

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

MTONDIA, Kenya

Dear Brothers and Sisters, loving greetings in Jesus' saving Name,

On 28th Dec 2009 last year we had a Bible school in which we were blessed with a visit by Bro. John Simiyu Sis. Caro, Bro. Epah Wekati and Sis. Faith Epah.

On that occasion, Bro. Onesimus Mbuvi led us in singing a chorus. And then Bro. Julius Garama led the prayers.

Bro. Simiyu explained how "Man" came about by referring to some chapters as follows; Genesis 1:26, Genesis 2:7 and many others.

"Jesus". Bro. Epah also emphasised about Jesus by referring chapters e.g Luke 1:30 -33. Here we found that the name "Jesus" is the "sun" of God, chosen son who will also Reign on Earth during God's kingdom.

To conclude Bro. Simiyu elaborated about the Kingdom of God. He gave out some chapters as Matthew 6:9, Isaiah 61:6, Daniel 2:44-45 and Genesis 12.

We were glad for all that day, and had enjoyed much.

The Bible school was to take two days. But because of shortages of water we could not proceed.

May GOD BLESS YOU ALL,
Love in the Hope of Israel,
Bro. Julius Garama

CANTON, Ohio – Sunday School, Sunday 10:00 AM; Breaking of Bread, Sunday 11:00 AM; Bible Class Tuesday 6:00 PM; at Mayfield Senior Center, Bro. Beryl Snyder, 4095 Prosway S. W., Massillon, Ohio, 44646

“Peace be both to thee, and peace be to thine house, and peace be unto all that thou hast.” (1 Samuel 25:6)

As we journey on our way to the Kingdom of God, in this age of Gentile dominion, we must many times cope with situations that are hard to endure. We are deeply saddened as we write. Our bro. Michael Phillips has found it necessary to withdraw over walk and conduct issues. We pray he will reconsider the course he has chosen and repent with a sincere heart these thoughts and actions.

We greatly fear this trend in our young brothers and sisters, aligning themselves with the thoughts and ways of the ungodly people that surround us. It is our fervent hope that the wisdom of Solomon is taken to heart by both young and old, *“My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.”* (Proverbs 1:10) *“My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path:”* (Proverbs 1:15). The truth is more than a system of rules and commands. It is a fool proof system to change hearts and minds of man to Godliness; to bring us in line with what Yahweh requires in His elect. We strongly urge our young brothers and sisters to consider it in your heart *“that the LORD he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else. Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, forever.”* (Deuteronomy 4:39-40) *“If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?”* (Proverbs 24:12)

Since our last communication we have had the agreeable association with Bro. Steve & Sis. Elizabeth Male around the table of the Lord. We would like to thank brother Steve for the much needed words of encouragement around the table of the Lord.

Each generation has had its share of troubles. We must live through the good and bad times during our probationary period. Paul cautioned Timothy, *“in the last days perilous times shall come.”* Should we expect anything different? It is vital we put all our efforts into the “truth.” Not wasting precious time with the foolish things of the world. Our duty is to *“establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”* (James 5:8)

Bro. Beryl Snyder, Recorder

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,

We have been alone in this northern part of the vineyard and have been blessed with the goodness that Yahweh provides us and the strength from His daily Word. Our contact each week around the table of our absent Lord with Bro. Bob and Sis. Mary Widding of Little Rock has helped all of us with the refreshment that only contact in the bonds of the Truth can provide. Our study of Eureka together has helped to a better understanding of the plan of salvation and Yahweh's grand design. The words of Elpis Israel study, in the week, often tie in with the thoughts from Eureka. Our weekly contact with the Boston ecclesia, through Skype in our study of Phanerosis, is a refreshing oasis in our lives.

Our travels to Texas, for our Sis. Caroline's funeral, emphasized the frailty of our life and the nearness of Christ's return. Our meeting with the brethren and sisters of Lampasas and Goldthwaite was a welcome respite in the midst of a cold winter. We had a lovely visit on our return journey with Bro. Bob and Sis. Mary in Conway Arkansas where we and our dogs renewed acquaintances. We were thankful for a safe return to the comfort of home just ahead of an ice and snow storm.

On a rather sad note, we report the withdrawal from fellowship of our Sis. Lisa Readman. Our prayers are with her during her trial. We pray that she will once again be able to unite with us around the table of the Lord as we wait the day of the soon return of our Lord and Master.

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

Holy Land Trip

Our plans are continuing for another trip to the Holy Land in May, 2011, God willing. We expect more people than we had on our first trip and should have prices firmed up in a couple of months. Instead of going down into Egypt we hope to visit a few places that Paul travelled to: Athens, Corinth and Cenchrea before departing for home. You may see the complete itinerary at the Richard web site (richardbereans.com). We look forward to the day when we will all assemble at Jerusalem to enjoy that marriage feast prepared for those that are accounted worthy. What a glorious hope we can look forward to. Please contact Bro. Jim Sommerville for further information.

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

HOUSTON FRATERNAL GATHERING.....April 9–11, 2010

Bro. Michael Kramer, 8008 Junius St, Houston, TX 77012

HENGOED FRATERNAL GATHERING.....May 21–24, 2010

Bro. Steve Male, 19 Glas Y Gors, Aberdare, CF44 0BQ, Wales, UK. Email tiscali.co.uk

LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING.....June 11–13, 2010

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

HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING..... July 26–Aug 1, 2010

Bro. Mark Braune, 209 Ranger Drive, Buda, TX 78610, USA. 1-512-295-2868, email markbraune@gmail.com

The Study Class will be on the

book of Daniel.

NE FRATERNAL GATHERING – BOSTON.....Oct 9-10, 2010

Bro. Steve Osborne, 35 Shady Lane, Northboro, MA 01532 503-393-5721

steve.sharon@verizon.net The theme will be on “God Manifestation”

The BCAA

A website called Berean Christadelphian Audio Archives, or BCAA for short, has made available a large selection of talks on MP3.

The address is www.bcaudioarchives.blogspot.com. Please bookmark this link as we will be updating this archive with new material as much as possible.

The main purpose of this site is to restore and make available lectures, exhortations, and study classes. Some of these talks are decades old and have seldom been heard. The quality of the material will vary; they have been transferred from audio cassettes and reel to reel tapes. Some have occasional distortion and tape flips.

It is an ongoing project, and we have lots of material to work with. However, we are always looking for tapes, and if you have some talks that you would like to share, please email either Bro. Craig Kiley (craigkiley@yahoo.com) or Bro. Noah Brown (sbsugar@gmail.com) and we will be happy to transfer the talks to mp3 format and post them.

Any comments and questions are very welcome; we want this website to become a resource for brethren and sisters worldwide.

God Enthroned in the Ecclesia

This morning our thoughts will be on the structure of the Mosaic Tabernacle as a whole and its significance as the pictorial manifestation of God revealed among men. All the Tabernacle appointments were for glory and for beauty—Divine glory and for spiritual beauty. Glory and beauty characterize everything pertaining to God, and we must get in harmony with the glory and beauty of God, for literally we are ugly—sin is ugly; the flesh is ugly; human nature is ugly.

Moses' face shone with the glory of God, for when he came down from the revelation of these things he had to cover his face, for Israel could not look upon him. Paul tells us that this symbolizes their groveling, earthly blindness. That true believers see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; that they grow daily more like Him from glory to glory. Glory means excellence, and excellence means betterness. We are changed into the same image from glory to glory, from betterness to betterness, closer and closer to the divine ideal, to the perfect beauty of character, spirituality, divinity, godliness. The whole purpose of our lives is to increase in glory and in beauty, in excellence, in holiness, in godliness, in beauty of character, in fullness of love, in depth of understanding. If this does not occur, we live in vain.

Solomon declares, “*God has made everything beautiful in His time*” (Eccl. 3:11). Only beauty, true beauty, is eternal. All else must pass away. The very existence of beauty, the basic beauty of all God's works from the smallest to the greatest is one of the greatest arguments for divinity and is against the theory of evolution. Evolution is blind, earthly, grubby, carnal. It has no place or explanation for beauty and for glory.

The Tabernacle was God's plan, God's initiative, God's instruction. “*See thou make it according to the pattern shown thee*” (Exod. 25:40). It was a great act of love and condescension upon God's part to dwell with Israel and to speak with them. God went all the way in approaching to man and taking them to Himself, but there were very strict regulations—no familiarity, no carelessness, no thoughtlessness in God's presence. Among the very first things that happened in connection with this Tabernacle was the death of the High Priest's eldest sons, Nadab and Abihu. God must be honored in those who dare approach unto Him. Those who dwell in His presence must be sober, mature, circumspect, reverent. God will not tolerate careless, thoughtless, slipshod, half-hearted service.

The next great lesson was that God is only to be found where and how He appoints, “*This is life eternal that they might know thee*” (John 17:3), and He can only be known by that which He reveals about Himself; therefore, it is our wisdom to learn all we can that He has lovingly revealed.

How much do we really study the divine message? Half an hour a day is two percent of our life, and how many do even that? What tremendous dividends we expect from such paltry investments! There are fifty chapters of the Bible devoted to the Tabernacle and its service. We are told that all Scripture is given for doctrine, instruction, correction and reproof in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect—we have a long way to go, and these are things that point the way.

As we notice from our readings, particularly in the book of Hebrews, much of the language of the New Testament has its foundation in the Tabernacle service and cannot be understood without a comprehension of these things: the veil, the mercy seat, propitiatory, laver, altar, priest, high priest, the Lamb of God, sacrifice, offering, candlestick, the shedding of blood, the Tabernacle, the Temple, the Passover, the Firstfruits. All these are parts of the picture of the glory and beauty of God that the New Testament reveals in Old Testament terms. All the deep principles of godliness are graphically and vividly portrayed in the Tabernacle service: holiness, obedience, glory, consecration, beauty, sacrifice, unity, dedication,

fellowship, rejoicing, thanksgiving, forgiveness, mercy, reverence and love.

The Tabernacle was the center of the nation's life. This is what gave it purpose, futurity and hope. It stood in the center of the camp, but it stood majestically alone. The tents of Israel would be of black goat's hair. And in a large central area, separated from all these tents by an open space, the white walled Tabernacle stood in isolated splendor—a white center of purity in the midst of black humanity, with the overshadowing cloud of God's love and providence hovering above it.

Well could Balaam say as he looked down upon this sight from the heights of Moab, "*How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy Tabernacles, O Israel*" (Num. 24:5)—a beautiful God ordered array with God in the center. Apart from this, Israel would be just another dark, purposeless human mass, but this glorious object in their midst and their divinely instructed arrangement around it gave the whole assembly meaning and purpose and a divinely established dignity. It lifted them from the common perishing horde and related them to eternity. Human life without God is a dark and meaningless tragedy of sorrow and of death—a purposeless existence of a few brief joys, ever increasing heartache, and eventual black oblivion. "*Vanity of vanities, all is vanity,*" but God in the midst changes everything from darkness to light. For God is a God of hope, and of life and futurity, of beauty and holiness and glory. The Tabernacle taught all these things. God enthroned in the midst of Israel, in the ecclesia, in our hearts and lives. How great is His beauty and how great is His goodness!

The pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night showed God's preservation and care and guidance and overshadowing love for His people. It visibly manifested His presence and favor to all Israel. Only the High Priest entered the Most Holy and he but once a year, and only he saw the Shekinah Glory of God's manifestation between the Cherubim, and even then it had to be obscured by the cloud of the incense, lest he die. But even the humblest and the farthest removed could see the cloud over the Tabernacle. When the cloud moved, they moved; and when it stayed, they rested (Num. 9:23).

What a tremendous privilege to move with God, to go where He goes, to stay when He stays, to always be in step with God, borne along by His manifested presence—no other love or interests but to follow God. The wilderness pilgrimage was a glorious privilege or a bitter burden, according as Israel saw it with natural or with spiritual eyes.

Israel was closer to God then than at any time in their subsequent history. They had a far greater manifestation of His presence and power; but the most outstanding of the Tabernacle lessons, as Paul points out, was that it was a barrier. It signified that the way into the Holiest was not yet made manifest. But still, it bore a tremendous message of condescension for the present and promise for the future. It taught them of God's unapproachable holiness, but it also showed them His love. It held them at a distance, and yet it foreshadowed perfect communion in the end. Christ came "*not to destroy the Law but to fulfill it*" (Matt. 5:17)—to fulfill all its glorious prophecies and promises.

In His love and wisdom, God always tempers outward restriction with inward promise—outward sorrow with inward joy. Even in our present wilderness journey every tribulation has its compensating greater blessing, and every loss has its compensating greater gain

When Moses went up into the mount for 40 days, the very first thing that God said to him was (Exodus 25), "*Speak unto the children of Israel that they bring me an offering.*" What can man offer to God? And yet, God allows us to give. He gives to us first that we may have the pleasure of giving to Him, for all is of Him. "*And let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them*" (Exod. 25:8). This was the first message, "*and there will I meet with the children of Israel*" (v. 21).

Fifteen (3 x 5) different types of gifts are commanded to be brought, but the essential requirement was, as we read in verse 2, "*of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering.*" Nothing grudging, no compulsion, every one whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work of the Lord to do it.

Are we among the joyful and blessed number, whose heart stirs them up continually to the work of the Lord? Not as a duty, a task or a burden, but as an eager, irresistible fire in our bones. What an inestimable blessing! Yet this divine joy is freely available to all who seek it. As with the Mosaic Tabernacle, so with the everlasting Tabernacle that God is building from the human race, an eternal dwelling place of God by His Spirit. It must be from the abundance of eager and willing hearts.

In Exodus 36:5 we read that "*the children of Israel brought too much,*" and they had to be stopped from bringing. God would accept no more. There are two deep and solemn lessons here; first, the time comes when it is too late. Those who had been dilatory, who had not brought up to that time, now had no opportunity to take part in the Tabernacle. The door was shut. And secondly, how do we compare with Israel in this matter? Could it ever be said of us that we bring too much—too much liberality, too much labor in the work, too much devotion to divine things, too much manifestation of love? Is there any possible danger that what we have done for God may be considered an over abundance; or could it possibly be the other way around—too little?

The most precious things of the Tabernacle—those most significative of Christ and his work—must be carried by hand. Both the altars, the table of shewbread, the candlestick, the ark, were all borne upon the shoulders by staves. These things could not be carried in carts, though carts were available. It must be personal human labor—nothing mechanical, nothing impersonal, nothing delegated. For the important things of life only personal care and attention and effort will do. Do we perceive the lesson? Salvation is a very personal thing, calling for very personal effort and labor. There were six carts that carried all the outer framework of the tabernacle. This is all our external ecclesial framework and organization, but the inner things must be borne for the whole long wilderness journey on loving and consecrated shoulders. An ecclesial organization will not save us. Our salvation will depend upon how faithfully and lovingly, and above all, how joyfully and cheerfully we have put our own shoulder to the work of the Lord.

We are impressed with the compactness of the Tabernacle. It was all separate pieces easily taken apart for removal, and yet full provision was made for knitting and bonding it together firmly that it should be a unity, one Tabernacle. Bonding, linking, stabilizing, joining together is a prominent feature throughout all its construction. We can readily see in

natural things that the more firmly anything is bound together the stronger it is, the more it can withstand, the more it can accomplish; but do we perceive the importance, the absolute necessity of this in spiritual things?

The Tabernacle consisted of three parts: the court, the Holy Place, and the Most Holy. And these three contained among them seven items: two in the court, the altar and the laver—sacrifice and sanctification; three in the Holy Place, the table of shewbread, the candlestick and the altar of incense—fellowship, testimony and worship; and in the Most Holy two, the ark and the mercy seat above it—the manifestation of God in Christ. And we see a straight line, the altar, the laver, the altar of incense—redemption, sanctification, intercession, worship and prayer. And then the veil that was rent to give access to the perfect state when God shall be all in all.

In the Holy Place—the present probation of God’s people—on the one hand is the candlestick, the irradiating testimony, both within the ecclesia and to the world, and on the other hand the table of shewbread, fellowship and communion together and with God—for the ‘bread of the faces’ or of God’s presence.

Regarding the boards that make up the framework, we read in Exodus 26:15, “*Thou shalt make boards for the Tabernacle of shittim wood, standing up.*” Why standing up? Why were not the boards lying down horizontally as in any ordinary construction? Could we possibly miss the meaning and the lesson? Are we standing up? Standing up for the Truth? Standing up for the work of the Lord? Standing up to the full stature of the perfect man in Christ Jesus? Paul says, “*Put on the whole armour of God . . . that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth*” (Eph. 6:13, 14).

“*The evil day*” that can prevent us from being found standing at the end can come in many deceptive ways—some very pleasant to the flesh, not perceivable to the natural eye as evil at all, only evil in their final consequence. We must keep standing, even when weary and it is much more pleasant to lie down with the world.

The boards were not only standing, but they were standing close together—shoulder to shoulder, no space between them. They were knit together on each side of the Tabernacle by five bars, and each board reached down two *tenons* (the original word is *hands*)—two hands into silver foundation sockets of redemption in Christ. Each board was covered and preserved by the pure gold of present faith and future immortality. The sockets of silver supported the boards, and they separated them from the earth.

The boards had originally been trees, rooted naturally in the earth, but they had been selected and cut down—brought low, stripped of all their branches and natural glory—shaped, trimmed, smoothed, and dressed to fit God’s pattern, and then overlaid with purest gold. Now they had no connection with the desert upon which they stood, but a very close and intimate connection with one another and with the pure silver sockets of redemption, and with the glorious curtains of righteousness and beauty. They were fitly framed together and builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. They were all perfectly equal in height, for one is their master and they are all brethren.

The silver sockets were the one exception to the freewill character of all the materials of the Tabernacle. The gold of faith was the freewill offering of all, both men and women, but the redemption silver was the compulsory requirement for the men only—one half shekel for each male. The rich could not give more and the poor could not give less. All stood upon equal footing as regards redemption in Christ (Exod. 30:13-15).

Freewill offering here was not enough. This was a ransom for man’s forfeited life. “*Each man shall give a ransom for his soul of one half shekel.*” His helpless bondage to sin and need for redemption must be emphasized in the foundation of this building. Here is something that no amount of voluntary offering, eager and freewill though it might be, could accomplish. There was more silver used in the Tabernacle than gold and brass combined. The atoning sacrifice of Christ must be the major foundation aspect of the way of salvation. He must have the pre-eminence in all things, as we read in the first chapter of Hebrews.

The boards were knit together by five bars on each side—four bars through the golden rings on each board, and a fifth bar right through the center of the boards. “*And he made the middle bar to shoot (reach) through (sever) the boards from the one end to the other*” (Exod. 36:33). (See Law of Moses p. 139, 3rd edition.)

Here is a strange combination of the four - five symbol; four visible bars and one hidden one, making five. What is it that holds the ecclesia together, that makes it a unit, that changes it from a number of boards standing precariously alone, to one firm Tabernacle—the House of God? Though many things can unite temporarily and carnally, there is only one thing that can unite spiritually and eternally, and that is the Truth, the law, the Word of God. Here are four manifested bars clasped to each board by a golden ring of faith—the universal Cherubim gospel of Christ, and one hidden bar shot through the wall from end to end and hidden in the heart of every board—the foundation of all, the law of God in the heart, making five in all. Bars are to bind together, to keep out that which does not belong, to give protection and security, rigidity, stability. They are a girding and a strengthening—loins girded with the Truth Only the Truth can accomplish all this.

The cloth coverings are distinguished into three parts; the first of which is the Tabernacle. In the original the Hebrew is *miskan*; this word is from the same root as *shekinah*—the inner dwelling. This does not carry the idea of impermanence or temporariness. It simply means *dwelling*, particularly in a religious or divine sense. That is the first linen layer—the dwelling place or *miskan*. The second layer was the tent of goat material—the *ohel*. This is the true meaning of tent or temporary dwelling. The distinguishing into the three layers is clear and significant. The covering of the two outer layers were ram skins (the third), and badger skins or seal skins. (The word is a little indefinite; it was natural skins of some sort.)

The first alone is the actual Tabernacle—the ten linen curtains, two groups of five—two groups knit together by fifty golden fasteners. Here again is the double five symbol, and the fifty fasteners of gold turn our mind immediately to Pentecost—the connecting link between Jew and Gentile. These ten curtains were of the same material as the veil—blue,

scarlet, purple and fine twined linen, worked with cunning work of Cherubim. These ten curtains are the Christ-Body, as the veil is the Christ-Head. They alone are the true tabernacle. The rest is simply temporary scaffolding and covering. This great embroidered linen sheet, fifty feet by seventy feet approximately, covered the entire Tabernacle, top, sides and back.

The second layer was of goats' hair—eleven curtains and slightly larger each way than the linen covering. These are in two uneven groups, five and six. They are united, not by golden fasteners but by brass fasteners—fleshly fasteners. This second layer of goats' hair is the earth that helps the woman—the natural goat class. They obscure the true linen curtains. This is all the world can see of the Tabernacle. The five—the Word or law of God—unequally yoked together with the six by fleshly brazen fasteners—the number of man and of the flesh. Here we can see the unequal yoking of some who claim to be God's people with the world. This covering is useful in its place as a temporary shield, but it is not the true eternal Tabernacle. It is very easy to belong to this half and half class. Many of us will find in the end that that is where we have been—half in and half out, half in the Tabernacle (half in the Truth) and half in the world—the five yoked with the six, an unequal yoking. When the Son of Man comes, his sad but necessary task will be to separate the sheep from the goats.

The third layer was ram skins dyed red. Here is blood, aggression, the power of the sword. Here, clearly are the powers of the world whose sole real purpose in existence, though they know it not, is for the protection of the Tabernacle.

And finally, the fourth outer layer of badger or seal skins, just a final natural outer covering laid over all. This final covering is nature or creation itself. The lesson is that all things are for the sake of God's elect—all creation is for their good. Great nations come and go just to forward slightly God's purpose with His people. Are we worthy to be the center of the purpose of creation? The fine linen will finally be found to be so worthy, and there is no reason why we should not be among them, if we make this the sole and consuming desire of our lives.

Finally, we consider the veil—the veil that separates the Holy Place from the Most Holy. The veil of his flesh, as Paul describes it, that which stood in the way, that which obscured the way and had to be torn asunder that the way may be opened. This is the meaning of the word *veil*—that which *separates, shuts off or obscures*. This veil was held up—manifested on four pillars, the four Cherubim pillars, the four gospels, the four-fold camp of spiritual Israel. The veil was of the same material as the ten inner linen curtains—Christ and his brethren are one. Fine linen of strong closely twisted threads interwoven with blue, scarlet, and purple, and skillfully embroidered with Cherubim figures.

The word translated *needlework* in connection with the embroidery of these Cherubim really means *skillfully*, and its root meaning we find is to combine colors into a pattern, though it is used of any skillful work. We see the great fittingness in the work of God in Christ—skillfully combining the heavenly blue with the earthly scarlet to produce the royal and victorious purple. The creating of the Cherubim is all the skillful work of God. *“It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure”* (Phil. 2:13). Our part is simply to submit, to expose ourselves to the divine light and let it do its work, to empty ourselves with all that interfered with the work of God in us, to keep a steadfast unwavering gaze upon the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ that we may thereby be changed into the same image from glory to glory. It is all something that is done to us, not that we ourselves do.

This word *needlework* or *embroidery* occurs nine times in the Scriptures, eight times in connection with the Tabernacle, and once in that remarkable prophetic passage in Psalm 139 concerning Christ. *“I will praise thee for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works...my substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought”* (that is the word *embroidered*—skillfully and beautifully worked) *“in the lowest parts of the earth”* (Psa. 139:14,15). This is the same word as the *embroidery* of the Cherubim upon the veil and the curtains.

When Christ died, when the sacrifice was complete, this veil was miraculously rent asunder—the way into the Holiest was opened—Mosaic shadows were at an end. He said, *“It is finished”* (John 19:30)—completed, perfected. At that moment all the marvelous imagery of the Mosaic Tabernacle reached its climax and fulfillment. The world's hopeless darkness had been turned into joyful light; sin had been conquered; death had been destroyed; truth and holiness were victorious, and the grave had lost its power.

Paul said, in summing up his wonderful exposition of the Mosaic patterns to the Hebrew brethren, *“Having therefore, brethren, boldness (or confidence) to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled (with the sacrificial blood) from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water (in the laver). Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works”* (Heb. 10:19-22, 24).

We note how he combines the sublime with the practical—highest vision of the future with the most pressing command for the present—love and good works; a beautiful all sufficient combination—love and good works. How do we provoke any one to love and to good works? To provoke is to stir up to activity, either for good or otherwise. We provoke to love and to good works by manifesting love and good works. Love begets love and nothing else will. Love can not be commanded; it must be taught, manifested, exemplified.

There is no point in merely preaching these things; we must manifest them, praying that God will provide vessels for picking up the radiations and carrying them on. Paul continues: *“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.”* This is vital, and it does not just mean Sunday morning; it must be an eager, constant, basic way of life. *“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together”* (Heb. 10:25). If we do not assemble when there is opportunity to assemble—Sunday morning, Sunday evening, mid-week, (let us speak frankly) we are the most blind and foolish of all blind fools. What do we think the way of life is? A once-a-week ritual, like Christendom? Indeed many in the assemblies of Christendom could put us to shame. If our heart is not with the ecclesial activities always and our bodies whenever possible, we are living a lie and deceiving ourselves. *“Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together... but exhorting one another, and so much the more, as ye see the day*

approaching.”

Earlier in the Epistle (Heb. 3:13) he says, “*Exhort one another daily.*” Now he says, “*...as the day approaching,*” and certainly we are at that era. “*So much the more,*” we should bear this in mind, in case we feel that a couple of evenings a week is too much to interfere with our personal pleasure or worldly activities. To the real children of God—those few whom He will acknowledge in the end—the Truth is their whole life—daily, hourly, constantly. They always abound in the work of the Lord. Their heart is always in the Truth and the brotherhood. They grieve when they have to miss any ecclesial activity, knowing that the body needs all its members to be healthy and to function.

Let us prayerfully strive to be among the few chosen from the many that are called.
—*Bro. G V Growcott*

Hast Thou Considered My Servant Job

About this time each year our daily readings takes us to the book of Job. Today, we are almost at the end of this book of 34 chapters. But, what do we really know about this book? For instance, did you realize that it is the only non-Jewish book of the Bible? Because when you collect the names, places and characters of the story of Job, it takes you to an area somewhere between the Dead Sea and the desert region which is occupied by people that we call Arabs today. Job is called one of the “Men of the east” – A term often applied to the Ishmaelites and Edomites, from which modern day Arabs descended. Now according to Bro. Growcott, the most likely time of Job would be during Israel’s 230 years in Egypt. And, the pioneer brethren generally agree that Moses is most likely the writer of Job. Actually, Moses may have known Job during his 40 years in Midian since Job was the greatest of “the men of the east” (And therefore probably the best known.)

So, don’t you think it unusual that this great example of patience and suffering is not a Jew—but a Gentile and an Arab at that!—A race of people that has always been and still is antagonistic to the Jews. So here is a man who is projected as the model of patience – who was not a Jew – he was not under the law – Actually, had nothing to do with the Law – as a matter of fact he had nothing to do with Israel either! – And yet, he is put in the company of Noah and Daniel, as three outstanding examples of righteousness.

James tells us that Job is the prime example of patience and faithful suffering. Speaking of suffering, -- this is the **BIG** question that is asked over and over in this book isn’t it? – Why do the righteous suffer? And the answer in Job comes through loud and clear—which is—we must totally trust in God without question or reservation. Ask yourself, no matter what happens, do I completely put my faith in God’s love, mercy, judgment, and justice regardless of the appearances and circumstances. You see, it is vitally important that we understand that God has a reason and a purpose for the suffering of His people. Now, we may not know the reason or understand why – But we do know this — that “it is through **MUCH** tribulation that we will enter the kingdom.” You see, the purpose of trials, tribulations, and suffering is for our ultimate glorification. We are expected to accept God’s ways without hesitation, because He is the Creator. He knows the “end from the beginning” and He knows and understands the reason for all things—even though we may not. For, He has made known to you and me His infinite wisdom and power.

Brothers and sisters — we are not at liberty to pick and choose the different aspects of God’s plan and purpose that we like or don’t like. We either accept the whole picture or reject it!! Because, for us to question God’s ways in light of His overpowering Greatness is obviously a bad idea!! You see, this is the lesson of Job, because in the end God displayed His wisdom, love, and compassion. So, the lesson to us is—we must have unwavering trust in God—regardless of our circumstances. For he tells us “*In ALL thy ways acknowledge Him and He will direct our paths.*” After all, He is shaping and forming our character now in order to be fit subjects in the Kingdom of God later—(If we do our part faithfully.)

You see, Job was privileged to be an example for all of us, of what true righteousness and faith **really** is. Because, the exhortation we should derive from Job’s example is—that trials, tribulations, and suffering are but avenues whereby we may eventually be made perfect by that suffering! Just look at Job’s history—He was the most righteous man of his day—an example of faith and endurance. God himself tells us that he was “perfect and upright” and there was “none like him in all the earth.” Yet in spite of this, he still had something to learn—something that needed to be developed and brought to completion. And I think there is no doubt that Job was a better, wiser, greater, more compassionate and understanding man who was much closer to God after his terrible ordeal, than before. For, he is the only person (other than Christ) to receive a direct manifestation from God, a fervent request he had pleaded for, so that he might state his case. Brothers and sisters, we will never endure what Job endured. He lost his family, livelihood, and possessions. He was struck with the most painful and consuming form of leprosy which resulted in prolonged and agonizing suffering. His wife eventually turned against him, as did his friends and acquaintances and he was abandoned and cast out of the city. Now, just what do you think our reaction to these circumstances would have been? Well, I shudder to think what my answer would be! But I will tell you that Job’s answer was unhesitating, total acceptance of God’s will. He said “*The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord.*”

And then his friends show up—but they were so shocked by his appearance and misery that they did not utter a word for 7 days! Then when they did talk, they condemned him and accused him of being the wickedest of sinners. And like most of us, Job was hoping for a little comfort, compassion, sympathy and support. But, even this disappointment had its intended effect. It showed him that there was no one and nowhere else to turn to for real comfort and understanding but God Himself. Can we see how God molds and guides us through trials? As it turns out, his friends’ condemnation was an **ESSENTIAL** part of the trial that contributed to the final result. You see, Job’s troubles were allowed to happen in order to demonstrate Job’s righteousness and to show all following generations of believers the way in which trials and tribulations should be perceived and handled. Therefore as hard as it is for us to think about, — it is necessary that the lesson of Job be impressed upon our minds. Because God’s plan is to develop us through trials, trouble, challenges and adversity – for we are promised that “through **MUCH**

tribulation” we are to enter the Kingdom of God. Now the reason for that is — that man cannot be made to understand his true position in God’s creation — which is being totally and completely dependant upon Him — without being made lowly and humbled by trials, tribulations, chastisement and correction.

That is why people of the world do not understand the lesson of Job correctly. In their prosperity and easy living they become too self-conceited and self-reliant. They are easily absorbed in worldly things and how to advance themselves in it. Actually the Scriptures give us a true picture of this class of people in Psalms and Job.

In Psalms 73 verses 4-11 he says- *“Their strength is firm, they are not in trouble as other men. Therefore pride compasseth thee about as with a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness. They have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt and speak wickedly concerning oppression. They prosper in the world, they increase in riches.”*

Then Job 21 Verses 8-15 tells us- *“Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes. Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them...therefore they say unto God depart from us for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty that we should serve Him? And, what profit should we have if we pray unto Him?”*

God has no use for this class of people because He made the earth for His own glory and these only glorify themselves. This is precisely why we are told that “God hath called the poor of this world rich in faith heirs of the Kingdom which he hath promised to those that love Him.” Do we not yet understand that trials, adversity and trouble are our school of discipline? You see, God does not inflict tribulation just because He can, — but He does it with an objective in mind! Therefore He guides and regulates the degree of trial in order that the objective may be obtained which is “that we may be made partakers of His holiness” and hopefully we can understand that it is done in love—for we are told “whom the Lord **LOVETH**, He chasteneth.” Even our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was not exempt for He also *“learned obedience by the things which He suffered.”*

The exhortation we need to take from Job’s experience is how he reacted to his trouble. We find the answer to that in his attitude toward God during his experience which needs to be separated from his attitude toward the trouble itself. We are told that “In all this Job sinned not with his mouth, nor charged God foolishly” – here Bro. Roberts states “This implies that in the treatment of this subject, it is possible to sin AND to charge God with folly.” Now just think about it, how many times have we heard someone say “what have I done to deserve this” or “why would God allow this to happen.” Bro. Roberts tells us that “In such utterances, men sin with their mouth in that they charge God foolishly. They make the comfort of the creature, whom God permits to live, the standard by which they judge the actions of (as they suppose) an irresponsible Creator.”

But Job’s way of dealing with trouble and trials is the scriptural model for us to try to follow however difficult it may be. For Job said “Shall we receive good at the hands of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?” – “the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away.” – “He doeth as it pleaseth Him.” – “None can say to him, what doest thou.” – “though he slay me, yet will I trust Him.”

We, brothers and sisters need to learn, as Job needed to learn that trials, troubles, tribulations and adversity have many uses in the love and wisdom of God. They are tools for constructive and loving discipline and directional chastisement to strengthen us by training and mental exercise to deepen our faith and resolve for our edification and purification and lead us to a fuller understanding of God’s wisdom and glory.

You see, through it all, Job held fast his trust in God, and he refused to deviate from his dedication to righteousness. Because he knew that at the end of the day, if he remained steadfast and unmovable that he would be eventually be raised to enjoy the blessings God has in store for all who would follow his example. As a matter of fact, there is no greater example of faith than is expressed by him while he was totally in the depths of despair and misery when he said “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. ...He shall be my salvation!...If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee...”For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.”

Job knew his dedication and steadfastness to righteousness would lead to beneficial results. And we, brothers and sisters, understand that too. But from time to time we need to be reminded that not only should we be prepared for sufferings — But we are assured that suffering of some type will be a part of our probation. The apostle Peter tells us “Beloved think it NOT STRANGE concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; But REJOICE, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings: that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad with exceeding joy....for it is better, if the will of the Lord be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing....For what glory is it if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently? But if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God....For the eyes of the Lord are ever on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers....Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.”

Now, the other lesson Job had to learn was humility. Job asked for an audience with God basically to convince Him that He must have made a mistake! Well, the fact that God would stoop to talk to man at all was highly unusual, especially one who was calling His ways into question. But what we see is God answered Job’s questions by not answering them. Instead HE spoke of His wonderful creation and His might and power in the way He maintains the stars, moon, sun and galaxy after galaxy with little effort. Then Job was embarrassed when he realized the total stupidity of daring to challenge God and to question His ways. Job became completely convinced that whatever God did must be right and is rooted in love and wisdom concerning the future. You see, the whole lesson of God’s self-manifestation to Job was to show the unlimited power and greatness of God and the utter smallness of man. Bro. Growcott asks us to think about this – “If God had stooped to explain himself to Job BEFORE totally humbling him by the recognition of his nothingness, —then God would have been conceding man’s right to judge God and demand an answer for his ways. And this right, man must be made to fully understand, that he does not have. It is absurd (says bro. Growcott) and unthinkable that puny little ignorant created man should for one moment question his Creator.”

Now we all know that the scriptures tell us that “Christ learned obedience by the things which he suffered.” Now the question I ask myself is—If God used suffering to teach his only begotten son, our Lord and Savior (who never sinned) obedience during his probation—then I pretty much know what me, a sinner, should expect. Because Christ—who we meet to memorialize this morning suffered more than any one ever has – before or since—but he remained obedient even unto death. And although Christ’s experience was far superior to Job’s, there are some striking parallels in their lives. For instance—

1. Both were outstanding righteous men of their time.
2. Both suffered more grievously than is recorded of any other men.
3. God knew that both would be faithful and steadfast unto the end.
4. Both were shamed, persecuted and derided.
5. Both were utterly despised and rejected by their generation.
6. Both were assumed to be accursed by God by their friends.
7. And both learned obedience through suffering.

So, as we turn our attention to the emblems and remember the suffering and sacrifice that the sinless son of God made on our behalf, may we at the end of our probation, like the apostle Paul have the confidence to say “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, **I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH:** Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not only for me, but for all them also that love His appearing.”

(We are appreciative for the works of Bro. Robert Roberts and Bro. Rene Growcott for their knowledge and insight upon which much of the information contained in this exhortation was gleaned.

—Bro. Jerry Connolly

Encouraging Words No. 6

HOW practical God has shown Himself to usward! And yet the unbeliever makes this very method a ground of cavil and blasphemy. Man corks a bottle of poison with a prickly stopper, so that when the fingers touch it the mind may be informed that there is something wrong. This is the plan which God has adopted in arranging the curse. The prickly stopper—toil, pain, death—meets our touch at every turn, pressing home the fact that there is something wrong. As regards the poison we say, What a wise, life-saving arrangement. Let us not be less reasonable and appreciative of God’s method. Let us not, so to speak, simply look at our pricked fingers, and wickedly murmur or blaspheme. Let us consider the import of the divine arrangement and accept it as a reminder to man of his relation to the curse on account of sin. Eternal life depends upon our humbly learning the lesson which the curse and Calvary alike enforce.

How practical, too, God has shown Himself as touching the evidence which He has given concerning the truth of the Bible. To take the case of the Jew. A child runs home with the information that there is a Jew or Jewess at school who may not read the New Testament, and questions follow: Who are the Jews? Why are they here? Why do they not read the New Testament? These queries, if rightly answered, take both mother and child straight away to the Bible and the history which it gives of this unique people. There is no other solution to the queries. And yet could a more simple homely way of leading up to the great evidence of fulfilled prophecy have been devised? And so with the land of Palestine. This is notoriously an age of “land-grabbing.” How natural that the thought should arise:—Why has not Palestine, with all its advantages of situation, fertility and beauty, been seized and made into a prosperous possession after the manner of Egypt, etc.? There is only one answer—that given by God: “Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies’ land: even then shall the land rest and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.” Let us not, after the manner of the sceptic, disregard these divine aids to belief because they are centred in the undesirable, oppressed Jew, and in desolate, uncared for Jerusalem.

No less practical are God’s ways of conveying lessons as touching faith and practice. The instruction largely comes to us through his dealings with mortal man—men and women of like passions with ourselves. And yet with what perversity does the unbeliever rail at these and their need of pardon. The record of God’s intercourse with heaven’s resplendent hosts would have presented an awe-inspiring standard of righteousness, but what encouragement would it have afforded the unbeliever or anyone else to turn from his evil ways to Him who has illustrated His lavish extension of mercy to the sinner in the very instances which are so short-sightedly called in question? But for the merciful record of the short-comings of God’s accepted ones, surely we should be moved to join in Peter’s cry of despair: “Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.”

Do we feed upon and utilise God’s truth as interwoven in matters which are daily before our eyes and upon our lips—things which verily confront us as we sit in our houses and as we walk by the way? To do so will provide more valuable instruction for our children, our neighbours, and ourselves than all the imaginative tales or sentimental word-painting which the human mind can produce. Human imagery, like the spray from the ocean, appears beautiful for the moment, but quickly vanishes. It can neither be retained nor used for any practical purpose. Bible incidents—matters which reveal God’s dealings with men and women—are the vital, all-important things in which to instruct ourselves and others. Let us, by laying hold of them, show a becoming response to God’s practical kindness to us, and not give it the go by for the profitless reasoning and imagery of unenlightened minds.

—*Sis. C.H. Jannaway—1906*

Meditations – Deity’s Ways No. 9

The existence of the poor among the children of God is a divine arrangement. Probably its object is to test obedience and develop neighbourly love. The Israelites were commanded not only to open their hand to the poor, but to open it *wide* (Deut.

15:11). With equal emphasis has this requirement been introduced into the law of Christ. The fact that God should have to be so emphatic in regard to such a matter shows how lamentably selfish is man. God, however, will have this defect remedied in His children. He has provided the things needful to remedy it. If “that day” should reveal that we are still imperfect, the fault will be ours — we shall find ourselves without excuse. God’s command concerning the poor has been enhanced by the promise that He will repay all that has been given, and also by the threat that the one who heeds not shall himself surely come to want (Prov. 21:13; 22:16). The day is fast approaching when both the obedient and the disobedient will realise that God meant exactly what He said (Matt. 25:31–46).

Elisha was particularly favoured in his foretaste of the powers of the world to come. Glance at the prophet’s experience—it will enforce the greatness and blessedness of Scripture promises. Elisha’s power is to be manifested again, only upon an infinitely larger and grander scale. And we are to exhibit it, that is, if it be our happy lot to find an entrance into the kingdom of God. With this thrilling hope before us, let us review Elisha’s achievements. He divided Jordan—healed water and land of their barrenness—brought divine judgment upon his adversaries—foretold future events—counteracted the effect of poison—supernaturally increased food—cured disease—inflicted disease—made iron to swim—revealed the intentions of one far away—&c. Imagine a countless number of Elishas distributed and eternally established throughout the earth! What breathless terror, admiration, and thanksgiving they will excite among the nations. Let us be patient! The time will come when God will satisfy the desire of His people even in this. “The nations shall see, and be confounded at all their might.”

Mankind has been divided by God into two classes. Men try very hard to make a third, but the effort is futile. The names by which the two classes are designated are very expressive: wise—foolish; friends—enemies; saints — sinners; obedient — disobedient; believers — unbelievers; children of light—children of darkness; seed of the woman—seed of the serpent; children of God—children of the devil. Exaltation from the one to the other class is entirely dependent upon the attitude taken to that form of doctrine delivered by Christ and the apostles (Rom. 6:17; Gal. 3:26; Rev. 12:17; John 15:14; Col. 1:21–23). The man who receives a part and not all of that doctrine is a spiritual abortion. To die not far from the Kingdom of God is practically the same as dying ten thousand miles off. A hearty belief of the truth and a ready submission to its requirements form the only passport to life eternal. How slow are men to accept this truth! They seem afraid to take God at His word! Why this unbelief? The popular cry of “unreasonable” and “uncharitable” reveals the cause. Men esteem their own imperfect sin-biased intelligences to be wiser than the Scriptures of truth. This is the secret of the Scripture-wresting of the day. How few are they who logically and sincerely receive the Bible as the Word of God.

John did no miracle, nevertheless “among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John.” He was great because he was appointed to herald the Messiah, and he was also great because filled with the Spirit from his birth. In the power of his teaching, John was unequalled; the impression he made upon Israel was unprecedented. So marked was the result of his work that Christ compared the nation to a man who had been exorcised of a demon. “There went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptised of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.” Herod heard him gladly, and did many things because of him. The rulers and priests were moved to enquire whether he was the Messiah or Elijah risen from the dead. The people were “*persuaded that John was a prophet.*” Christ testified of him that he was a prophet and much more than a prophet. But notwithstanding John’s greatness, we have the opportunity of becoming greater! Consider Christ’s words: “*He that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he.*” John was Christ’s forerunner; those in the Kingdom will be Christ’s companions. John’s influence was confined to the nation of Israel; that of the glorified saints will extend to the ends of the earth. John had to succumb to death, and his work was of short effect; the saints will be deathless and their work lasting.

We are strong in the truth just so far as we are acquainted with the evidence upon which the truth rests. To be immovably established in the first principles, it is not only necessary to have confidence in the divinity of the Bible but also to have at our fingers’ ends the statements upon which those principles are based. A brother or sister who cannot promptly quote a few passages in support of the various items of the one faith is unquestionably weak. It is such an one who becomes the easy prey of the ever-ready seducer! Let those who are deficient in this matter speedily instruct themselves from the Word—let them ponder anew the elementary works on the truth. Salvation depends upon our keeping the first principles in mind. This is apostolic counsel. To imagine that the first principles when once known will always be retained, is one of the greatest mistakes that could be made. Many in the first century forgot, and human memory is no more reliable to-day. Let those who teach forget not to continually enforce the first principles—the wise householder brings forth treasures old as well as new. Paul’s command was, “Affirm constantly.” He also said, “To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not irksome, but for you it is safe”

The rejecter of the Bible points to the various evils which afflict the human family, and confidently asks, “Are not the righteous and unrighteous upon a level in relation to them?” Apart from the Bible, this question cannot be satisfactorily met. The rejecter of the Bible judges solely by appearances, which cannot decide the matter either way. Appearances certainly do not exclude the Bible answer, which is that evil—so far as the righteous are concerned—is manipulated by God so that it may work for their ultimate good. God could exempt His children from evil as easily as He exempted the children of Israel from the plagues of Egypt. But this He has not promised to do. It would be antagonistic to the principles upon which He is developing them. That His hand should be hidden, though not absolutely withdrawn, is essential. Otherwise, there would be no scope for the exhibition of faith. “*All things are for your sakes,*” said Paul, in addressing the righteous. And again, “*All things work together for good to them that love God*” (2 Cor. 4:15; Rom. 8:28). Inspired history shows how God has controlled all things—literally all—for the benefit of one and another of His children. Let us steel ourselves against the atheistic views of the world which exclude God from our affairs. The only way in which this can be done is by developing faith, and “*faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*”

If Paul were more faithfully followed, there would be infinitely less hesitancy in accepting the infallibility of the Scriptures. It is profitable to recall the passages which exhibit the Apostle’s mind. Take first his expression to Felix: “*I confess unto thee*

that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets” (Acts 24:14). The same thought comes out in the statement to Agrippa: “I continue unto this day witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which Moses and the prophets did say should come” (26:22). It is also recorded in another place that Paul persuaded men concerning Jesus, “both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets from morning unto evening.” Surely such a mode of tuition is very significant! Deluded, indeed, must the man be who affirms that when Paul said “all things,” and “none other things,” he did not mean what he said! And that when he appealed to Moses and the prophets, he did not appeal to them as an unerring authority! Yet how many to-day are endorsing this indefensible position. If Paul is worth following, let us follow him wholly. Let us contend with him that the Scriptures are “the oracles of God” (Rom. 3:2); that they are “holy” (Rom. 1:2); that they are “the word of truth” (2Tim. 2:15); that they have all been given by inspiration, and are all profitable (2Tim. 3:15–16). Paul upon this matter was not double-minded—with him it was not an attitude of yea and nay.

“Who said to Paul through the Spirit that he should not go up to Jerusalem.” This does not necessarily imply, as some have thought, that Paul visited Jerusalem contrary to the Spirit’s command. There is an important difference between a revelation from the Spirit respecting what should happen at Jerusalem, and a command not to go there. It is in this difference that the explanation of the passage lies. The context justifies this interpretation: that certain brethren sought to dissuade Paul from visiting Jerusalem because the Spirit had revealed that hurt awaited him there. This interpretation is in harmony with the apostle’s statement to the elders of the Ephesian Church—“I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Spirit witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.” Had Paul been influenced by the Spirit’s revelation in the way that his friends apparently were, he would have had to cease from the work to which he had been divinely appointed! Paul’s mission was to be accomplished through suffering. This Paul knew from the beginning. The apostle upon a subsequent occasion was very desirous that the brethren should know the good that resulted from this evil experience (Phil. 1:12). Paul went on while his brethren trembled. Their entreaties to halt were met by that grand reply: “I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.” How unanswerable was this! All that the brethren could say was—“The will of the Lord be done.” This they could not have said had they thought that Paul was going in opposition to the Spirit’s command. Paul was not disobedient—banish the thought.

—Bro. A. T. Jannaway—1887

Thoughts Gleaned By The Way

There seems to be an idea growing in the minds of those who have left the firm foundation of sound fellowship, that a certain amount of false doctrine can be fellowshipped, or it can be tolerated under certain circumstances, or that one is not responsible for the toleration of false doctrine if it is in another ecclesia other than his own, especially if it is far away. Some have already reduced their responsibility to their own meeting, and the number appears to be growing who are resigning themselves to the “comfortable” feeling that so long as they are individually free from error they are in no danger. Just a step from the churches on the matter of fellowship.

These conclusions are neither based upon imagination nor opinion. They are based upon the awful fact that many brethren, once esteemed as stalwart supporters of sound doctrine and fellowship, have had to completely revise their position of fellowship in order to adjust themselves to their new associations and justify themselves in forsaking those who refused to be moved away from the firm foundation on which all faithful brethren have stood since the days of Dr. Thomas.

To such the passages of scripture which teach us how to deal with teachers of error are becoming meaningless and useless. Toleration is now becoming a definite policy and practice. Brethren who now uncompromisingly stand for the old position on fellowship are discredited and despised. The tolerant, the liberal, the compromising and the worldly-minded type of brethren are the ones now who are admired, honored, exalted to leadership and chosen as “counselors” by those who have forsaken their first love for modern Laodiceanism.

And so, it seems, that the time has come for vigorous teaching and action by those who have not been victims of this “strong delusion,” that we may revive and keep alive that which “has been committed to our trust,” in the hope that we may “strengthen the things that remain,” and save as brands from the burning a few who have been victims of this latter-day departure from the Faith in its purity.

Questions which naturally arise in doubtful minds when the subject of fellowship comes up, are: To what extent can we bear with the teacher of false doctrine? How much false doctrine can we tolerate without endangering the purity of the Faith? What attitude should we assume toward the teachers of error?

Such questions come only from those who have failed to heed the Apostolic admonition to “be not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.” For divine instruction concerning the preservation of the purity of the Faith, and the manner in which error should be dealt with is so clear and positive that there is no excuse for anyone who is instructed in the word having any doubts about what to do when error appears in the body.

Failure to take action against error, as a rule, is not so much a lack of knowledge as to what should be done, but a lack of faith and courage to do it. Personal admiration and friendship for the teacher of error, a desire to maintain peace at any price, weakness for kinship, a desire to remain with the majority, etc., are more often barriers to courageous and decisive action in the dealing with error than a lack of knowledge of what should be done.

However, let us consider the questions above noted. When Bro. Roberts was faced with the problem of dealing with teachers of error (and not the least of his difficulties was well-meaning brethren who wanted to take a tolerant attitude toward these corrupters of the Faith) he wrote down his conclusions, based upon scriptural truth, in “My Days and My Ways,” page 203, as follows:

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

Obviously by the means indicated by Paul and John, that is, by exacting of all who are in it an implicit adherence to the things, facts, principles, points, tenets, or whatever else they may be called, which go to make up the Truth in its entirety, and by refusing to associate with those who oppose or refuse to endorse any of those elements. Some recommend in opposition to this the employment of argument with those who may be in error...But if an ecclesia is to go no further than argument, how could its existence continue? An effort should doubtless be put forth to reclaim those who are in error; but, where those efforts fail, dissociation by withdrawal is natural and inevitable.

The ecclesia is not a place for argument; it is for worship in agreement. When a man requires to be argued with, his natural place is outside, and if he will not go outside, separation must be enforced with withdrawal on the part of the rest. Division is the inevitable concomitant of an uncompromising adherence to the Truth. Peace purchased at the cost of compromise is doubly dangerous. The Truth is the standard and must alone be allowed to rule. All doubt ought to be solved in its favor. The action of separation is not an act of judgment against those from whom we may separate. It is an act of self-vindication; an act by which we discharge a duty and wash our hands of evil. The Truth has gradually emerged from the fables in which for centuries it had been lost, and only an inexorable policy on the part of those receiving it will preserve it from a recurrence of the disaster which drove it from among men shortly after the days of the Apostles.”

(We cannot help but think that, if a brother of the caliber of Bro. Roberts had continued in the publication of “The Christadelphian” to this day, the division and confusion in the body for the past 35 years would not have happened. But God does things His own way. Is it not more probable that a last-days' purging of the very thing which Bro. Roberts cried out against was necessary to save the body from complete apostasy on the eve of the appearing of Christ.

It was the judgment of Bro. Roberts, based upon sound scriptural reasoning, that the teacher of error, when it is evident that he cannot be turned away from his error, must be fellowshipped no longer; that it is imperative that we withdraw from anyone who holds doctrine contrary to any element of the One Faith; and, that the teacher of error should be considered as outside the unity of the body and a corrupter of the Truth.

All of which is in strict accordance with Apostolic precept. How many times have we read, and have heard read and discoursed upon the words of the Apostle Paul in Gal. 1:6-9 - *“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel; which is not another; but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”*

It is vain to try to make it appear that Paul here was speaking only of those who completely departed from every element of the Faith. This was not so, though it led to that very thing, which is one of the reasons why a “slight” departure is so dangerous: Just a little thing; a harmless crotchet; it should not be made a matter of fellowship,” the compromisers of the Truth would doubtless say if such a perversion of the Truth should occur today.- It was nothing more than a claim by some of the Jewish converts that it was necessary to keep certain provisions of the law of Moses in order to be saved. But it was not a small matter to Paul or any other earnest defender of the Faith. It was a denial of the Word of God; a perversion of the teaching that salvation came only through faith in the things contained in the Gospel; by the grace of God, and not the keeping of the law of Moses. They were denying that salvation came by Jesus Christ.

Just so, the various crotchets which have plagued the body have denied some element of the one saving Gospel, the most recent one causing division in the body being a perversion of the doctrine of the Atonement, or the truth concerning Christ's nature and sacrifice. Who has the authority to say that these latter-day perverters should be treated tolerantly, when Paul said of all such, “Let them be accursed?” How dare anyone bid them God speed by fellowshipping them and assisting them in carrying on their corrupting influence by condoning, evading, whitewashing and sugar-coating their pernicious errors that they may be continued in fellowship? Has not the divine sentence already been passed upon all who do such things? How dare we try to change it? Is the teacher of error today any less guilty than those of Paul's day? Is the teacher of error any worse than those who aid, encourage and fellowship him? Not according to the inspired Apostle John! They cannot escape the stigma of the error. They cannot escape complicity with the teacher thereof - they are “partakers of his evil deed.”

We showed that ANY departure from ANY element of the One faith is just cause for separation from the teacher thereof. Unity of the body cannot be maintained so long as erroneous teaching is allowed to exist in the ecclesia.

Hesitancy in taking action against the teacher of error often comes from lack of understanding of just what is involved in the separation. He may be a brother whose previous record in the Truth is irreproachable. He has many friends and admirers to whom it is a heart-breaking experience. Attention is called to his previous good deeds. Surely we can overlook the “little departure” because of his excellent record in other directions.

It is mistakenly thought that we are displaying the spirit of Christ toward such brethren by dealing tolerantly with them, while as a matter of fact we could do them no greater disservice than to condone their error. Our only hope of doing them any spiritual good is to persuade them if possible to forsake and abjure their error. All who seek to help them evade and cover up their error are not only committing an offense against God's word-they are doing the greatest injury possible to the brother in error.

It should be borne in mind that it is not so much an act of putting the false teacher out, as the fact that he is putting himself out of the body by his heretical teaching. The ecclesia is upholding the truth by formally disassociating themselves from his perversion of the word of God. It is the only thing that they can do consistent with the Truth. Those who separate themselves from him are not causing a division. The division has already been caused by the teacher of error and those who support him, a

division which would grow wider and more destructive to the unity of the body if such a teacher of error were retained in fellowship.

Some misguided brethren think that they can keep themselves free from responsibility in the matter by constantly and relentlessly opposing and speaking out against the error. Recently we heard one say, "I suppose that we shall have to put up with it, but I will fight it as long as I live." As Bro. Roberts so aptly shows ("My Days and My Ways" p. 203), arguing and contending with the teacher of error within the body is in itself contrary to the spirit of Christ and the apostolic teaching, provoking turmoil and dissension.

The scriptural rule is, "*A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself*" (Titus 3:10-11). Notice also Matt. 18:i5-17. Note that a more correct rendering of verse 15 is, "*if thy brother be in error.*"

The obvious scriptural rule, in harmony with the spirit of Christ is: In a spirit of meekness, with a sincere desire to redeem the heretic, or the brother in error, admonish him; but if he does not renounce his error, have no fellowship with him.

This rule could not possibly apply to those who, for many years have taught error, and who were admonished time and again; to keep on trying to get some acceptable statement from them without any renunciation of error. Utter abjuration of the error is the only method by which the false teacher can clear him or those who fellowship him.

Complete separation from all who depart from any element of the One faith, or who live in disobedience to the commands of Christ, is the only course that is in harmony with the divine precept and example. Under the Law of Moses separation from every manner of false teaching, uncleanness and wickedness was one of the most prominent things enjoined upon the children of Israel. They were to deal summarily with the false prophet or teacher; they were to have nothing to do with the teaching nor the practices of the nations around them; they were to separate themselves from anything that defiled or made them unclean, even in a ceremonial sense, that they might be a holy people unto the Lord.

These things were "written for our admonition;" a type of the separateness which the body of Christ must maintain in order that they may be holy and retain communion and fellowship with the Father and the Son, and be the children of the Father (2 Cor. 6:14-18).

It is not a matter of choice. It is not a question of our pleasure or convenience. It is a solemn duty enjoined on all who have been privileged to know the Truth, to keep it in its purity as the word of God, unperturbed, uncontaminated by human error, that God may be glorified and His word magnified.

It is not possible to worship the Father except in "Spirit and in Truth." Christ said so. Therefore one cannot worship the Father, neither can he remain in fellowship with the Father and the Son while believing or condoning a lie. One cannot remain in fellowship with the Father and Son while believing or teaching a perversion of the word of God. Neither can anyone remain in fellowship with the Father and Son -while remaining in fellowship with those who believe, teach, or tolerate error.

If there was not another passage of scripture dealing with the matter of fellowship, the 2nd epistle of John would fully verify what we have been saying. It has been one of the many portions of scripture which has sustained the faithful brethren ever since the days of Dr. Thomas in their battle against error and their position on fellowship: "We will Not fellowship anyone who teaches error, neither those who fellowship them."

Some would now, judging by their words and actions, have us believe that the brethren of old put "too strict an application" on these words, and that we now should assume a "more tolerant" attitude toward teachers of error and those who fellowship them. Nevertheless these words still ring true. Let not the compromisers diminish from their strength:

"This is love, that ye walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, that, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it. For many deceivers have come into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves that ye lose not those things which we have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed IS PARTAKER OF HIS EVIL DEED "

Let us note well: Teaching error is an evil deed! Those who fellowship the teacher of such are partakers with him of the condemnation of the Almighty God for perverting His word - accursed.

Those who lost the love of the Truth in the great departure from the faith during the first centuries after Christ, were cursed with "strong delusion." There is good reason to believe that now Bible history in this respect, is repeating itself in the latter day departure from the purity of the faith.

—Bro. Oscar Beauchamp

Three Classes

In relation to life and death there are three classes of mankind; first the true believers or heirs of eternal life; second, the unbelievers or rejecters of the truth, who are the heirs of the resurrection to suffer punishment ending in eternal death; and third, the descendants of Adam, not yet placed under law, together with those who are physically incompetent of belief or obedience, and whose lot is consummated in death eternal, undisturbed by future life.

—Bro. John Thomas

Analecta Apocalypticæ (46)

The Sixth and Seventh Trumpet

The Second Woe

"And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying . . . Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone; and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts" (Rev. 9:13-21).

Here we have a representation of something that came after the Saracenic affliction, but of as terrible a nature. The Saracens overran and subdued the eastern and southern provinces of the Roman Empire in 150 years, which are five months of years, viz., $5 \times 30 = 150$. In another period of 150 years, their power had declined to the collapsing point. It took them 150 years to rise and 150 years to fall, which was according to the two periods of five months mentioned in the prophecy of the fifth trumpet. But what further great Oriental military eruption upon Europe is here represented in the sixth. Trumpet? The answer will naturally spring to everyone's lips having the least acquaintance with history. It is suggested by the geography of the sixth trumpet just read. The river Euphrates is mentioned. This is the geographical basis of the symbolism, and takes our attention at once to the east. Four angels bound within or on the eastern side of the Euphrates are summoned; not literally four angels of course, but military powers. That is shown by the fact that when they were "loosed" in compliance with a command ordering them to be loosed, John saw, not four angels, but myriads of horsemen. Our attention (fixed upon the east, when the Saracenic torment had died away) beholds the Turkish hordes in muster, and sees them in four great waves pour into the provinces of the eastern third of the Roman Empire, spread over a period of nearly four hundred years. It is needless to go into the particulars of these four military tornadoes that carried desolation and death into the heart of the eastern Roman empire. They are associated with names famous in history — Togrul Beg, Alp Arslan, Timour, or Tamerlane, Bajazet, and so on, the leaders of the Ottomans or Turcomans. The particulars may be found in Eureka, at great length and clearness. It is sufficient for our purpose to see the general form of the fulfilment. The four angel powers did not come into operation simultaneously but one after the other. Their mission was to "slay the third part of men". The Saracens were not allowed to kill the eastern empire with political death, but only to subject it to scorpion-torment. But the Turks were to "slay"; they were to prevail over and extinguish the eastern third of the Roman habitable as the western had been by the Goths. To this end, they were employed to deliver four successive assaults, so to speak, the last accomplishing the work for which the way had been paved by the work of the first three. All four were necessary; the work to be done was therefore the mission of all; and for the performance of the work, they were prepared" for an hour, and a day and a month, and a year". This is symbolic time, which, reduced to literal time, gives the following result:—

An hour ... 1 month

A day 1 year

A month ... 30 years

A year 30 years

391 years 1 month

How do we apply this period to the work performed by the Turks against the Greek Empire — that is, the eastern third of the Roman Empire? This will be seen readily. As a matter of fact, the Turkish assault on the eastern remnant of the Roman Empire extended over nearly four hundred years. Constantinople, with the capture of which the Roman Empire in the east was extinguished, fell into the hands of the Turks, A.D. 1453. This was the accomplishment of the mission of the four angels; and if we reckon backwards 391 years, the time "for which" they were prepared, we find ourselves at the beginning of the Turkish power when Togrul Beg, their first military leader, being married to the daughter of the Caliph of Bagdad, the head of the Saracenic or Mahometan religion, became the head of the Mahometan faith, from whom the Turkish Sultans have to this day inherited the title of Commander of the Faithful. This is a sufficiently satisfactory illustration of the chronology of the otherwise obscure phrase, "an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year". It seems probable, however, that there is a secondary application of the period, according to the analogy of some other scriptural cases; that is, that it not only signified the time that would be occupied from the commencement of the preparation of the four angels to the completion of their work, but also the time during which the work accomplished would last from the date of its accomplishment. It took 391 years from the time the Turkish power was fully organized to the extinction of the eastern Roman third by its means; and it has taken a similar period to fulfil the course of the Turkish power from the time

of its establishment to the time appointed for its drying up. If we add 391 years (the hour, day, month and year) to the date of the capture of Constantinople (1453), we are brought to the year 1844, when the Turkish Empire had fully entered on that downward course that at the present moment (1880) threatens its total extinction. This would give twice 391 years for the full work of the four angels — of the sixth trumpet — nearly 800 years. This is a long period compared with the time of the preceding trumpets, except the fifth, which occupied twice five months of years, or 300 years. The disparity may strike us at first sight as strange. We must remember, however, that a difference is marked between the first four and the last three trumpets, by the fact that when the first four had been blown, an angel bewailed the fate of mankind in prospect of the remaining three. The protracted duration as well as the severe nature of the woes of the remaining trumpets would seem to be intimated by this preface. However this may be, the fifth and sixth trumpets bring their chronology, with them. They contain specifications of duration for their events. There is no mention of time in any of the other trumpets, while in these two, we have periods defined which harmonize with the historical facts of the case.

The number of the cavalry will strike everyone as enormous — verse 16, “two hundred thousand thousand” — two hundred millions! Here there must be some exaggeration, surely, some one may say. Perhaps such an one may think another thought on the subject if he understands that what is meant is, not the number employed at the commencement of the Turkish power, but the number spread over the entire course of the Turkish career. The number of horsemen used by the Turks (whose soldiers were nearly all horsemen), during four hundred years would not be likely to run far short of the immense figures of the sixth trumpet; and if we add to them the horse men used by them during their ascendancy in a second period of four hundred years, the number ceases to have the impossible aspect it possesses at first sight.

The description of the horsemen may also appear at first sight a difficulty; breastplates of fire, jacinth and brimstone, heads of horses as the heads of lions, with fire, smoke and brimstone issuing from their mouths, by which three things — the fire, the smoke, and the brimstone — the mission of the horsemen was accomplished, viz., the third part of men was killed; having also tails with heads in which their power lay, and with which they inflicted injury. All this is very hideous and appalling if taken as a description of literal things. Doubtless the demonology of popular theology borrows some of its conceptions from this description. The pictures of hobgoblins and evil creatures with which the youthful fancies of the present generation were scared into “piety”, have doubtless part of their roots in the dreadful imagery of the sixth trumpet and other parts of the Apocalypse. It is only an unenlightened treatment of the Apocalypse, however, that can yield such results. When the great fact is kept sight of — that the Apocalypse is a condensed and symbolic exhibition of literal things, we escape the difficulties into which a literal reading inevitably leads, and are kept on the look-out for the meaning of the symbol instead of being overpowered and bewildered by gazing on the symbol itself as a literal thing. There is only so much of the literal throughout as serves to give character and clue to the symbolism. Here we have horsemen and the Euphrates as literal elements in the imagery that at once identify the symbol with the Turkish apparition that scared and afflicted Europe over seven centuries ago. The details of the picture exhibit other literal elements hieroglyphically. The whole Turkish career during centuries is condensed into one immense army of cavalry, which John sees and hears enumerated. The means by which this army prevailed to the extinction of eastern Rome, are illustrated—gunpowder. The Turks prevailed over the Romans by the use of gunpowder at a time when it had been recently invented. The Turks were the first to use cannon. It was by this they killed “the third.” Had their foes been similarly armed, their success, humanly speaking, would have been doubtful. Now the principal thing that would strike anyone witnessing an army of cavalry, using field guns, would be the three things mentioned by John, “fire, smoke, and brimstone”, and a description of the new weapons dragged after the horses at a time when they had no name, would be a tail with a head to it, in which lay the power to hurt. These same tails would, however, when the artillery came into action, become the mouths of the formidable horsemen of the vision; for of course, when the artillery vomited fire and smoke and brimstone, the horsemen would be in the rear of their pieces, which accounts for “their power” being said to be both “in their mouth and in their tails.” The roaring of the guns would also account for their mouths being said to be like lions' mouths, and their breastplates or protection behind which they would fight, being of fire and brimstone. Even apart from these special explanations, which are doubtless the proper ones, the destructive power of the horsemen in relation to “the third” would be a sufficient justification of their highly wrought description, after the analogy of Scripture example (see Hab. 1:8; Joel 2:4-8; Isaiah 5:21-30, etc.).

“The rest of the men”, we are told, “that were not killed by these plagues, repented not of the works of their hands” — a statement illustrated by the fact that notwithstanding the terrible affliction and the overthrow of eastern Rome by the Turks, as the instruments of God's vengeance, the populations of Western Europe continued addicted to the doctrines and practices of Mother Church, which God has stamped with His execration. The eastern section of Christendom was given over to the desolating Turk, because of its long-standing and patiently-borne but increasing abominations; after the example of the seven nations of Canaan which, for a similar reason, were given over to the sword of Joshua.

The eastern section of Christendom comprises all the countries that were anciently the scenes of divine visitation in a special manner — the Holy Land, where God wrought openly and the prophets delivered their messages; and Asia Minor where the apostles laboured and the Spirit shone in the midst of the ecclesias in the miraculous endowments it conferred on leading brethren. Thus it comes to pass in our day [1880], that all the lands of hallowed memory are blighted and desolate under Turkish rule. The horsemen of the sixth trumpet summoned by the trumpet blast of divine providence, swept over “the third”, to its extermination and the consequent desolation of the lands over which they threw the blighting shadow of their subsequently established government.

The seventh trumpet, however, will end this state of things. Though itself a trumpet of woe for mankind, its woes are of a healing order; for John heard an angel proclaim concerning the seventh trumpet, “In the days of the voice of the

seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets". What this "mystery" (or formerly hidden secret) is, those are aware who are acquainted with those writings of the prophets wherein it is "declared." It is the recovery of His land from desolation (Isaiah 61:4), the establishment therein of a divine government for all the world (Jer. 3:17), and the consequent blessedness of all the nations of the earth walking in the light thereof (Micah 4:14). This glorious mystery (for which there has been a preparation in all past ages) will be finished, accomplished, or established "in the days of the voice of the seventh angel". Its accomplishment will be preceded by woes transcending all former human experiences consequent on the fact that in the course of it "Jehovah [Yahweh] (in the person of Christ) comes forth out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity" (Isa. 26:21). This causes the seventh trumpet to be classed with the woe trumpets; but in its ultimate effects, it is only good. Its general character is proclaimed in the "great voices in heaven" which John heard when the seventh angel sounded (Rev. 11:15): "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ." The seventh trumpet changes the face of the world. It puts an end to human rule, and establishes the kingdom of God in all the earth. This is a glorious change, but not to be effected without the putting forth of much destructive power, "dashing the nations in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Psa. 2:8-9; Dan. 2:44-45) and causing a time of trouble such as never has been (Dan. 12:1).

It might be supposed that the fifth and sixth trumpets (the Saracenic and Ottoman) having occupied such a long time, and the seventh being with them one of the three woe trumpets, it must be a long time yet before the saints attain that salvation which is to be brought to them under the seventh trumpet in the establishment of the kingdom of God. Any dreary conclusion of that sort is excluded by the 10th chapter of the Apocalypse, which comes within the lecture of this evening. The ninth chapter covers the entire period occupied by the rise and fall of the Saracens and Turks. The tenth chapter takes up the thread where Turkish history closes, and exhibits a symbol which shows that at that juncture the promised divine interposition, which overthrows the kingdoms of men, takes place.

John sees (chap. 10:1) a cloud-clothed angel descend from heaven, with face of sun-like brightness and head encircled with rainbow-like beauty and glory. His feet, like pillars of fire, he places one on the sea and one on the land, and utters a shout like a lion's roar. His shout is followed by seven thunder peals, in which intelligent voices are audible, declaring certain matters which John wished to write, but was forbidden. The angel lifts his hand to heaven and "swears by him that liveth for ever and ever . . . that there should be time (delay) no longer: but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished". This declaration and the symbol taken together, show that the third woe (or seventh trumpet) is not to be protracted like the first and second (or fifth and sixth trumpet), a conclusion further confirmed by the remark in Rev. 11:14, "The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly." It may be asked, how does the symbol support this conclusion? The answer is, it does so by its manifest identity with Christ and the saints in their corporate relation to the world in the day of their glory. The angel, of course, is a symbol, standing for a class sent, for it is clothed in a cloud — the symbol of a multitude. It is a class exercising conquering power on sea and land, for the angel places his right foot on the sea and his left on the land. It is destructive power, for his feet are fiery. It is for beneficent purposes, however: for a rainbow encircling his head speaks of sunshine after rain. It is an effective class that can command the world's attention, for he cries with a voice that resembles a lion's roar. It is a voice controlling executive authority; for seven thunders (the symbol of war) are let loose by its utterance. It is not a fallible human community; for the thunders so loosed divulge revelation. It is not an earthly or mortal class, for the face of the angel shines with the lustre of the sun. It does not originate among men, but is of divine origin, for the angel comes down from heaven.

Now, when we ask what class, according to the plainer Scriptures, appears upon the scene at the close of the Turkish desolation, with authority to proclaim the dispensation at an end and the time arrived for the accomplishment of God's prophetically-enunciated purpose in the earth, and to set warlike agencies in motion for the enforcement of their decree, there is but one answer: Jesus comes to be glorified in his saints and admired in all them that believe (2 Thess. 1:10). What is his promise to them at that time? "To him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father" (Rev. 2:26). He and they, head and body, then form one powerful community of whom it was testified in Daniel concerning this time: "Judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the Kingdom" (Dan. 7:22). Consequently, the mighty angel seen by John to descend from heaven at the close of the Turkish plague, cannot be understood in any other light than as the symbol of the One Body in its manifestation in power and great glory at the advent of Christ.

This view enables us to understand why John was forbidden to record what the symbolic thunders proclaimed. What is recorded is recorded for the guidance of the servants of Christ during his absence. But at the time of the seven thunders he will not be absent. He will be amongst them and they will be gathered around him, and will themselves be the executioners of the seven-thunder or nation-breaking programme. The knowledge of what they will do then, in its details, would be of no special value to them now when they are on probation for a place in the mighty-angel community; while the publication of those details in advance might interfere in some way with the execution of the divine work then as regards the nations of the earth.

As to the little book or scroll, open, in the angel's hand, there cannot be any difficulty in view of the fact that a closed or sealed book or scroll is always in scriptural usage the figure for that which is either not revealed or not understood (Isa. 29:11-12; Dan. 12:4). An open book in the hand of the multitudinous angel manifestly tells us that in that day there will be no more concealing or nonperception of the divine counsel, but such an exhibition of the glory of the Lord that all flesh, even the unwilling (Isa. 26:10-11) shall see it together (Isa. 40:5; 66:23), with the result that the veil shall be taken from the

eyes of all nations (Isa. 25:7), and they shall confess, coming from the ends of the earth, they have been the victims of darkness and imposture (Jer. 16:19).

The incident of the eating of the book by John (verses 8-11) is confirmatory of this interpretation: John was commanded to go up to the angel holding the open book in his hand, and take it. Having done so, he was commanded to eat it, which he did — a symbolic transaction: for men do not eat literal books. Men are said to eat words in the sense of receiving and embracing the instruction they afford (Jer. 15:16; Psa. 119:103). To eat a book is intellectually to appropriate its contents by reading. The eating of the open book in question by John shows that the angel was the symbol of the class to which John belonged: for whereas the book was first in the angel's hand, it was transferred from the angel to John, and thus an identity was established between them. What followed the eating is further instructive in the matter. John relished the act of eating, but the effects produced after the eating were disagreeable. This harmonizes with the fact that every saint even now in measure experiences, viz., that while the reception of Jehovah's [Yahweh's] truth is itself a source of pure sweetness and peace, it makes us the subject of great bitterness afterwards in the feelings with which we view the state of the world and the wickedness of men around us on every hand. John having eaten the book, was told, "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings" (verse 11). This shows that the book stood for divine knowledge: the eating for the act of acquiring that knowledge: and the purpose of its impartation that it might be communicated to others. We may take this as affording a hint to ourselves even now, for John is our brother if we are brethren of Christ. But there can be no doubt that the ultimate significance of the book-eating is of a future application, both as regards John and those for whom he stood. John was an old man when he was told he would have again to prophesy before nations and kings. He was close on a hundred years of age: and there is no evidence that he ever appeared in public after receiving the Apocalypse. His death occurred shortly afterwards. Consequently, the prophesying in question must refer to what he will have to do after his resurrection at the coming of Christ. This would follow from the conclusion that the angel out of whose hands he received the book was a symbol of the saints in their post-resurrectional relation to the nations. An open book in that angel's hands must stand for the things to be further revealed at the coming of Christ, the time having then arrived for the realization of Paul's words: "Now we look through a glass darkly, but then face to face.... then shall we know even as we are known" (1 Cor. 13:12). How interesting is the reflection that comes out of this interpretation of the case—viz., that John, and therefore his brethren, and therefore we, if we are acknowledged of the Lord as such in the day of his coming — will be mediums of communication between the Lord and the nations in the great epoch of the end during the process by which the government of all the earth is transferred from its present holders to the King of kings and Lord of lords, who shall reign for ever. This means much interesting work and many sweet revenges in the day of Christ. The brethren of Christ are now despised with a fervid abhorrence. They are hated of the World because they are not of the world. They are looked upon as utter and irreclaimable rubbish, or as Paul expresses it, "the offscouring of all things", and this is by no means agreeable to them. But how completely will the situation be changed when those brethren appear throughout the earth as the authorized messengers of Jesus returned! Doubtless, at first they will be opposed and slighted as Moses and Aaron were by Pharaoh, but how easily they will bear it with the knowledge that they are immortal, and that they have Christ behind them in an open and visible manner, and that the time has come for the overthrow of the power of the enemy and the triumph of Christ in all the earth. Berean 2009-107

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

Hints For Bible Markers

One of the most difficult tasks we have during our walk Zionward is learning self control. We want to talk to friends and show how knowledgeable we are on current events in the brotherhood. The bible teaches that in the case of sin we are not to speak of it to anyone other than the offending person. This is a very easy command to break. How many times have we said, "Did you hear about...?" Speak not evil one of another is the command. We need to continually work at developing a Godly character and practicing self control is one of our most important processes. Controlling our tongue is one of our most difficult tasks. If we go to a brother with the attitude Christ commands, alone, in the spirit of meekness, with the goal of recovery we may win the brother back. Consider that the brother may not know or understand that what he is doing is sin. Showing him scripturally the error of his way, saving him "from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." By showing him his error he may overcome and not repeat it over and over again. Everyone sins. Everyone makes mistakes. It is not our place to judge the motive behind another's sin and condemn him for committing it. We all fail. Our best efforts fall far short of the perfection of Christ. We are admonished to treat all men with kindness and love. Jesus said, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." James calls it "the royal law." Think about how we would like to be treated and treat others the same way. When we are admonished we must have the self control to refrain from anger and consider what was said. We must have the attitude of the Psalmist when he wrote Psalms 141:5 "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil". Reproof is one of God's appointed methods for keeping us in the path of righteousness.

—Bro. Beryl Snyder

The Commandments of Christ

As collected and organized by bro. Roberts

In case of sin (known or heard of) speak not of it to others, but tell the offending brother of the matter between thee and him alone, with a view to recovery.

Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. (Matthew 18:15)

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. (Galatians 6:1)

(19) Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; (20) Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. (James 5:19 – 20)

Grudge not: judge not: condemn not one another.

Judge not, that ye be not judged. (Matthew 7:1)

Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. (Romans 14:13)

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God. (1 Corinthians 4:5)

Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. (James 4:11)

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