the days of her humility, but as she will be in the time of her glory and immortality.

Verse 1 – *“How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince’s daughter! the joints of thy thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman.”*

“How beautiful are thy feet with shoes.” “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace.” But there is other work for the shod feet besides the publishing of good tidings, and that is the treading down of the wicked as prophesied throughout Scripture. *“But you that fear my Name...shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts”* (Mal. 4:2-3).

This takes our minds back to David's description: "*The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework...*" —a radiant picture of those who are now one with the Master.

"*Thighs like jewels*" – the association to jewels lies in the fullness and beauty of shape. It is the beauty of the finished jewel that bears support to the skill of an astute workman who has thus fashioned it. When Christ counts up his jewels, he too will look for the beauty of his workmanship.

As regards "halting," we find out that it represents trials or adversity. "*But in mine adversity (or halting) they rejoiced.*" The indistinguishable thought is articulated in God's words to natural Israel, "*In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted*" (Micah 4:6). "*In that day*"—the glad Day when the Bride, then glorified, shall have been united to the Beloved—her "halting" or adversarial foes will have been purged from before them.

Verse 2 – "*Thy navel is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor: thy belly is like an heap of wheat set about with lilies.*" We are all made extremely conscious that the navel is the focal point of existence for a yet unborn child, and its spiritual meaning here may perhaps be understood from a saying of Christ. "*He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.*" We are also led to consider the resource of the river of Ezekiel's vision that flows out from under the entrance of the house, and grows with ever-increasing degree in an eastern trend, healing the nations, and watering the desert.

"*Wanteth not liquor*" – It was believed customary in the East to mix other ingredients with wine to manufacture necessary effects, to improve the flavor, heighten the bouquet, deaden pain, induce forgetfulness of grief, etc. In the days when the Saints share of "*wine upon the lees well refined,*" then the day arrives for the fulfillment of the Lord's promise to drink wine "*new with you in my Father's Kingdom.*" No concoction to alleviate pain or cause forgetfulness at this point in time will be needed, "*for the former things are passed away,*" and remembered no more. This is the day that you and I all wish to be a part of through the ever plentiful mercy of Him who has promised to abundantly pardon.

Verse 4 – "*Thy neck is as a tower of ivory; thine eyes like the fishpools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bathrabbim: thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus.*"

"*Thy neck is as a tower of ivory,*" a structure that is indicative of strength and purity. Not a watchtower, for the days of watching have most joyfully faded away, but a stronghold. One of the glorious characteristics of the Bride will be her immortal strength and keen ability to carry forth the commands throughout the whole earth for he who rules on Mt. Zion.

The meaning of the name "*Bath-rabbim*" is "multitudes" or "the daughter of many." It is situated near the city of Heshbon. The imagery of the pools or the gate is very beautiful when we remember "the enormous multitude that no man can calculate," who have been immersed into the Name of him who has said, "*I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.*" Here the eyes of the Bride are like cisterns of clean, clear and deep water, reflecting the image of him for whom this combined multitude from all generations have so patiently awaited.

"*Thy nose,*" indicates the direction of her face, looking towards Damascus, the capital of Syria. The Israelite, when presenting the first-fruits after entering the Promised Land, was commanded to say, "*A Syrian, ready to perish, was my father,*" bringing to remembrance their

wonderful deliverance by the Almighty hand of Yahweh from the unfortunate bondage of the Pharaohs of Egypt.

There will ever be for the Bride a remembrance of her great deliverance into the Promised Land and of “*Christ our Passover,*” who shed his blood for you and I so that we have a chance to become part of this glorious age, if persistent and faithful to the end. Likewise, there will be a remembrance of Christ as the burnt offering, provided by God. As in the Holy Place, the Cherubim of beaten gold with outstretched wings, looked down always upon the blood-stained Mercy Seat, of which they formed a part, so will the anti-type correspond with the type. The Saints (the Bride), those who remained steadfast unto the end, clothed in white raiment in their exalted position as kings and priests, will offer incense continually in the Temple of God, giving thanks and praise unto the Almighty, for their deliverance from sin and death forever.

Verse 5 – “*Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple: the king is held in the galleries.*” The long ridge of Carmel, though not high, is of elegant elevation and enjoys great natural fruitfulness, as its name implies. It was the “garden” of the land. It is brought into the visualization of the Holy City as the Bride foretold by the prophet Isaiah. “*The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God*” (35:1-2).

The color purple speaks to us of royalty, which is also a feature of the glorified Bride. “*The galleries*” bring to mind Ezekiel’s Temple—that glorious Temple whose architect and builder is Christ, who directs this selected group, or Bride, from his throne on Mt. Zion, the governing force of the entire world.

Verses 6-7 – “*How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights! This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes.*” Tallness of stature was always counted as an addition to beauty and was an indication of magnificence. We are all familiar with the description of Saul, who is described as “*shoulders higher than any of the people.*” But here refers to the fullness of Christ.

The Bride in her stature is likened to a palm tree for her splendor, even as the Saints are described elsewhere as “*trees planted by rivers of water.*” “*The righteous shall flourish like the palm trees.*” In Solomon’s Temple also were palm trees carved in all the walls round about. The same symbol is described in Ezekiel’s Temple, which so aptly depicts the future age to which we hope to be a part.

“*Clusters of grapes*” are the “*much fruit*” borne by the branch of the vine. “*Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me*” (John 15:4).

Verse 8 – “*I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples.*”

Our Master promised when he went away that “*if I go... I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.*” This verse speaks of that return, which has been the hope of every true follower of his throughout the ages.

Verse 9 – “*And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak.*”

“*The roof of thy mouth,*” or palate, is a very important feature, and the culminating one in the description of the perfected and glorified Bride. All her tastes are perfectly attuned to the

heavenly; no more the desires of the flesh, only a feverish desire within to do God's will endlessly.

Verse 10 – *“I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me.”*

In that magnificence of holiness, the perfections of which the Beloved has been singing, she indeed will be desirable unto him, fully attuned in heart and mind unto the Divine, and she herself having set all her aspirations upon him. So does the King greatly desire her beauty.

As he states in verses 11-12, *“Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.”*

At this time when the Kingdom shall be established, there will be a new earth as well as new heavens. That earth, watered by the heavenly dews and gentle showers, will respond to the blessings bestowed upon it. Yea, the people all taught of God shall bring forth the fruits of righteousness. The Holy Pair, of which we pray to be part, will delight in tending the newly planted vines and orchards, providing a willing people with all spiritual nourishment and refreshment, loving, watching over, and providing for both temporal and spiritual welfare. So shall the whole earth be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God, and where so ever the sanctified feet shall tread, there shall joy, love, and hope like flowers spring in their path to birth.

And whilst the Beloved and his chosen rejoice in the noble work, they likewise delight endlessly one in the other. There will be incalculable, delightful intervals of pleasant unity, one with the other; endless, endless happy days of rejoicing, thanksgiving and praise of the Father, who appointed this glorious day way back in the book of Genesis when the seed of the woman would triumph over the seed of the serpent.

In closing, I think it only appropriate to reflect on words issued by the Almighty through the pen of Solomon. When one ponders the statement issued, they cannot help but tend to fall into the category of what was referred to earlier as one of those sentimental thinkers who hope and pray that Solomon will have a part in this glorious age, which he was allowed to portray. *“Fear God and keep his commandments for this is the whole of man.”* It is only a mind that dwells in this *“modus operandi”* that will inherit through our Master's mercy a status known as the Bride of Christ. We have but a very short time to wait, which as well means we have a very short time to prepare. Let us pray without ceasing night and day that Solomon, you and I, when we stand before our Master, and the true intent of our most important hearts revealed, that we will be bestowed with a nature that was the focal point of our entire probation. For this day, and our quick release from the nature that we now possess, we fervently say, *“Come, Lord Jesus.”*

—Bro. Paul Garvey

He That Wavereth

“He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed”

It is not with uncertain and faltering step that the faithful ones of old walked before God in the way of His Truth. They were “fully persuaded” in their minds that what God had promised, He was able also to perform. They “staggered not” as they walked, neither were they doubtful in their minds about the kind of course they should pursue.

They had heard the voice of the spirit that said,

“This is the way. Walk ye in it.”

With confidence and assurance they had laid hold on the hope as an anchor for their soul, both sure and steadfast, so that they could walk with a firm tread with the knowledge that He whom they served would not leave or forsake them.

“A double minded man,” says James, “is unstable in his ways.”

Not so the one who is fully persuaded in his own mind – the one who is not divided between two opinions.

The faithful servants of God are never at a loss to know what the true course of wisdom is, no matter how torn and confused others may be. When a situation presents itself wherein there are two roads that lead out, then the light of the Word directing their steps, and shining on their path will direct them unerringly.

“The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.”

The confusion at Babel came about because of men, leaving the wisdom and counsel of God, were exercised for the most part in their own devices that would make a name for themselves in the earth.

Lot’s position as a stranger and a pilgrim in the earth must have been lost sight of, for a time at least, when the well watered plains and green pastures of the Jordan valley led him to pitch his tent toward Sodom, where the men were *“wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly.”*

The secret of those who walk the path of the just, with never a thought of wavering, or those who *“be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive,”* is this: they have settled in their minds the age old query of the spirit that the “many” have carelessly overlooked,

“He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God”?

The “few” who have this important matter fully resolved in their minds before the place is reached that two ways meet, they will not be troubled or concerned over the situation when they meet it.

The confident wisdom that sustains the man of God when there is a choice to be made between one course and another, springs from a mind that has settled – within itself beforehand, what measure of devotion and service must be yielded in the cause of their eternal salvation. They have found that God has asked for all that we can give or do, and that anything less may mean utter failure.

The quibbling and uncertainty that is characteristic of those who halt between two opinions, is that activity of the mind that has been called parleying with the devil. It is a state of double-mindedness in which there has not yet been a full and complete surrender to all the demands of the high calling that takes us out and away from all else.

The mind, then, in such a case, will always be faced with the problem at each turn of the day of making a decision on the matter of conduct to determine just how far one can go across the line without compromising his conscience.

As this goes on from day to day, the conscience toward God becomes more tolerant, and the Way, though narrow to begin with, reaches out in all directions, to allow for the exercise of all the desires. Thus the thinking of the flesh takes control of our lives, driving out the eternal things of God.

—Bro. Emitt W. Banta

Neutral Christadelphians

In this spiritual warfare, whose weapons are neither lead, nor steel, but more effective than either for putting to flight the aliens, there are neither truce, armistice, neutrality, nor peace. He that is not with us, is against us; and he that gathereth not with us, scattereth abroad. I for one, know no man in this warfare

as a brother and friend who is neutral or not gathering. A man who is neutral stands by with arms folded and sees the enemy crushing me to death! He believes in the cause I am fighting for, but he calmly views my destruction without any sign of help. Is such a man my friend and brother? Is he not rather a sympathizer with the enemy? If he helped me, we might prove too strong for the foe; the enemy knowing this cannot look upon neutrals in any other light than his friends. And this is just where Christ puts all neutrals in the good fight of faith.

—*The Christadelphian*—1865 “*Letter from Dr. Thomas to Bro. Tait*”

Trials By Trouble

...It is no strange picture that we see, when we see David in trouble. It is the portion of all God's children at one time or other of their lives. It is necessary. It is refining and improving every way when not carried to the point of destruction—which God does not allow.

“He will not suffer us to be tried above that we are able to bear.”

A good man is made better by trouble. It chastens and subdues and humbles him. It enables him more acutely than ever to discern and feel the vanity of all mortal excellence, and the intrinsic majesty and authority of the Eternal one, from whom all things have proceeded, and in Whom they subsist from day to day. It enables Him to sympathise more easily with others. It prepares him for the kingdom. The way to the Kingdom of God is, therefore, a troubled way.

Rich men find it difficult to enter the kingdom. Their hearts are liable to be satisfied with the creature, instead of seeking rest in the Creator. It is through much tribulation that God brings men to himself.

Moses had to spend a long hopeless time in the wilderness, before God adjudged him fit to be entrusted with the mighty work accomplished by his hand. Joseph had been fitted for his exalted part by the ignominy of slavery, slander, and imprisonment: David was prepared for the throne by exile and implacable and deadly persecution. Jesus himself, we are told, learned obedience by the things that he suffered.

Reviewing these facts, are we not more able to reconcile ourselves to the troubled day through which we are called upon to pass in this period of the world's history? It is only preparatory. It will not last for ever. It cannot last for ever. It must end in a few years at the very longest, even if it come in the form of death. Death itself is a welcome ending to those who have entered into the new covenant: for, by one short step, it transfers them from their present evil state to the Lord's presence at his coming. Let us then be comforted in all our tribulation that we endure, knowing that though painful to endure, it is working out for us a great result, for which we shall thank God in great gladness, when the work is done, the night past, and the morning arrived.

The Christadelphian—1886 Bro. Roberts Exhortation No. 165

Meditations - Uncertainty

“Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my deliverer.”

Psalms 19:14

Uncertainty is the most salient feature of the present age. It pertains to friends, means of subsistence, health, and, above all, to life itself. What a pleasing contrast to all this does the Bible form! “*The word of the Lord endureth for ever.*” But even in this, men are endeavouring to shake our confidence. They would make it send forth a very uncertain sound; its history they would convert into fable; its miracles reduce to the level of everyday occurrences; its morality question; and its divinity overthrow by attributing to it bungles and blunders innumerable. The book, however, remains unaffected—a certain guide and an invaluable friend. It cannot be rendered unintelligible by the cavilling, pedantry, and hypercriticism of

sinful flesh; it cannot be biased; its yeas are yeas and nays, nays. Unlike human friends, it is not fickle. Act righteously and it will commend you; act wickedly and it will condemn you. Approach it rightly—honestly, considerately, and reverently—and it will bless you; approach it wrongly, and you will most certainly incur the vengeance of God, its author.

Apathy in regard to Bible knowledge, indifference and rebellion to its requirements when known, love of ease and of smooth-sailing, instability, faintheartedness, cowardice, lack of determination, are traits that should not be discoverable in those who profess to be God's friends. The judgment seat will make it manifest that these traits have in numerous instances barred the way to the Kingdom of God. The rulers and teachers of that Kingdom will all be exemplary men and women, able not only to say, "Do so and so," but "Do as we have done." The beauty of their example will lie in the fact that in the days of their probation, they hungered and thirsted after righteousness, had an affectionate regard for the will of God, had been able to endure hardness as the occasion required, were single minded, courageous, steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

"Be not ashamed of the testimony of our Lord" (2 Tim. 1:8). There is an inclination in everyone to infringe this exhortation. The truth is so unpopular; a confession of it makes one so singular. There may be no objection to publish abroad some big special effort, or vaunt meetings when held in a desirable hall, or publicly recognise this or that brother because of his so-called respectability or ability, but to preach and practise doctrines that separate us from friends, that bring upon us ridicule and contempt, to openly associate ourselves with poverty and humility—there is the trial! In order that we may successfully combat our natural prejudice in this matter, it is written, *"Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels"* (Mark 8:38).

Without the Bible, what would our condition be? Hopeless. This does not sufficiently express it. Take away the influence the Bible has had, and still has, upon mankind, and our condition would be inconceivably dreadful. This is no guess. Paul reveals it. The works of the flesh, uninfluenced by the Spirit's teaching, are these: *"Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like."* Think on this, ye who lightly esteem the Word of God.

Obedience to Christ's precepts is inevitable in those who truly love him. How do we know? Because Christ has said, *"If any man love me, he will keep my words"* (John 14:23). This is a divinely-provided test, simple but sure.

How many thousands judge of divine decrees by the standard of their own warped and sinful intelligences! They listen to God only when He agrees with them, and the harmony thus produced they have the audacity to style Scripture confidence. What a shameful delusion! Faith from a Bible standpoint is an unqualified belief in God's word—a complete surrender of independent thought and action to whatever He may communicate or command. Such faith was exemplified in the father of the faithful. At God's command, Abraham left his country, his kindred, and his father's house, not knowing whither he was going. He believed the word of the Lord that he should have a son, when to all appearances it was an impossible thing. He withheld not his only son from death, notwithstanding that the fulfilment of the promises depended upon that son's existence. Finally, he closed his eyes in full assurance that a resurrection would bring to him all that God had covenanted. Those who would follow in the footsteps of Abraham must grasp the ground of his confidence, which lay in his recognition that God is all wise, and therefore His commands are reliable; that He is true, and therefore His promises are certain of fulfilment; that He is all-powerful, and therefore able to perform to the uttermost all that He has said. Let those who have not made themselves familiar with these truths strive to do so at once, for they form the foundation of the faith *"without which it is impossible to please God."*

We are very positive when enforcing obedience upon the alien; are we equally candid and emphatic with ourselves in regard to obedience? Baptism is truly essential to salvation, but a life-long continuance in well-doing is quite as much so.

There is no detail in the machinery of the truth of higher moment than the interviewing of candidates for baptism. When inefficiently carried out, it leads to incalculable trouble, such as invalidation of

immersion, subsequent doubt and anxiety in the mind of the one immersed, suspicion among the brethren in regard to him, etc. Laxity in this matter sows the seeds for an unhealthful condition of the body generally, for that which is done in one ecclesia affects all, either directly or remotely. It is of the utmost importance that brethren who engage in interviewing should have the requisite qualifications for the work. These are: a thorough knowledge of the truth, the ability both to clearly interrogate and quickly see a point, and the courage and firmness to say “No” should the case require it. Those who take part in interviewing should keep God well to the front—losing sight of persons. A frequent attendance at interviews forms a good preparation for the undertaking of the work; this gives an idea as to how to question, and develops confidence. Nervousness unhinges both questioner and candidate. Those who perform the work should, unless absolutely impracticable, have the assistance of another competent brother. The presence of another gives general satisfaction, prevents the omission of any point in the questioning, and makes the interview less formal. Should a postponement be found advisable, by all means arrange for it. God approves of His work being done well, and we may be quite sure that an adjournment under such circumstances would evoke His pleasure. Unnecessary haste must be avoided, and also negligence and unwarrantable delay.

Inability to fathom the wisdom of God in subjecting His children to the heavy trial involved in the command “*Resist not evil*,” is no reason for disobeying it. To patiently submit to the evil doings of those around is indeed a flesh-crucifying process, and one which, oftentimes, has the appearance of leading to ruin and starvation. But consequences should not be considered by those who have learnt that all God’s ways are arranged for the eternal well-being of those who love Him. God has made faith and obedience the basis of acceptance, and these are not impossible conditions with those who put their trust in Him.

There is every probability that the command “*Resist not evil*,” has been enjoined to test the obedience of the saints, and to string up their faith to that pitch which is requisite for an entrance into the kingdom of God. No guiding principle that God has laid down is more calculated than this to wean from the things whereon the natural man solely relies and lead to Him who providentially sustains and protects. Should this view of the command be correct, great will be the dismay and sorrow on the day of judgment of those who will have allowed low-thoughted care to influence them to turn away the ear.

One way to mock Deity is to affirm that His commands are impracticable. Apparent impracticability should form no barrier with those who believe the promise, “*I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.*” Their mind should be that of David, and of David’s greater son, “*In God have I put my trust, I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.*” In view of the many divinely-recorded instances of obedience under the most trying circumstances, notably that of Abraham, the plea of impracticability can never excuse the rejection of God’s commands.

Impossibilities become possibilities when God is helping. Thus Paul could say—“*I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me.*” But mark! Those only are assisted who recognise the necessity for obedience, and who set to work with a determination to render it. “*The Lord is with you, while ye be with him.*” Divine help enabled Noah to perform the superhuman work of maintaining his integrity in the midst of a whole godless world; It enabled Jeremiah and Ezekiel to testify during a long course of years in the teeth of a rebellious and blood-thirsty nation; it enabled all the men of Israel to leave, on the occasions of their feasts, their wives, children, and possessions in perfect safety in districts subject to constant invasion from marauding bands; it miraculously brought Israel a three-fold increase of the earth’s products on every sixth year, so that God’s command concerning the seventh might be observed. Divine help will in like manner enable God’s children in this generation to fulfil the precepts given for their rule of conduct. In giving commands, God has taken into consideration the aid He has purposed to afford. He does not mock; that which He has enjoined He will most surely help us to carry through. There is nothing too hard for God. Therefore, in obeying His injunctions, natural consequences must not be taken into account. “*The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong on the behalf of those whose heart is perfect toward him.*”

Grumbling is very contagious, and its effects are deadly. It is a common complaint, and one which is not escaped by Christadelphians. To overcome this evil should be the earnest endeavour of everyone. Grumblers are not friends of God. They are classed by Jude among the ungodly. It was persistent grumbling that brought in the time of Moses the vengeance of God upon thousands in Israel. In Paul’s

letters (1 Cor. 10:10; Phil. 2:14) grumbling is expressly forbidden. Particularly baneful is this habit when directed towards ecclesial affairs. Those who indulge in it check and hinder where they should diffuse warmth and encourage. They may, perchance, be thoughtless, but they are, nevertheless, unkind. They hamper the strivings of those who are labouring for the truth. Ecclesial work is hard and uphill enough without it being added to by incessant and purposeless complaining about the hall, the journey to it, the speakers, the brethren and sisters generally. It should not be forgotten that Christ is at the head of ecclesial affairs. If these are troubles or unsatisfactory, it is possible, nay probable, that he may have thus wisely arranged them. This thought alone should quiet the murmuring tongue.

The following rules, though simple, are worth observing in connection with the meeting for breaking of bread:—

1. Aim at realising the importance of the occasion, the pleasure it gives to God, and the benefits that are to be derived from a faithful observance of it.

2. Divest the mind as much as possible of all that would engross or pre-occupy. Such as business and domestic anxieties. An effort of the will can accomplish much more in this direction than many are prepared to admit.

3. Be punctual. Non-punctuality disturbs and flurries the mind, and renders it unfit for some time to heartily participate in the worship. The attention of others is also interfered with by late comers.

4. Examine yourself; and not others. Do not allow wisdom's instruction to pass unheeded, neither take umbrage at it.

5. So frame your walk, from day to day, that you may have the answer of a good conscience before God.

It is of the highest moment that our ideas of the Gospel be correct the language by which we express them is of secondary importance. Correct ideas are the outcome of an understanding of the Word, and this is a vital condition of salvation. Correct speech arises from secular education, and furnishes no ground of confidence for an entrance into eternal life. Those who are deficient in ability to give utterance can look forward to this deficiency being rectified with a change of nature. Not so with ideas; now is the time for imbibing these. The first principles of the truth, like character, must be acquired this side of the Kingdom. Fluent and grammatical speech, apart from right ideas, is dangerous; it beguiles and misleads the simple and unwary. Ability, unaccompanied by an understanding of the Word, is suggestive of Solomon's proverb, "*As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion.*"

Have you ever experienced life to be thoroughly joyous and pleasurable? When there was an absence of aches and pains, and when the ordinary cares and anxieties did not press? If so, recall your experience, and let this reflection follow:—The attainment of Christ's reward means the greatest happiness that you have ever experienced infinitely intensified, and not only so, it means that happiness made perpetual! Who shall say that the divine promises are not great and exceedingly precious?

"*Asking no question for conscience sake*" (1 Cor. 10:27). How often is this expression misapplied by brethren! Paul refers not to one's own conscience, but to that of another (see verse 29). The idea that sin can be evaded by wilfully continuing in ignorance is dangerous and objectionable in the extreme. Those who quote the above passage in support of this notion, should look again, and amend their way.

—*Bro. A.T. Jannaway*—1887

Thoughts Gleaned By The Way

"*Then shall ye return, and Let the words of my mouth the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.*" Malachi 3:18

Malachi's prophecy was written during the return from Babylon, when the great proportion of the people of Israel was in a state of apostacy, only a small remnant who "*feared the Lord, and thought upon his name.*" A crowning characteristic of this faithful remnant was the ability to discern between the

righteous and the wicked, which would only be made manifest to “*all Israel*” in the day when the Lord will “*make up his jewels,*” when “*there shall come out of Zion the deliverer. And shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.*” Romans 11:26

Spiritual discernment is to see and understand, and evaluate character in relation to divine service; to be able to tell the difference between service to God and flesh pleasing ways. The Apostle Paul gives the divine rule for spiritual discernment. It is divine wisdom’ discernment based solely upon spiritual understanding:

“Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Cor. 2:13-14

To judge the acts and character of one according to worldly standards is to fail to “*discern between the righteous and the wicked,*” for “*My thoughts are not your thoughts, saith the Lord,*” and “*that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.*”

* * *

“But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.” James 3:8

One of the most common human weaknesses is a desire to gossip. Scriptural terms for this very bad habit are “*tattlers...slanderers ...talebearers.*” (1 Tim. 5:13, 1 Tim. 3:11, Prov. 18:8)

A tattler is an idle talker, a prater, a busybody, a meddler in the affairs of others. A slanderer is one who gives out an evil report, calculated to injure the reputation of the one slandered, an accuser. The word from which slanderer is translated in 1 Tim. 3:11 is “*diabolos,*” the same word rendered “*devil*” in other scriptural passages. A talebearer is one who tells mischievous tales, and is, therefore, both a tattler and a slanderer. It is not difficult to understand why the scriptures uniformly condemn talebearing in any form. It is the common method by which the “*deadly poison*” of the little member, the tongue, is transmitted.

Talebearing, or gossip can come in varying degrees; all the way from innocent desire to spread news and attract interest in conversation to actual and deliberate slander and defamation of character. The confirmed talebearer is no respecter of persons. Neither friend nor foe is safe from the venom of the wagging tongue. There is a morbid desire to get an audience. He or she seems to give little or no thought to the fact that good reputations may be smeared, friends turned into enemies and sorrow and heartaches created. A high price to pay for a little unwholesome satisfaction; for,

“The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the inmost parts of the belly.” – wounds which may never heal. (Prov. 26:22)

There is a type of talebearer who gossips because he or she loves to prate about the faults and misdeeds of others, apparently in an effort to minimize their shortcomings. One of the worst features of talebearing is that the gossip is rarely content with telling the unvarnished truth. The morbid desire to tell something new and shocking leads them to grossly exaggerate, if not to tell plain falsehoods.

As we consider the odious aspects of talebearing, let us stop and consider to what extent we might be guilty of contributing to the gossip which goes on around us, even though we might feel that we are free from spreading mischievous tales. We read in Prov. 26:20,

“Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no tale-bearer, the strife ceaseth.”

Here is a simple remedy for squelching all talebearing – refuse to listen to it, making it clear that it is not appreciated. Otherwise, one is, often without realizing it, contributing to and encouraging the evil. Let us not furnish any wood for the “*fire.*”

—Bro. Oscar Beauchamp

Analecta Apocalypticae (37) **A Very Gorgeous Picture**

With chapter four we enter upon a new division of the things exhibited to John in the Isle of Patmos. The first three chapters deal with the affairs of the friends of Christ, as organized in separate communities in various parts of the world. Christ in these gives his opinion or judgment of the condition and deportment of these various communities, and advice according to their needs, in such a way as to be beneficial to all his friends afterwards, as we have seen. He now turns John's attention to the future. "I will shew thee things which must be hereafter." John thus addressed finds himself "in the spirit", and a spectator of the scene which becomes visible to him as the result of being in that state.

The picture is a very gorgeous one. It is a picture of over-powering glory and loveliness, symbolic though it be. Nothing more sublime and beautiful could be conceived than the brilliant scene that burst upon his view. A human figure, of dazzling brightness, sits on a shining throne, over-arched by a rainbow of glowing colours. Before the throne, stretching away on all sides, an outspread ocean of glassy splendour and crystalline translucency, on which are grouped before the throne strange but glorious objects; four curiously-formed living creatures glistening all over with eyes, and twenty-four venerable men wearing crowns. Surrounding them on all sides is a countless multitude of the angelic host, forming an outer fringe of glory (chap 5:11). John watches and listens. He sees movements and hears voices among the living symbols. The elders do homage to the central figure, casting down their crowns: the Four Beasts are instinct with life and give forth sounds of praise. The angelic environment take up the anthem, and the vault of heaven rings with the joyous and melodious outpourings of glorious myriads.

What portion of "things which must be hereafter" can be represented by this opening scene? The symbols themselves would almost bring the answer. It is a kingly picture. There is no mistaking the meaning of a throne anywhere. But it is not an ordinary throne. It is a divine throne: for there are seven lamps burning before it to symbolize the Spirit of God, as explained in verse 5, chapter 4. And the occupant of the throne is proclaimed Creator for whose pleasure all things have been created (verse 11). The most superficial consideration of the picture would suggest that the kingdom of God is here symbolized. This View becomes certain when we look at certain details.

Consider for example the words that are sung by the symbolic four living creatures and the twenty-four elders: "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." We know who literally answer to this description. Christ did not die to redeem twenty-four elders and four nondescript creatures: he died to redeem those that were under the law (Gal. 4:4), and also to gather together the children of God that are scattered abroad (John 11:52) -- the other sheep he had which were not of Israel's fold after the flesh (John 10:16), viz., of the Gentiles, whom he afterwards visited by the hand of Peter and Paul, to take out of them a people for his name (Acts 15:14; 26:17-18). Consequently the twenty-four elders and four nondescript living creatures, who in song affirm these things of themselves, are but the symbols of that element of the kingdom of God which consists of the glorified brethren of Christ in their numerical totality.

But why should they be symbolized by four beasts and four-and-twenty elders? There is a very good reason which those only can appreciate who know "the hope of Israel"; and all who truly know the gospel know this. In their corporate completeness, the community to be glorified constitute "the commonwealth of Israel". So Paul styles them (Eph. 2:12), saying that by nature the Gentiles are "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel", but by the gospel become fellow-citizens therein (5:19). The hope of the gospel he styles "the hope of Israel" (Acts 28:20). The man who, though a Gentile, is adopted into the commonwealth of Israel, becomes a Jew, being a Jew inwardly; so Paul says (Rom. 2:29). The Gentile so adopted is likened to a wild branch grafted on the good olive stock of Abraham (Rom. 11:24). The salvation to which he stands related is by Jesus said to pertain to the Jews (John 4:22).

But in what way do these facts furnish an explanation of the employment of four beasts and four-and-twenty elders to symbolize the glorified community of the saints? The answer will be apparent when certain facts are called to mind concerning the house of Israel in the divinely-accomplished and recorded history of the past. When they came out of Egypt, the congregation was divinely organized in four camps, each camp having a standard on which was displayed a beast as the heraldic symbol of the camp. You will find the particulars in the 2nd chapter of Numbers.

1.--THE CAMP OF JUDAH (consisting of the tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun), numbering 186,400 men (verse 9); and each man was to "pitch-by his own standard with the ensign of his father's house" (verse 2).

2.--THE CAMP OF REUBEN (consisting of the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad), containing 151,450 men (verse 16).

3.--THE CAMP OF EPHRAIM (consisting of the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin), 108,100 men (verse 24).

4.--THE CAMP OF DAN (consisting of the tribes of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali), numbered 156,700 men (verse 31).

The ensigns of the four camps were the four animals incorporate in the symbolic cherubim--the lion, ox, man, and eagle. These therefore become symbolic of the Twelve Tribes in four camps. The divine encampment, consisting of the tabernacle and the Levitical families, pitched in the midst of the four camps (Num. 1:53; 2:2). These Levitical families were in the days of David divided into twenty-four priestly orders surrounding the throne and conducting the service of the kingdom, which was a service of worship, in due alternate order (1 Chron. 24). Four beasts and twenty-four elders were therefore the fitting and already-appointed symbols of the kingdom of God: for the kingdom of God, as we have learnt from the gospel, is the kingdom of Israel to be restored. The throne of Christ is the throne of his father, David (Luke 1:32; Isa. 9:7): the throne of David was the throne of the kingdom of Israel (2 Sam. 5:1-5). The rearing up of Christ's throne on the earth is therefore the "raising up of the tabernacle of David that is fallen" (Amos 9:11); the raising unto David a righteous descendant who as "a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth" (Jer. 23:5). Now Jesus promises a participation in the throne to all who secure his approval at the last (Luke 22:30; Rev. 3:21). The scene before us represents in symbol these things accomplished. The four beasts and four-and-twenty elders are eloquent on the subject. They are the heraldry of the kingdom of God, that is, of the kingdom of Israel, past and future. They as distinctly identify the kingdom of David, as the lion and the unicorn and the quarterings of the British shield identify the kingdom of Queen Victoria. The gospel of the kingdom--the hope of the restoration of the kingdom again to Israel under Christ (Acts 1:6; Luke 24:21)--this gives us the interpretation of the splendid symbolism seen by John. You know how powerless the popular theologies are to yield a clue.

See how the details of the symbolism harmonize with the doctrine of the kingdom which it exhibits. The rainbow for example was the appointed token of a covenant of peace between God and the earth's inhabitants (Gen. 9:12): here we have it a prominent object--the canopy of the throne as it were. There is more in this than may appear. It is a pledge of the stability of the glory to be revealed. The revelation of that glory is due solely to the purpose of the Creator. So far as man is concerned there is no reason why it should come, and when it comes, there is no reason why it should stay. The only reason we have for believing it will endure for ever is God's own covenant: "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, as a faithful witness in heaven" (Psa. 89:34). This covenant is the foundation of our hope, and as we behold the gorgeous arch of coloured light over the throne seen by John, we see a guarantee of the perpetual stability of the salvation that will come with the establishment of that throne on the earth.

Then the rainbow brings another idea. It is seen after storm and when peace has come to the elements. There is storm connected with this throne, for as John looked, he saw "that out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices." These in all languages and among all men stand for the symbols of war. When the throne is established, there is war. The nations league themselves to overthrow it (Rev. 19:19). The "war of the great day of God Almighty" ensues (Rev. 16:14). There is no doubt as to the issue: "the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful" (Rev. 17:14). The result is to overthrow the power of them everywhere (Psa. 2:9; 110:5-6; Isa. 24:21; 52:13-15; Ezek. 39:17-22; Zeph. 3:8; Hag. 2:21-22; Zech. 12:1-3; 14:1-9). What comes of this devouring outburst of judgment? "The inhabitants of the earth learn righteousness" (Isa. 26:9). They come from the ends of the earth, and admit they have been entirely led astray in former times (Jer. 16:19). They repair in humble desire to Jerusalem to be instructed in ways of wisdom and righteousness (Micah 4:2), and follow no more "the imaginations of their evil hearts" (Jer. 3:17). Jesus speaks peace to the nations (Zech. 9:10; Ps. 46:9). They abandon war and walk in the light of the Lord (Isa. 2:4-5). After the storm comes sunshine and the resultant rainbow, speaking of peace and stability and of the blessedness with which all the families of the earth will be blessed in Abraham and his seed.

The rainbow over-arching the thundering throne seen by John, tells us of all those things.

Next, take the sea of glass. We might be at a loss to conjecture the significance of this part of the symbolism were we not informed further on (Rev. 17:15) that the oceanic waters shown to him stood for "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues". Though this interpretation did not apply to the sea of glass, but to the turbid sea which formed the base of the symbols representing the Roman polity, still it gives a clue. It gives us the idea of population being represented by the sea, and from this it is easy to extract the conclusion that a difference in the state of the sea represents a difference in the state of the people. Thus if a troubled sea of water stand for a mortal population with its constant uncertainties and vicissitudes, what can a fixed and vitrified translucent sea stand for but for that state to be finally reached by the agency of the kingdom of God, when the human race will be one family of peace and light? "Mingled with fire" we may understand more easily when we know that the state of the verb in the original describes a past accomplished action submitted to, and not a present state. "Having been mingled with fire" gives us the idea more accurately, intimating that the national translucency and peace will have been attained as the result of the purifying fire of judgment.

Another modification of the original will make the language of the symbol more apparent. The elders are said to have "had on their heads crowns of gold". This ought to be stephans of gold. The stephan was a crown of a certain sort; still it was not what we understand by a crown. It was the floral wreath awarded to the victors in the Greek games--a "corruptible" wreath, as Paul terms it; in contrast to the incorruptible stephan that will be bestowed on the faithful. Its significance as contrasted with crown lies in the fact that it is only awarded after a struggle. A crown is an affair of hereditary succession: a stephan can only be acquired by individual prowess. Hence, the fact that the elders were stephaned with gold rather than crowned, intimates that the wearers had been in a previous state of conflict in which they had obtained the victory.

The four beasts were "full of eyes", and they rest not day nor night, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty; which was, and is, and is to come". Eyes, besides representing individualities, are indicative of perception and enlightenment. They may be regarded here as representing the enlightened state of the finally established and glorified commonwealth of Israel, when all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest (Jer. 31:34), in contrast with the blindness of Israel according to the flesh. The continual ascriptions of the four beasts speak to us of an Israel that recognizes its true position and God's relation to all, unlike Israel under Moses, who "with their mouths drew near to God, but their hearts were far from Him."

Surveying the things as a whole--the first scene witnessed by John in the exhibition of things which were to be in John's "hereafter"--it is plain that as the seven candlesticks represent the seven ecclesias, so this more complete and more glorious symbolism represented the

commonwealth of Israel in its glorified and perfect state--the state contemplated in the statement by Jeremiah: "Though I make a full end of all the nations whither I have scattered thee, yet I will not make a full end of thee". People in general are aghast at the suggestion of any connection between this symbolism and the Jewish race. They look at the Jews as they know them in their midst, and they say, "What! are these the heavenly commonwealth?" The mistake they make is in not discriminating between various parts of truth. They overlook the principle laid down by Paul, "They are not all Israel that are of Israel", or rather they misapply this principle. Because the bulk of the Israelitish stock is no part of the finally glorified commonwealth of Israel, they tacitly come to the conclusion that there is no Israel at all, but only so many immortal souls to be saved. They look at Jews who are not really Jews, lacking the character of Abraham, and deny that there are any Jews. The truth will rectify this mistake. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets (Luke 13:28) will awake from the sleep of death when the time arrives for the setting-up of the throne of David; and they will assuredly be joined by myriads of accepted Jews of their stamp, and of as many adopted Gentiles as the Lord may approve at his coming. They will be one Abrahamic polity, and that polity--a royal institution--is symbolized by the glorious throne of four heraldic beasts and four-and-twenty elders.

But here there is an apparent difficulty. The throne was the first thing seen by John. Many things seen after have come to pass, but the kingdom is not yet established on the earth: how can the throne have symbolized the kingdom in that case? The question is answered in two ways by different classes of objectors. There is first the futurist who, accepting the kingdom as an explanation of the throne, says, the kingdom having not yet come, it follows that all the other events--in connection with the seals, trumpets, vials, etc., are all future, because they come after the kingdom in the order of vision. Then there is the orthodox objector, who grants the seals, trumpets, etc., are all past, but insists that the vision of the throne and the elders must be past too, because coming before things admittedly past: this objector contends that in fact, what John saw was a vision of what was in heaven in the days of John, and therefore a proof of the existence of multitudes of the redeemed at that time, and therefore of the existence of men in the death state. The contention of these objectors is that we must either have the seals future or the throne past--that we cannot have the seals past and the throne future--that they are both past or both future.

Looking at the matter from a merely scenic point of view, there would appear to be considerable cogency in this representation. But we must not judge the matter superficially. The right treatment of truth is carefully to give their logical place to the leading facts, and follow the conclusion to which these facts so placed lead us. Treating the matter in this way, we cannot allow unqualified futurity to a vision which connected itself with events actually occurrent in the days of John: as in explanation of the seven heads and the ten-horned beast of the sea: "five (Kings or sovereignties) are fallen; one IS: and the other is not yet come" (Rev. 17:10); and again, "The woman thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (Rev. 17:18). There are other reasons against the futurist view which we glanced at earlier. As to the orthodox objector, we cannot allow him to claim unqualified actuality in the days of John for a vision shown to him under the express intimation that he was to be shown "things which must be hereafter" (Rev. 4:1). Nor can we allow that dead men are alive (Heb. 11:13; Eccl. 9:5; Isa. 38:18), nor that a kingdom to be manifested at the appearing of Christ (2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Peter 5:4; Jas. 2:5) had actual existence in the days of John. The only interpretation admissible is that which suits all the facts of the case. What is that? How comes it that the kingdom should be shown first, and as an institution apparently contemporary with all the events exhibited in the succeeding parts of the Apocalypse?

The answer is to be found in the fact that in an important sense, the kingdom of God has been contemporary with human history from the beginning. Christ expresses that sense in the words which he says will be addressed to the accepted in the day of his appearing: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world". All God has done from the beginning has been the preparation of the kingdom to be entered by the saints at his appearing. Christ illustrates this in all the parables which represent the kingdom as having a present relation to the affairs of men and a present operation among them. He speaks

of it as a mustard seed planted, as leaven hid; as a net submerged in the waters; as a marriage feast for which invitations have been issued; as a vineyard let out to husbandmen, and so on (Matt. 13:13, 33, 47; 22:2; 21:33). If it be asked how he could speak of a kingdom not yet established as a something existing all the while, it has to be remarked that although never yet established in the form in which the saints will be invited to inherit it, it has in point of fact existed since the day that God organized Israel into a kingdom by the hand of Moses (Psa. 114:1-2; Exod. 19:6). The kingdom of God is the kingdom of Israel (Acts 1:5; 2 Chron. 13:8; 9:8). Jesus told the twelve disciples that it was their Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom (Luke 12:32), and when they inherit it, how do we find them enthroned? "Sitting on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:30). The kingdom of God is the kingdom of Christ, and (Eph. 5:5) the kingdom of Christ is the kingdom of David (Luke 1:32; Isaiah 9:6; Jer. 23:5). Consequently, we are enabled to understand what Christ meant when he said to the rulers of the kingdom of David 1,800 years ago: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21:43).

Now because of these things, it is by no means so unnatural as it would otherwise appear for the Apocalypse to represent the kingdom as contemporary with the events that were to transpire among men during the absence of Christ. Christ's own existence supplied this element of coincidence. The person of Christ as the son of David and the Son of God was the kingdom in a nutshell, so to speak. He was the power and essence of the kingdom. This kingdom is his power spread out. While this power is unspread out, the kingdom may be considered as bound up in him, as recognized by the people on his triumphal entry into Jerusalem when they sang "Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Mark 11:10). Though withdrawn from the earth, he has had to do with all that has been going on in the earth. He did not abandon the earth to itself. In fulfilment of his promise (John 15:26) he sent the Spirit upon the apostles, and through them, conducted a great work in the midst of Israel. He established an encampment among them in the order of things founded by the apostles. This encampment became a potent fact in relation to the affairs of men. It was brought to bear on all the habitable in the divine message and invitation it heralded everywhere. It became what dealers in phrases call the *raison d'être* of European politics in their divine regulation. It was the representative of the kingdom of David in relation to the Gentile powers. It was the representative of the kingdom as a coming institution--as a foregone conclusion: not a contingency--not a potentiality, but a certainty, and therefore to be spoken of as all divine purposes are spoken of, in the language of accomplished fact. It was therefore exhibited first in order in the vision of "things which must be hereafter"--first as a fact in a certain form, supplying the starting point of the vision of what would transpire during the times of the Gentiles, and second, as the upshot of all the events that would so transpire. It was the enigmatic illustration of the fact that the purpose of God is the first and last in the affairs of men, and the explanation of the course of those affairs, and the termination of that course in the proposed age of glory. It proclaimed heraldically that that purpose hinges on the kingdom of David. In relation to the times of the Gentiles, the kingdom of David was first and last; and God has regulated those times with reference to the exigencies of that kingdom. The Gentiles exalt their horn over the land of Israel--not by their own prowess, but by divine permission and arrangement because of Israel's sins. -- (See *Ways of Providence*). When they have accomplished the whole work of God upon Israel; the kingdom of David will re-appear. Therefore, it is in harmony with the fitness of things that the kingdom of David should be the beginning of the vision shown to John in Patmos, and the end thereof in the establishment of the Holy City as the Ruler of all the earth.

The symbols employed to represent the kingdom combine both this past and future. They recognize the political reality of the throne of David in the past as the pivot of the divine plan, and at the same time exhibit the divine purpose to establish that throne in the hands of Jesus and the saints as the basis of universal empire in the age to come. Both features are combined, and thus place is found for the apparently incompatible elements of co-existence and futurity, and escape provided from the contradictory theories of the Apocalypse already referred to. The details of the vision throughout are also by this means harmonized.

As an illustration of the difficulty created by other theories in connection with those details, we may point to the fact that the time for raising and judging the dead, and rewarding all the servants of God "small and great", arrives only under the seventh seal in chapter 11:18. How is this to be reconciled either with the idea that the redeemed were in a state of reward in heaven in the days of John, or with the idea that all the seals and all the vision comes after the exaltation of the saints at the coming of Christ? So also with the slaying of the witnesses of Jesus under the fifth seal (chap. 6:9), and the overcoming of the saints by the beast of the sea (chap. 13:7); and a number of other features that may come under our attention in succeeding lectures, all inconsistent alike with the futurist and the orthodox theory. A recognition of the Davidic character of the symbolic throne and its environment of four living creatures and twenty-four elders, relieves the subject of all difficulty on this head, and shows us a programme of intelligible and harmonious events, with the kingdom of David as its basis and starting point, and the kingdom of David as its landing place.

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

Errata

- 1) In *The Berean Christadelphian*, 1994 pg. 21 The article "Fellowship" is by [bro.] Albert Anderson was first published in *The Herald of the Future Age* 1846 pg. 215, not *The Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, and not by Bro. Thomas. Albert Anderson became a brother some time later and is mentioned so by Bro. Thomas.
- 2) In *The Berean Christadelphian*, 1954 pg. 60, 1988 pg. 128 and 1993 pg. 314 "The True Christadelphian Ecclesia" was from *The Christadelphian*, 1887 by Bro. Lemuel Edwards entitled "A True Christadelphian Ecclesia".
- 3) In *The Berean Christadelphian*, 2001 pg. 212, an assembled quotation by Bro. Roberts should have been attributed to both *The Christadelphian* 1876 and 1887.
- 4) In *The Berean Christadelphian*, 1953 pg. 298, an assembled quotation from two different years should have been attributed to Bro. A. Macdougall in *The Christadelphian* 1885 pg. 497 and to Bro. Roberts in *The Christadelphian* 1887 pg. 470.
- 5) In *The Berean Christadelphian*, 1978 pg. 345, a dialog did not need to be attributed to Bro. F.G. Jannaway in *The Christadelphian* 1892. To identify the publication and year is accepted editorial practice.
- 6) In *The Berean Christadelphian*, 1923 pg. 252, 1958 pg. 378, 1975 pg. 374 and 1995 pg. 152, an article entitled "Heresy Hunting A Duty" should have been attributed to Bro. J.J. Andrew in *The Christadelphian* 1886 and not by Bro. Roberts. The article was not quoted or attributed to Bro. Roberts in *The Berean Christadelphian* for 1981 and 1986.
- 7) In *The Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial News*, 2004 pg. 31, "...the group separated from Central." The name Central was not associated with *The Christadelphian's* group. "The term "Central fellowship" would not appear till 10 years after 1923 and, even then, the term was not widely used."
- 8) In *The Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial News web site*, under the section labeled "Fundamental Doctrines" the Berean Restatement reflects the latest 1980 version as reprinted in the June 2007 issue.

Bro. Fred J. Higham

ANTHEM 32

We live in a glorious sphere, whose ordinances are based in the highest beneficence. The grandeur of the glittering firmament on high; the overpowering glory of the splendid sun in the heavens; the softness and benignancy of the "blue ethereal sky;" the pleasant play of light in its infinite variations of color and shade; the invigorating rush of the healthful breeze; the charming fragrance of opening flowers; the beauty of earth's variegated carpet; the pleasure of every healthful function—in fact, the whole paraphernalia of being, reveals the fact that the creating, sustaining, and presiding Genius of heaven and earth is the good and wise and gracious Being revealed to the fathers of the house of Israel.

When to all these we add the promise of life everlasting, a nature incorruptible, society joyful and ennobling, a kingdom unfading, we can see what reason we have for joining—and that rapturously, too, in the exultation of David—

“I WILL EXTOL THEE, MY GOD, O KING, AND I WILL BLESS THY NAME FOR EVER AND EVER. EVERY DAY WILL I BLESS THEE, AND I WILL PRAISE THY NAME FOR EVER AND EVER. GREAT IS THE LORD, AND GREATLY TO BE PRAISED, AND HIS GREATNESS IS UNSEARCHABLE” —Psalm 145:1-2

Psalm 145 is used in 3 of our hymns, covering nearly all of the Psalm’s verses.

May we all remain ever-cognizant of the greatness of Yahweh and of His promised blessings to all those of like precious faith.

God is “the Saviour of all men” (1 Tim. 4:10) in the sense expressed by David when he says “*The Lord is good unto all . . . The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season.*

“*Thou openest Thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.*” —(Psalm 145:15–16.) Jesus expresses the same truth in saying,

“*He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*” —(Matt. 5:45)