

# 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.

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CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

## **Ecclesial News**

### **San Angelo, Texas**

Hello Bro. Fred,

Loving Greetings in the Lord's Name.

It is with great gladness that the San Angelo Ecclesia announces the emersion of one of Adam's race into the saving name of Christ. **Donna Mays**, the daughter of Sis. Becky Knox, has given a good confession of faith. Donna followed the commandment of Christ with baptism and we of the San Angelo Ecclesia extended the right hand of fellowship. Donna resides in Houston and will be attending the Houston Ecclesia.

In a few days, we will follow with her address and phone number.

Love in the Truth,

bro. Gary Smith

### **Austin, Texas**

Loving Greetings!

The members of the Austin Ecclesia wish to share various pieces of news from the past few months.

First of all, we would like to report the birth of Ethan Alexander Brown, son of Bro. Noah and Sis. Julie Brown, on February 14. They are all doing very well. We have had visits from Bro. Gary and Sis. Brenda Smith, as well as Bro. Frank Darter. Sis. Jaymie Phillips has been a regular visitor to our ecclesia, as well as Jonathan Salinas, a new Bible student.

We were very pleased with the outcome of the May 2010 Hye Quarterly. While time and expenses prevented us from making the full-fledged study weekend as we have done the past two years, it was still enjoyable to meet with our fellow brethren and sisters here in Texas. Although the kitchen was closed for a major remodeling (wait until you see it this year!), Gary and Brenda arranged for a spaghetti lunch to be cooked - and served - outside. It was quite a treat to eat together in the open air, in what was certain to be a nod to the earliest gatherings on the campgrounds.

There is now an official website for the Austin Ecclesia, which can be found at A schedule of our expected meeting times and places - God Willing - can be found there.

With all these pieces of good news, however, there are unfortunate tidings as well. Bro. Matt Brown and Sis. Shiloh Brown have decided to withdraw from the Berean Fellowship.

And that is all we have from Austin, Texas.

Love in Christ,

Bro. Seth Brown

## **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)

**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](http://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](mailto:craigkiley@yahoo.com)) or Bro. Noah Brown ([sbsugar@gmail.com](mailto: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.

### **Go Forth To Him Without The Camp**

*“Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but seek one to come” (Heb. 13:13-14).*

The epistle to the Hebrews is a call to Jewish believers to leave the Law completely. The time had come for a final break. The Law given by Moses had served its purpose. The intervening period of transition between the death of Christ and the destruction of the Temple was nearly over.

God did not just give Israel a bare command to leave the Law. Rather He gave, in this epistle, a beautiful, satisfying, reasoned explanation and revelation of the infinitely better way in Christ. This is the message of

Hebrews—how Christ so beautifully fulfills every type, answers every question, supplies every need.

It was a time of tremendous transition for the Jewish believer. Moses and the Law had been ingrained into every fiber of their national being for so long. Now the Old Covenant had waxed old and was ready to vanish away. The glorious New Covenant—the Abrahamic—was in force, established by the blood of Christ.

Those who were blindly wedded to the ritual of the old were lost and dismayed. But those who saw the purpose and meaning and deep typical significance of the glorious Law God had given Israel through Moses, were ready and eager for the change. Chapter 13, the final chapter, consists of personal exhortation and the great call to go forth in faith unto Christ without the camp, bearing his reproach.

“Let brotherly love continue” (v. 1).

Brotherly love is the key to everything. Without it, nothing can succeed; with it, nothing can fail. It was especially important at this great crisis of doctrinal transition during which the apostles wrote. It is equally important in the problems of today. We talk so much of love, but we so easily forget it, when issues are raised and emotions are aroused. Let us ever remember James' searching words:

“Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.”

In our ignorant self importance, we so often think our anger can advance God's glory.

“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers” (v. 2).

Notice the word “strangers.” This is a command of God just as much as baptism is a command. Do we do it? Do we entertain strangers? When did we do it last?

There are two kinds of people in the world. One group is very large, one is very, very tiny—the small-minded and the big; the fleshly and the spiritual, the self-centered and the self-sacrificing. The Scriptures call them: goats and sheep, tares and wheat, unfaithful and faithful stewards of God's goods. It is quite easy to tell which group we belong to: “If we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged,” “Be not forgetful to entertain

strangers.” The thought is broader than simply entertainment or hospitality. Literally it is, “of the love of strangers be not neglectful.”

As the apostle says elsewhere (Gal. 6:10)—

“Do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”

Not just as an incidental, self-pleasing, meaningless hobby, but a full time, wholehearted, dedicated way of life.

“Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity as being yourselves also in the body” (v. 3).

This is the second greatest command—

“Love your neighbor as yourself “

Not just love your neighbor, that's quite common and meaningless in various self-satisfying degrees, but—

“Love your neighbor AS YOURSELF.”

There is a world of difference.

Thank God there are some like this today! And their life is a glorious fulfillment of what life was meant to be. But how few they are! But they alone are Christ's true brethren and sisters, the only ones he will recognize when he comes. He makes this so abundantly clear in Matthew 25—

“When saw we thee hungry, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison?”

How blind we can be if we do not want to see!

“Marriage is honorable in all” (v. 4).

Rather, more correctly, as in the Revised Version and the Diaglott, “Let marriage be honorable among all.” It is an exhortation, a command. Let everything to do with this major aspect of natural life be pure and beautiful and spiritual and in harmony with the glorious ideal that God established at its beginning.

The world has made such a sad travesty and corruption and degradation and failure of what could be life's most beautiful and comforting and helpful natural aspect. How man always cheapens and degrades everything he touches! How childishly, how pitifully, they deck out and adorn their poor

corrupting bodies, but how naked are their souls! God will judge all who corrupt His pure and holy ways.

“Let your conversation be without covetousness” (v. 5).

“Conversation” here means “custom, way of life, frame of mind, character, outlook.” Covetousness is simply wanting something we do not need; and our needs are very, very few. This is the mainspring of the whole world's activities, but the brethren of Christ are called to a higher, more satisfying way of life. They are called to free themselves from the shackles of selfishness and desire, to fill their minds with the infinitely more satisfying joy of service to God and to man.

“Be content with such things as ye have” (v. 5).

Contentment is a wonderful blessing. It is one of God's greatest gifts to His children. It is the essential foundation of happiness and peace. Paul said to the Philippians, writing in bonds and from prison—

“I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.”

Surely one of the Spirit's greatest and most essential lessons! Until we learn this, we are children, wanting, wishing, desiring, seeking a mocking illusionary joy in getting and possessing—accumulating and hoarding, ever fearful of the morrow.

When we have learned this, we are men. We are ready for God's work; we have cleared the decks, we have girded our loins. We are ready to be useful in the divine purpose. We have become spiritual adults. We have found true peace and satisfaction and happiness and security.

“For He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (v. 5).

This was said to Jacob when he left home in fear of his brother and started out alone into the unknown.

It was said to Joshua, when he lost Moses, and found himself alone with the whole burden of Israel.

It was said to the humble young Solomon as he was about to take on the rulership of the nation after David.

Have we a right to appropriate the promise to ourselves?—

“I WILL NEVER LEAVE THEE OR FORSAKE THEE.”

Clearly, from Paul's words here, we have, though it was never spoken generally, but to specific individuals at specific times. There is a comforting lesson here. God is no respecter of persons.

“Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope.”

Do we believe this promise that He will not forsake us? Are we willing to trust ourselves to it in faith? Are we willing to do, to our fullest means and abilities and resources, what comes to hand TODAY and leave provision for the MORROW to God? We are told earlier in this epistle that—

“He that cometh to God MUST BELIEVE—must have faith”

— and faith, says James, calls for deeds, not words. Why are we reminded (in Heb. 11) of all these wonderful things that ordinary weak, fearful men and women like ourselves have risen to through the power of living Faith? Is it not to teach us the solemn, vital truth that we, too, must, in perfect faith, follow the same path if we would reap the same reward?

“Remember them which have the rule over you” (v. 7).

Again, it is better in the Revised Version—“them which had the rule over you, which spoke unto you the Word of God.” It is a calling to remembrance. He is clearly reminding them of former leaders, and their faithfulness to the end of their lives: “considering the END of their conversation (way of life).”

James (who was put to death by Herod) is the only one of the apostles whom we know would be in this category, but doubtless by this time, just before the destruction of Jerusalem, others had sealed their testimony with their blood. The last days of terrible vengeance were about to come on the guilty nation as Jesus had foretold. Patriotism would soon be at a fever pitch, and all who did not enter into the defense of the Mosaic institutions would be branded as traitors and cowards. This was the “time of trouble” of which Jesus had warned.

“Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and for ever” (v. 8).

The emphasis is on the contrast between that which is eternal and unchanging, and that which is temporal and passing. The Law was a temporary arrangement. Christ is an eternal, living reality. Paul's reference

clearly is back to the quotation from the Psalms given in chapter 1, which he applied there to Christ—

“Thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.”

Tremendous changes were impending for the Jewish race—God's ancient people—terrible, convulsive, destructive changes. They were to be cast out and scattered, the temple burnt, the city destroyed, the land plundered and desolated.

In the process, the whole Mosaic framework would of necessity collapse and come to an end. How urgent, then, that they be anchored to that which would never, could never, change.

“Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and for ever.”

The one fixed point in all Creation; the Nail fastened in a sure place, the Cornerstone of the eternal Temple, the Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, made—

“Not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.”

For us, too, the message is the same. The changing background is different but the eternal alternative to which we are called is the same.

“The things that are seen are temporal”

— for the Gentile just as for the Jew. We live as Israel did then, at a time of tremendous and revolutionary change. Change in everything in the world around us, its standards, morals, way of life, the patterns of world power and control and influence—all are in violent flux. There are no fixed points of reference anymore. The sea and the waves are roaring.

Nations throughout the earth who have slept in backward obscurity while the white man has ruled and seized and plundered, and oppressed, are now rising in long pent-up and held-back blind fury. Warfare—domination of his fellow man—always man's chief occupation and delight, is daily opening up broader avenues of cruelty, horror, and mass murder on a hitherto undreamed of scale. This is twentieth century civilization.

And in what was once the Christadelphian body, vast and destructive changes are well advanced with their pernicious work, and gathering momentum.

Surely, as in the last terrible days of Israel's Commonwealth, we need to be reminded, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever." Here alone is reality, stability, continuity, eternity.

Paul, in the next few verses, leads up to the great climax of the whole epistle—the trumpet call (v. 13)—

"Let us go forth therefore unto him, without the camp, bearing his reproach."

"For here we have no continuing city, but seek one to come."

It was a call to Israel to leave behind every aspect of Gentilism—the way of the world—the mind of the flesh. Soon in our readings we shall read again John's words—

"Love not the world, neither the things of the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father but of the world."

In leading up to the climax of his appeal, Paul calls attention to a strange and wonderful aspect of the Law—a hidden mystery woven right into the fabric of the Law—in fact, placed at the very heart and apex of the whole Mosaic system.

The great day in Israel was the Day of Atonement, the tenth day of the seventh month—still kept in mechanical, ritualistic ignorance, but as a wonderful witness, three thousand years after its establishment, by blind, wandering Israel—Yom Kippur.

All the ceremonies and sacrifices of the Mosaic dispensation focussed toward this one solemn, yearly event when the High Priest, in a completely deserted and empty Tabernacle, went into the Most Holy Place to make atonement with the sacrificial blood.

This supreme sacrifice—the sacrifice whose blood entered the Most Holy—must be burned without the camp.

It was not to be consumed upon the Altar, and no man in the whole Mosaic system might partake of its flesh.

The one great central sacrifice, to which all the year's repeated sacrifices pointed, must be burned entirely outside the whole Mosaic organization. Here, in its crowning event, the Law portrayed its own inadequacy and

pointed to the one great sacrifice for sin who would establish righteousness and open a way over, above, beyond, and outside of the Law of fleshly ordinances given to Israel through Moses.

Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. We have here no continuing city, no ties to the present, no interest in earthly things.

Paul concludes with a beautiful prayer that God may lead them to a practical application of these things to themselves, without which all is meaningless; that He may in His love, and by His marvelous power, make them perfect in purity and holiness without which no man shall see God.

“Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen” (Heb. 13:20-21). *Bro. GV Growcott*

## **Retrospection and Retrogression**

We have been apostolically advised to “Exhort one another to provoke unto love and good works” (Heb. 10:24-5). This is our aim, and we wish to speak on Retrospection, or “looking backward,” from Luke 9:62, and Retrogression, or “going back,” from Jer. 2:27 and other passages.

Retrospection is—as we know—looking backward with the mind rather than merely with the eye. However we see Jesus used the figure of sight to imply the turning back of the whole mind and attention.

Even in this we must realize it is necessary to obey the many commands to “Look back”—to the prophets (Jam. 5:10), to Elias (James 5:17), to the patriarch Job (v. 11), to Abraham (James 2:21), and—as we all remember—to a host of other faithful worthies (Heb. 11). It becomes increasingly evident then, as we consider these things, that the forbidden looking and turning back is in the sense spoken of in the Scripture cited (Jer. 2:27), that is, “Turning the back to God,” or “Turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.” In John 6:65 we read:

“From that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him.”

## “REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE”

Here was a case of insufficient faith (v. 64). Hence these who were weak in faith” looked back”, which we are exhorted not to do. It is true the case of Lot's wife is cited which was turning to look back to Sodom. However, the subject treated of when Jesus gave this warning to “Remember Lot's wife” (Luke 17:32) was the end of the ages, or aions, Jewish and Gentile. Hence no time would be left for even loitering momentarily. Even so, Lot's wife stands out as a warning against turning the attention to those things we left behind.

Whether we apply it to the fall of Jerusalem and the consequent dispersion of the remnant of those escaping that national calamity, or to the time we shall be summoned to appear before our Judge and Lord, in either case there is no time for “looking back”; **the end is come**. In this connection David in Psa. 1 describes the blessedness of—

“The man who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.”

Note the gradual declension here: first “walking among,” then “standing in the way of,” then “sitting” with sinners, when finally drawn away. This corresponds to “**looking** back,” and then “**turning** back” to the world.

## PATIENCE AND FORBEARANCE

Doubtless, in the infinite wisdom of “Him with Whom we have to do,” there is a definite time when this or that brother or sister might be described as “not fit for the Kingdom of God.” But we fellow-pilgrims traversing with them this wilderness leading toward the Promised Land must exercise patience and forbearance, “considering thyself,” as we are exhorted in Gal. 6:1. Surely it would not become fellow-travelers to describe such weak brethren as “unfit for the Kingdom,” until the very last extremity has been reached.

The first illustration cited from John 6:66 is but one out of many causes for “turning back”—weakness of faith, resulting in a tendency to resent Scripture itself, even when presented meekly and with only affectionate motive. The context reveals that Jesus' followers were composed in part of those ever ready to take offence at what they could not readily discern or comprehend.

## “I WILL EAT NO MEAT”

Paul, in Rom. 14, deals at some length with possible causes of brethren becoming offended, and it is noteworthy that he advises extreme care and tenderness in cases of mere weakness of understanding. He also cautions against conduct which might cause such weak ones to lose faith in their brethren and in the Truth they are upholding.

The same subject from another angle is dealt with in 1 Cor. 8. For fear of causing some to be offended, even though the act in question was not in itself sinful, still the Apostle advises:

“Take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak” (v. 9).

And he concludes by saying that it would be advisable to refrain from eating meat altogether, rather than be a cause of offence to a weak brother. In Prov. 18:19 we are told:

“A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.”

## “WOE UNTO HIM!”

This we may all have found to be very true in experiences with offended brethren. Weak, but really sincere, brethren may be among the “lambs” the prophet Isaiah says Jesus will “carry in his bosom” (40:11), for in Luke 17:1-2 there is a warning of dreadful consequences to those who cause offences. This should cause grave concern when weak brethren are involved in trouble, and every attempt should be made to avoid unnecessary offence. Some have justified their withdrawal into the world by citing conduct of some to whom they looked as models of righteous living.

The retrogression of many who once “pressed forward to the mark for the prize of the High calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:14) only emphasizes the warning words:

“He that endureth **to the end**, the same shall be saved” (Matt. 24:13).

Paul spoke of Demas and others who “turned backward” to the “present evil world” in his day.

Some may wonder how, in these days of fulfilling prophecy which remind us of the saying, “Many prophets and righteous men having desired to see the things which ye see”—how, we say, **any** (or at least, how **many**) could lose faith and turn back. However, we can begin to realize that all

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signs are fulfilled in so natural a manner that (to the natural eye) there seems nothing has occurred except the customary shifting of the “status quo” from one group of nations to another as a result of scheming and political intrigue.

## **THE PRODIGAL SON**

Let us consider two more illustrations of those who have “turned back,” that we may learn a lesson from the repentance and zeal they manifest to us. We may take first the case of the “Prodigal Son” (Luke 15). After having “spent his substance in riotous living,” he compared his miserable condition with his previous place in his “father’s house” and in his father’s favor and tender love.

Thereupon, he “came to himself” and resolved to humbly repent and take a low position with his father.

“Yes,” some will say, “but that was a hypothetical case—only a parable: it never really occurred.” It was a parable, truly. Nevertheless Jesus, the Great Teacher who knew the hearts of all men, gave it as an illustration of a truly repentant man. Doubtless there have been many instances in real life which were very similar to those the parable portrays.

## **NAOMI AND RUTH**

Now let us turn to an actual case of returning to one’s own land and habitation, after first having had to turn away. We refer to the marvellous illustration of love, and the wise choice made by Ruth, in the story of the troubled life of Naomi, who returned to the land and worship of the people of God’s choice, turning her back upon Moab and “the people of (the worship of) Chemosh.”

Here we find the testimony of Naomi’s life was in itself a sufficient example of righteousness and faith in God, without her needing to plead with her daughters-in-law to accompany her. In fact, she tested their faith by actually suggesting they return to their native land and to their idol worship (Ruth 1:15). How refreshing it seems that such love and zeal as Ruth exhibited needed not to be prompted and coaxed from her, but rather the reverse.

Truly these examples of self-sacrificing love teach us there is no need of lengthy entreaties for brethren to return, if they reason like the prodigal son and exhibit humble repentance, or love for such as Naomi who depart from

idolatry and live as an example for God. If, like the noble Ruth, they choose the people and worship which is of God, they will be blessed.

Let us conclude, with Paul, “Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:39).

—Bro. H. A. Sommerville

## David

Good morning everyone, young people, friends, my dear brethren and sisters of our Lord Jesus Christ. The theme of our gathering this weekend—Christ Confirming the Words of the Prophets—is a subject that is needful, because most people who claim to be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ do not believe what he taught concerning himself, nor do they accept the reality of the prophecies contained in the Scriptures concerning Jesus, as the future ruler of the world.

Our main objective this morning is to impress you as young people and remind ourselves, brothers and sisters of Christ, with the reality of the coming Kingdom of God. What we would like to do is draw attention to the fact that the Kingdom of God will be superior to any government the world has ever seen in every way.

We, as mere men and women, have been invited to be leaders in that great campaign and system of order, but it requires great dedication and zeal for the things of God on our part NOW. It should be a great encouragement to us that Jesus does not want to rule the world alone. His own desire is to share his throne with us. This wonderful invitation to rule with him is found in Revelation 3:20-21, where Jesus says, *“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”* And he adds, *“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne.”*

The important thing to realize is that accepting the invitation to be with Jesus does not come without consequences. If we are to enter into the presence of a great King, we must be prepared for that great event. Jesus himself gave us the parable of the marriage supper and one man who had not dressed properly. In other words, he had not prepared himself. He did not respect the great king or the king’s son. The king asked him, *“How camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?”* What does he say? It says, *“And he was speechless.”*

## WHAT CAN WE SAY WHEN WE KNOW WE HAVE NOT DONE WHAT WE KNEW WE WERE SUPPOSED TO DO.

Perhaps though, we do not realize the importance of serving the great king—what it requires of us and what the benefits are for doing so. Jesus taught us that if we are going to do a great work, we must make a fair evaluation of our situation. He called this, counting the cost. He gave two examples—one of someone who started building a tower and was not able to finish it, and also of a king who had 10,000 men who might have to go to war against another king with 20,000 men. This is found in Luke 14:31-33 – *“Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassador, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.”*

Young people, or anyone new to the basics of the Truth, these parables are not to be taken lightly. They obviously indicate that a life of service to God, will require all that we have.

Do we see ourselves as the one contemplating the battle ahead, and we are vastly outnumbered? If we do, we are not alone. If we look to ourselves for victory, WE WILL FAIL. The parable provides an ambassador—someone to stand in the breach and secure a peaceful victory on our behalf. Victory is gained through confidence in God and faith in the fulfillment of His promises through our great ambassador the Lord Jesus Christ.

So we have some questions. Where does the idea of a future king to rule the world come from? What does the Bible tell us of a future king? Why does the world need a king? What must we do to develop greatness to be kings with Christ? And what did Jesus say concerning himself as the future king of all the earth?

As to the last question, in all his teaching we find Jesus spoke very little of himself as a king. When asked if he was a king by Pilate, he acknowledged it but he did not promote himself. He said *“Thou sayest that I am a King. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I unto the world, that I should bear witness unto the Truth.”*

In this, he gives us great insight as to how we can become great. He kept his priorities straight. Right up until the end, he kept fresh in his mind, the

cross must come before the crown. The great work he was doing of promoting God's truth was far more important than himself.

So the question is, Why do we need a king today? Or more importantly, why do we need Jesus as our king? First of all, our very young children need to know what a king does. What must a king have in order to reign? First of all, he must have a country to reign over. That's why it's called a kingdom—or king's domain, or land. Also, he must have a capital city—a place for his throne. The Bible tells us Jesus will reign from Jerusalem over the land of Israel and that his kingdom will grow to cover the whole earth. A kingdom of this size will require a lot of people to govern it. These people will be the resurrected servants of God who have lived from Adam's time until Jesus comes back. These people will be the best rulers the world has ever seen. They cannot make a mistake, and they can never die. These people will reign over all the people of the world who don't know the true teachings of the Bible today.

This is the key to the superiority of the Kingdom of God—for the first time, the world will be ruled by laws that are good and fair and just. Those laws will bring glory to God and blessings to mankind. This is why the angels rejoiced at the birth of Christ, *"praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."*

With these things in mind, our subject this morning also deals with Jesus in relation to the reign of David. The idea of God providing kings goes back at least as far as Abraham who met with Melchizedek, King of Salem. Also when Jacob's name was changed to Israel, *"God said unto him... a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins."*

Just before he died, Jacob blessed his sons, and said concerning the tribe of Judah, which of course Jesus came from, *"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come."*

Hannah, the mother of Samuel who anointed both Saul and David as kings, prophesied herself saying, *"The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed."*

At the time of this prophecy, God, the Father Himself, was the king of Israel. Israel was not satisfied with that. They wanted a human king to lead them. They did not want to wait for God to give them a king, because they didn't want to be different from other nations that had their own kings. They

said, “*Nay; but we will have a king over us; that we also may be like all the nations; and that our king will judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.*”

So, God gave in, and provided Saul to be their king. But he remained disobedient to God. So, God chose David. Why David? He did not have the outward appearance of a king. When Samuel came to anoint one of Jesse’s sons, he thought it might be his older, taller brother Eliab. But it was David who was the man after God’s own heart. Even before he was a king, David manifested a royal character—not the world’s standards of pride and arrogance and wanting to rule over other people, but faith, honor, obedience, service to his father, service to his brothers with humility. David did whatever his father asked, from watching sheep to taking food to his brothers at war.

Saul was the tallest of the Israelites. It was his job as king to meet the giant Goliath in battle. But Saul was afraid. David’s bravery sprang from trusting in God, because he was defending the honor of God. When he heard the giant mocking Israel, he remembered that God had helped him fight a lion and also a bear that attacked his sheep. And David believed that God would help him fight the man who was attacking God’s people.

David had come to check on his brothers’ welfare. His older brother Eliab was angry and spoke roughly to him. He belittled his coming. This reminds us of the Jewish leaders speaking to Jesus when he came bringing the true bread from heaven, they also rejected him.

Goliath was huge and powerful, well-armed in brass, and trained in warfare. He represents the natural man, or human nature. We are told that he cursed David in the name of his Philistine gods. And he disdained David. In other words, he thought he was beneath his notice. He scorned him. David shows his faith was in God, not in himself. He said, “*I come to thee in the name of Yahweh Tz’vaoth (interpreted ‘armies’ instead of hosts)—I come to thee in the name of He Who Shall Be Armies, whom thou hast defied. This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand ... that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.*” And David says, “*The battle is Yahweh’s.*”

The battle between David and Goliath represents a type of the struggle everyone has between good and evil. David’s stone struck Goliath in the head, showing the giant’s whole purpose was out of harmony with God. His mind controlled all of his actions

We notice David as a type, or shadow, of Christ. David began his work for Israel by destroying Goliath. Jesus began by conquering sin in himself. David did not become king right after this battle, and Jesus is still waiting to receive his kingdom. Both wait a long time from being anointed to receiving their thrones.

So why does the Bible tell us so much about David? It's because his kingdom represented the coming Kingdom of God. He answers our question—what does a king do? Or what should he do? More importantly, what will Jesus do? First of all, David did a lot more than fight Israel's battles. He was their lawgiver—the spiritual leader of the nation, the great poet of Scripture. He also prepared everything for the temple and the worship. All this work was not in vain. God tells us through the prophet Amos that David's kingdom is coming back. Jesus will rebuild it. Amos 9:11 – *“In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.”*

We've looked at David's life, both past and future, but were there things that relate to us now in our service to Christ? Saul became jealous of David. He sometimes treated him well and sometimes quite otherwise. David had friends who loved him and helped him, but there were others who would betray him in order to gain favor with Saul. David was always faithful and loyal to Saul, treating him with respect and even sparing his life. But David finally had to flee from Israel. He was rejected by the leaders, and like Jesus, had no where to lay his head. He was a fugitive looking for shelter and hiding in the wilderness, but his loyal followers remained with him. They were the ones who later helped him to establish and rule his kingdom. They were unhappy with conditions in Israel, disturbed by Saul's reign, and seeking justice when David's promised reign would begin.

When David was in the wilderness, he protected the flocks of a rich man named Nabal, whose name means 'fool.' David sent some men to Nabal and asked for some help—food and drink—in return for the help they had given him, his men and his sheep. But Nabal refused and insulted David and his men. Nabal's servants went and told Abigail what Nabal had done. Abigail brought David and his men abundant supplies of food and bread and wine, and begs David's forgiveness. She also said this, *“The LORD will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of the LORD, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days.”* And went on to state her belief that *“thine enemies shall he sling out as out of the middle of*

*a sling* (an obvious reference to her knowledge of his conquest over Goliath). *The LORD shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel ... When the LORD shall have dealt well with my lord, then remember thine handmaid.*” This reminds us of the thief on the cross, *“Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.”*

Nabal died about 10 days later. David then sent for Abigail, married her, and she shared both his exile in the wilderness and his kingdom. The friends of Jesus are now in the position of Abigail and David’s mighty men. They are not popular in the eyes of the world, but that doesn’t bother them. Their hope is in the future.

Christ tells us a parable about a king going into a far country, and another about a vineyard owner leaving his vineyard in the hands of the workmen. The unfaithful subjects and servants are glad that the king and master are gone, so they can do what they want to have their own way. But Jesus also tells of faithful loyal servants who watch for their master’s return and faithful loyal brides who wait for their bridegroom to come.

Jesus is now in his far country. He, like David, will be appointed ruler over Israel. His friends are not satisfied with the things the way they are now under the current rulership. They are like Abigail and the mighty men, seeking a better kingdom. They have faith that it will be established. They have been invited to join their king in the wilderness now and later in his kingdom.

The Apostle Paul understood this state of mind and how to prosper in this present age. Paul tells us in Philippians 4:11-13 – *“I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.”* And he tells how, *“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”*

The world has tried all sorts of governments, seeking for justice. The state of California is currently tens of billions of dollars in debt. The people of California have just recently removed their governor and in their frustration elected an actor. The scriptures tell us, *“It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.”* RULING IS THE WORK OF GOD.

The crowning virtue of God’s Kingdom on earth will be justice and righteous judgment with Jesus having the ability to know the hearts and rule in mercy.

The Scriptures define the life of Christ—from his humble birth to his elevation to King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The prophet Isaiah tells us he is a gift from God. And that God will establish his Kingdom. This is found in Isaiah 9:6-7 – *“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God (or strength), The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Yahweh Tz’vaoth will perform this.”*

In order to do this, Jesus must replace all the governments of the world with his own. The prophet Daniel told us that Jesus is like a little stone that strikes the image representing these nations on the feet, and knocks them all down. Jesus is the rock of our salvation, from head to toe. From the head of Goliath to the foundations of this world, the prayer of Jesus will come true, God’s will WILL be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

*Bro. John Phillips*

## **Signs – Sheba and Dedan**

*“Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil?” Ezekiel 38:13*

According to the prophet Ezekiel the Middle Eastern countries of Sheba and Dedan, known today as Yemen and Oman, are to be allies with Britain, America, and all the commonwealth countries, who will form the King of the South. So we took a keen interest in BBC reports when Yemen appeared in the news at the start of 2010.

“First came news that the alleged failed bomber of a US airliner had been recruited by a branch of al-Qaeda in Yemen. Then, within days, Britain was one of three western states to shut its embassy in the country in response to a possible terror threat.

“While the embassy, in the capital Sanaa, has reopened, though not to the public, terrorism remains a live threat and the UK has recently increased its spending on counter-terrorism activity in Yemen. It has also been upping aid donations...

“But this is not a new association. Yemen has loomed large in British consciousness since Victorian times when Britain ran the area around the port of Aden. The UK-Yemeni relationship dates back to 1839, when the strategically crucial southern port was conquered by the British East India Company. It was ruled as part of British India, until it was made a Crown colony in 1937.

“Pressure for the British to leave South Yemen grew in the early 1960s and following a bloody few years of protests, attacks and civil war they were driven from Aden in 1967. The North Yemen Republic and the People's Democratic Republic formed, but years of fighting ensued before unification in 1990. However division, conflict and corruption remains to this day.

“The early links with Britain had led to Yemeni immigrants forming some of the oldest Muslim communities in the UK. With Aden being the main refueling stop for ships between Britain and the Far East, many of the seamen went to the UK to work and then settled. From the end of the 19th Century, Yemenis working as stokers on steamships moved ashore and set up boarding houses in dock areas. Students and people seeking asylum from more recent troubles in Yemen have added to those communities.

“Yemen - the poorest country in the Middle East - is seeing a strengthening of support from Britain with foreign aid set to rise by 400%, to £50m a year by 2011, says the Department for International Development. As well as support for community-based development through the Social Fund for Development (SFD), it says it is promoting investment and growth, justice and policing, water resources management and humanitarian aid.” All of this aid for a country seen as a major terrorist threat doesn't seem to make sense, but as history shows there have been close ties between Yemen and Britain for over 150 yrs: As prophecy shows, these ties will remain. No matter how things appear to the world, we know Yahweh is lining up the nations for Armageddon. Let us all be ready and watching!

*Contact Magazine*

## **The Remedy At Christ's Return**

The work of establishing the new order of things is the work of Christ, and, therefore, of those who belong to him, for he shares his work with them. “The isles shall wait for his law” (Isa. xlii. 4). “The law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem,” for there shall be his throne as will be proved.

None but the immortal, unerring Son of God could promulgate such a law. Mortal erring man is not in the process or the service, except in so far as he may be subordinately employed as servants are employed in a great house, to deliver messages, to, fetch and carry and perform; for, of course, it is never to be lost sight of that the mortal population of the earth, after subjugation and purification, is the basis of the whole operation. And how could such a law be promulgated and administered successfully among a mortal population except in the hands of divine instruments?

A mortal judge can only judge “by the sight of the eye, and the hearing of the ear.” Therefore, mistakes are inevitable in such hands in the application of the best law that could be framed: the evidence upon which such a judge must depend may always be false, and he himself may be dim of discernment. It is necessary that a law that is to bless all mankind should be administered by those who cannot err, and cannot be deceived. That this is to be so is testified: “He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears, but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, etc.” (Isa. xi. 3). If this is the case with “the Branch” from Jesse's roots, on whom “the Spirit of the Lord shall rest, and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord,” will it not be so with his brethren who are to “reign with him?” It is so testified: “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?” (1 Cor. vi. 2). “Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known” (1 Cor. xiii. 12). It must be evident to ordinary reflection, where there is any experience of the working of things among men, that the accomplishment of these things requires that the agency accomplishing them should be a visible, practically working agency: for herein lies its power, that it should be visible, proximate, and effective. God's justice and judgment exist as really now as they ever will: but because they are not brought to bear because men for a time are allowed to do as they please, subject to each other's coercions only, the wickedness of man is great upon the earth. But let man be daily in the presence of a power brought to bear upon him through living agents, that avenges injustice and punishes the guilty with swift and unerring stroke, it is easy to realise that a great change must soon be brought about.

It is not only in matters of judgement, but in matters of education that the presence of such a visible living agency is required. A thousand doubts and contradictions arise among men in the present state of things as to questions most vitally affecting their ways. There is no one to settle them. “One man's opinion is as good as another's,” as the saying is. It is not quite true, but the principle is acted on. And so the human race staggers along in confusion. But let there be leaders whose word is law, and all this will be at an end, and human life will flow in peaceful harmony. This is promised. Immortal kings and priests reigning upon the earth supply the need exactly. But if they did

not show themselves, and did not interfere, their existence would be of no use. They might as well be in the moon. But they will show themselves, and will interfere, and that most effectually. For this is promised to Israel, in whose benefits all nations will share. "I will give you pastors according to my own heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jer. iii. 15). "THINE EYES SHALL SEE THY TEACHERS; and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it" (Isa. xxx. 20, 21). Who these teachers are, the apostolic writings reveal; the twelve apostles over the twelve tribes: all the prophets and all the saints in the kingdom, kings and priests unto God. The recompense of the saints in glory consists in part, of the honour and supreme satisfaction of having the power to bless placed in their hands, and in having their part openly recognised. This is their "reward."

The idea of reward may be foreign to some sublime philosophies; but it is an ingredient in the economy of salvation, and it is in harmony with the constitution of human nature. Even supposing it could be successfully maintained that "virtue is its own reward," there could be no objection to the addition of other rewards. The men do not live who would refuse them at the hand of divine munificence, however strongly they might prate under the influence of half-sighted views. "My reward is with me" says Jesus, "to give every one of you according as your work shall be." That this, "according as," means "in the degree of," is shown by the other statement, that "he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully, and he that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly." The nature of the Kingdom of God admits of these degrees, "Have thou authority over ten cities:", "have thou authority over five cities." This is the fulfilment of the more general promise. "To him that overcometh will I grant that he sit with me on my throne to him will I give power over the nations;" also that other promise: "the trial of your faith (shall be) found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Christ."

Sentimental literature has obscured these robust and glorious truths. The Kingdom will be a reality. Salvation is not a dream or a state of idle sensuous bliss. It is an affair of strong immortal men possessing the earth and ruling mankind. The head of them is Christ. In the carrying out of this affair, there must be details, and one of them is the revelation by Ezekiel: that Christ, the prince, has an estate of his own, of immense extent, embracing thousands of square miles in the best of the land, when it is "like Eden, like the garden of the Lord and that in this royal dominion the very presence and under the wing of the Holiness and Majesty of the whole earth, it shall be his happiness, when he chooses, to confer the happiness and high honour of a special residence and possession upon such as enjoy his special approbation. When such are his sons (that is, his immortal brethren), the

inheritance is for ever. When they are mortal servants, it is a revocable gift, and reverts to the fee simple in the year of jubilee. [Fee simple is an estate in land, a form of freehold ownership.]

It may seem a “gross” conception to modern spiritualism, but it is scriptural, and it is reasonable and beautiful, and is such an arrangement as none of the most refined and sublimated spirituals of our day despise in actual life. If a well-appointed mansion, in rural seclusion, is a desirable attainment in these mortal days, why should it be a thing despised when righteousness reigns, and when there is immortal strength in the possessors to enjoy the gift without drawback ? Whatever sentimental objection there may be, it is a matter of divine promise that the friends of God shall inherit the earth and reign therein with Christ; and Ezekiel's vision is a glimpse of what this means in practical fact. The thing seen is nothing but beautiful and altogether lovely. *Bro. Robert Roberts—“Christ on Earth Again”*

## **We Should Find Truth Given Pre-eminent Importance**

If all that we have said is correct, we should find the Bible placing supreme importance upon TRUTH. We should find it repeatedly emphasized that a correct knowledge of the facts God has revealed is essential to fellowship with Him and acceptance by Him. We should find careful instructions given for preservation of correct beliefs in, and exclusion of error from, the assemblies of worship. And we should further find instances and illustrations of the application of these principles. We should find error and falsehood and imagination and supposition condemned in words as clear and strong and uncompromising as the warning label on a bottle of poison.

*All these things we DO find—in vivid clarity and overwhelming abundance.*

Jesus said (John 4:24)—

*“They that worship God **must** worship Him in spirit and in TRUTH.”*

*“Thou desirest Truth in the inward parts” (Psa. 51:6).*

*“Teach me Thy Way; I will walk in Thy TRUTH” (Psa. 86:11).*

*“His Truth endureth to all generations” (Psa. 100:5).*

*“The Lord is nigh to all that call on Him in Truth” (Psa. 145).*

*“He that speaketh Truth showeth forth righteousness” (Prov. 12).*

*“Buy the TRUTH, and sell it not!” (Prov. 23:23).*

*“Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation that keepeth the Truth may enter in” (Isa. 26:2).*

*“Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free” (John 8:32).*

*“I am the Way, the TRUTH, and the Life” (John 14:6).*

*“When the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth” (John 16:13).*

*“Sanctify them through Thy Truth. Thy Word is Truth” (John 17).*

*Has all this passed away? Do Truth and Fact no longer matter, but merely human feeling and sentiment? Is it uncharitable and narrow to insist that TRUTH be still given the preeminence that we find it given in the Scriptures?*

Is it just and fair to represent Truth as something that unnecessarily constricts and hampers the operations of Love? Does not Love itself need the ever-present guidance of Truth if it is to be anything more dependable than shapeless, groundless feeling?—

*“They that worship God must worship Him in TRUTH.”*

*“The wisdom that is from above is **first** pure, **then** peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated” (James 3:17).*

The apostle Paul shows the same supreme regard for Truth, and abhorrence for ignorance and error, no matter how well-meaning. To the Ephesians he speaks of the *“Word of Truth, the Gospel of salvation”* (1:13) and of ignorance as *“alienating from the life of God”* (4:18). To Timothy he says—

*“God will have (that is, desires to have) all men to be saved, and to come to a **knowledge of the Truth**” (1 Tim. 2:4).*

*“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the Word of Truth**” (2 Tim. 2:15).*

James shows that a perception of the Truth is the vital connection between us and God when he says (James 1:18)—

*“Of His own will begat He us **with the Word of Truth**, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.”*

And of the bearing of a faithful adherence to this Truth upon salvation he says (5:19)—

*“Brethren, if any of you do err **from the Truth**, and one convert him; let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall **save a soul from death**.”*

John, too, bears the same testimony (1 John 2:21)—

*“I have not written unto you because ye know not the Truth, but because ye know it, and that **no lie is of the Truth**.”*

*“No lie is of the Truth.” This is a basic scriptural principle. Truth and error will not mix. There can be no fellowship between them. There is no hazy middle ground of charitable tolerance of well-meaning error.*

*Bro. GV Growcott*

## **Encouraging Words No. 10**

WHEN the question, “Was the gospel preached to Abraham?” is put to candidates who desire immersion, how often does the reply come in the form of an emphatic “No!” This is the result of feebleness of knowledge concerning the Israelitish nature of salvation. In view of this failing, let us, dear sisters, when we have found any who are willing to listen to the truth, be careful to instruct them thoroughly in all the bearings of the gospel—as a matter which has its root in the promises made to Abraham and Israel from the days of old.

The first and all-important foundation stone, as touching salvation, which we find laid in the Scriptures, is the covenant made with Abraham. It is only by becoming Abraham’s heirs in Christ, by faith in the things pertaining to the covenant, that we stand related to any future life at all. In instructing our interested friends let us not omit to point this out. Let us also draw their attention to the connection between this covenant and the kingdom by showing that it will be through the instrumentality of the kingdom that the blessing of all nations in Abraham and his Seed—the Christ—will be brought about. Let us also show that Abraham’s Seed in possession of the gate of his enemies is none other than Christ ruling in the midst of his foes (Ps. 110:2)—God’s king upon the holy hill of Zion ruling the nations with a rod of iron (Ps. 2.)—or, as still more comprehensively revealed, Christ and his immortal brethren in possession of the earth, exercising power over the nations (Dan. 7:27; Rev. 2:26).

Then there is another foundation stone, and this comprises the Israelitish nature of the kingdom, which is a “restitution”—a “building again”—a “restoring again” of the “kingdom to Israel.” This foundation stone lies deep down in Israelitish history. It embraces alike the divine origin of the Israelitish kingdom and its name, and includes matters such as the going

down into Egypt, and the coming up therefrom, the mighty works wrought on Israel's behalf, together with their God-given laws and land, their divinely selected judges and kings, God's covenant with David, God's visible presence, in symbol, between the cherubim, ready to direct, bless and preserve His nation, if obedient.

Nor must Israel's flagrant disobedience, resulting in the division of the kingdom, the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, and Israel's final overthrow and dispersal by the Romans, be overlooked. To be a stranger to Israelitish history is, to a large extent, to be ignorant of Israel's God and also of Christ's future mission in the earth, as foreshadowed in Israelitish events and persons. Further, the many lessons which the scriptures base upon this history are rendered pointless.

The things concerning the name of Jesus Christ should be dealt with in a no less careful way. In regard both to the things of the Kingdom and those of the Name it should be our aim to enable those whom we instruct to give a sound scriptural reason for the hope that is in them. Should any object to matters such as those alluded to as unimportant, let us refer our critics to apostolic custom, as evidenced by Paul's declaration to the converts of his day: "Ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." Let us also call their attention to those representative proclamations of the truth (and these in all probability greatly curtailed) by Stephen (Acts 7) and by Paul (Acts 13), and the immense amount of matter which they cover. When we read in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles the items—and these were all expository of one and the same gospel—comprehended in the gospel message of inspired men of old, our anxiety takes the direction of fearing not lest we should teach too much, but rather lest we should come short in covering the whole ground of the gospel. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation, but not to all, it is only to such as diligently seek (Heb. 11:6) and find it. To any who are making this endeavour let us give our most patient and thorough help. Let us, however, neither presume to substitute for the divinely revealed gospel a mere *précis*, nor to water it down for the indolent and indifferent.

*Sis. C.H. Jannaway—1907*

## **Wayside Letters No. 1**

DEAR BROTHER FAITHFUL,—When I describe this as a wayside letter I am not in the least degree guilty of affectation. Doubtless some writings have been given to the world as stray, wayside thoughts, when, as a matter of fact, they were beaten out of the author's brains by a laborious process, in the privacy of his study, while the children were in bed, and

other inmates of the house enjoined to be silent. I generally write a few sentences at a time, while waiting for a train, or sometimes even while on a journey, or while in a public room with loud-voiced strangers around discussing the iniquities of statesmen or the merits of a pantomime. In such an atmosphere a certain lack of concatenation is almost inevitable, and it occurred to me that this would be more pardonable in a letter than in work of a more solid character.

Even in writing a letter, however, it is well to be as consecutive as possible. An epitome of the crude thoughts that flash through a man's mind might be stimulating, and, quite conceivably, might be more interesting than his mature judgments; but it is not quite the thing the world needs. You have probably noticed that some of the most stimulating and interesting of modern writers are not remarkable for their consistency. I believe it was Emerson who said that a slavish consistency was a fetish of little minds. It seems that some modern writers have accepted this as an axiom, and have laid themselves out to prove that their minds are abnormally large. Probably we could make our lectures more interesting, and attract larger audiences, if we were less consistent. But whatever the world wants, it certainly needs some definite and unchanging teaching. So it was when the Lord Jesus was on earth before. I think it is probable that if we could be made acquainted with the teaching of many first-century scribes we should find that they were not hampered by a slavish consistency. It was an astonishment to the people when one arose to give them some definite and authoritative instruction, one who was really sure of his facts. People are equally surprised now when one dares to "speak as the oracles of God," and they are less willing to listen than in the first century. But definite thoughts are what this generation needs. We must continually hammer away at the old, well-established truths.

It seems necessary, however, to find new ways of enforcing old truths, or they lose their effect. It seems sometimes that old truths long ago embraced lose their power, while old errors long resisted gain in strength. When a brother who has given many years of service turns away from us, and says that he believes no longer, we naturally desire to know the cause of the change. How surprised we have been in such cases to hear the most ancient and time-worn of difficulties urged as the reason for faith to fail. We have felt that there must be some mistake. It is not that an old argument is to be despised, or that age in any way diminishes its force, but we feel that a brother of long standing must have faced and settled these old difficulties long ago. There is nothing unhealthy in a young brother feeling some perplexities and difficulties when he first faces the great problem of good and evil, joy and suffering.

If he is a thinker the difficulties are inevitable, and there is no reason why he should keep quiet about them, fearing to mention them, lest someone should denounce him as a heretic. He needs help, and older brethren should be in a position to give it. But it seems to me that there is something very unhealthy in the spectacle of one of long standing dragging out all the old rags of scepticism, and treating them as if they were a new discovery. It impresses one with the same kind of wonder we should feel if a man, after twenty years of married life, clamoured for a separation because he could not endure the colour of his wife's eyes. We may, with an effort, realise the possibility that one with the so-called "artistic temperament" would be so much affected by colour that every other consideration would have to give way to it. But really we should judge that he must have noted this matter with reasonable thoroughness before he was married. And in the same way, we should think that a brother of average intelligence must have faced the fundamental difficulties in his early days. We sometimes feel inclined to ask, "Have you really only just discovered that there is evil in the world, and that life is not built on the kind of plan that we should most appreciate? Have you only recently found these alleged discrepancies in the Bible? Have you only just heard of the objections raised by sceptics a century ago?"

Another thought arises naturally out of these questions. Does the real difficulty appear in these old arguments? Or is it one of those familiar instances where the objections raised have no real connection with the lack of faith they seek to justify? I remember an instructive cartoon, which appeared some years ago in a business magazine, called *Salesmanship*. It represented the salesman wielding a huge sledge hammer, and striking with all his might at what was really a dummy figure. The buyer crouched on one side smiling at the wasted energy. The idea is one that will appeal to all business men. It is a fact that either from lack of moral courage, or from a desire to escape trouble, a merchant will often state a reason for not buying which is not his real reason, and unless the salesman is astute enough to perceive the truth of the matter, all his effort is wasted. For instance, instead of saying "I have found a line of goods I like better than yours," a business man may say, "I think there will only be a poor sale this season, and I shall buy very sparingly."

It may not be a case of actual falsehood. It may be true that he anticipated a bad season, but the fact remains that, if the salesman hammers away at that point his energy will be wasted. In the same way, men continually lay emphasis on arguments which have nothing to do with their convictions, and we may waste our energies in answering difficulties which do not really influence them.

I think that I can suggest what is the real cause of faith failing nine times out of ten. It brings us back to an old formula which frequently is mentioned simply because it is fundamental. In plain process of logic, every negative implies its corresponding affirmative. Life is an affirmation, death is a negation. The healthy man says: "I am hungry, and this food will suit me admirably." The unhealthy man says: "I crave for nourishment, but all food is loathsome." The healthy man says: "I dislike that, but I like this. That is false, but this is true." The unhealthy man says: "I detest this, and I don't know what I like. This is false, and I don't know what is true."

Nine times out of ten, or probably ninety - nine times out of a hundred, the wavering brother falters because he shirks the responsibility of affirmation, although in strict process of logic, he is bound to affirm as strongly as he denies. He is more willing to say: "I do not believe in the genuineness of prophecy," than to say: "I believe that all these fulfilments were merely coincidence." More willing to deny the resurrection of Christ than to affirm that the disciples were all mistaken, or that they told lies. More willing to doubt the existence of God, than to believe that all things came by chance. Instead of pursuing a clear line of constructive thought he allows a hundred other men to fill him with blurred and confused doubts. Instead of growing and living, he is decaying and dying. It is not that he has given greater attention to his former faith, and has proved it false. It is not even that he has given attention to a contrary proposition, and proved it true. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, it is simply that his thoughts have been on a lower plane, or where they have touched the higher reaches at all it has been in the negative process of decay.

In so far as a man shirks the responsibility of affirmation, his mentality ceases to develop and begins to die.

*Christadelphian—1913*

## **HYMN 158a**

**BEHOLD**, meditate upon it, **TH' AMAZING GIFT OF LOVE THE FATHER HATH BESTOW'D ON US, THE SINFUL SONS OF MEN,** undeserving yet hopeful of His mercy, **TO CALL US SONS OF GOD!** "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God..." This truly is amazing when you think about it.

**CONCEAL'D AS YET THIS HONOUR LIES, BY THIS DARK WORLD UNKNOWN,**—"...therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not" (1 John 3:1). **A WORLD THAT KNEW NOT, WHEN HE CAME, EVEN GOD'S BELOVED SON.**

**HIGH IS THE RANK WE NOW POSSESS,** called to be Saints. It is a high and holy calling. **BUT HIGHER WE SHALL RISE,** chosen to be

Saints; **THOUGH WHAT WE SHALL HEREAFTER BE, IS HID FROM MORTAL EYES.** "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (3:2).

**BUT THIS WE KNOW, WHEN HE APPEARS, WE'LL BEAR HIS IMAGE BRIGHT,** equal to the angels; **FOR ALL HIS GLORY, FULL DISCLOS'D, SHALL OPEN TO OUR SIGHT.** "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps. 16:11).

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him" (1 John 4:9).

## **Analecta Apocalypticae (50)**

### The Beasts of the Sea and Earth

John, standing upon the sand of the sea (chapter 13:1), sees a beast rise up out of the sea having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns. The seven heads and ten horns show the Roman nature of the power represented, and the crowns being on the horns and not on the heads shows the time or era. It is the new organization of the Roman world in the west long after the era of Constantine, when the days of a single imperial rule had passed away, and the ten kings had made their appearance, and acquired their sovereignty in Europe. "Upon his heads the name of blasphemy." The Papacy is the name of blasphemy, and the heads, the seven hills upon which it is established. The beast therefore has to do with Papal times. These had not arrived in the days of Constantine. The Popeship was in the germ even then in the office and pretensions of the Bishop of Rome: still it was not a developed institution. It did not become the name of blasphemy enthroned on the seven hills of Rome till nearly 300 years afterwards.

"The dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." The dragon, as we have seen, first represented the political Paganism of Rome in its opposition to the Christian name in the west. This political Paganism was headed up in Licinius, whose seat of government was Byzantium (afterwards called Constantinople). Licinius in the east (Byzantium): Constantine in the west (Rome), presented at this time the historical counterpart of the dragon and his angels on the one side, and Michael and his angels on the other. When Constantine had overthrown Licinius, he transferred his capital from Rome to Byzantium, which he built anew and named Constantinople. Here he and his successors became what Licinius's government had been before them — the dragon. They did so by reason of occupying the same capital, ruling the same territory and assuming the same hostility towards the true witnesses of Christ. It was from Constantinople that the persecution of the Church emanated in Constantinian and succeeding times. Constantinople continued to be the throne of the dragon though professedly Christian in character. A recognition of this is necessary to enable us to understand the statement that "the dragon gave (to the beast of the sea) his power, and his seat, and great authority." It was from the emperor reigning in Constantinople in the

east that the Papacy in the west received its constitution and recognition, or its "power and seat and great authority." The history of the uprise of the Papacy will show you this. The dragon had the power to bestow, and bestowed it on the bishop of Rome after wavering for some time between the bishop of Rome and the bishop of Constantinople. It was not an instantaneous or a single act of appointment. The competition between Rome and Constantinople for the headship of Christendom extended over more than a century. It was terminated in favour of Rome by the emperor Justinian in A.D. 535, whose decision was finally confirmed and established by his successor the emperor Phocas, A.D. 606-8.

"I saw one of his heads as it were wounded unto death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast." The sixth head of the Roman beast — that is, the sixth of its seven historic forms of government — the imperial — received an apparently fatal wound from the sword of the Goths, as we saw in the consideration of the fourth trumpet. The Roman Empire was totally extinguished in the west — the kingdom of the Goths taking its place "for a short time", that is for seventy years. At the end of that time, the forces of the dragon — the armies of the emperor at Constantinople, restored the imperial authority in Italy by defeating and expelling the Gothic forces and putting an end to the Gothic interregnum. Afterwards, on the ground thus cleared, Roman imperialism was restored in the crowning of Charlemagne in Rome as Roman emperor of the west. Thus the sixth head of the Roman beast was healed, to the admiration and astonishment of the world, who rejoiced in the evidently perennial vigour of the ancient imperialism of Rome, re-invigorated from Constantinople. This state of mind is indicated in the statement that "all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast. And there was given unto him (the beast) a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given to him to continue (A.V. margin — to make war) forty and two months." To the Roman beast, in its Papal constitution, was given (by the dragonic imperial decree from Constantinople) authority to dictate to the world in spiritual things. The Roman Pontiff, in his official utterances, was this mouth, whose great speakings were blasphemies. Power also to wield the sword, in the enforcement of the ecclesiastical ascendancy, was accorded by the same settlement of things, by the Constantinople (dragonic) ordinance. The duration of that power was not defined in the dragonic decree; but it was fixed in the counsels of Providence. The Papacy was to possess the power for forty-two months (1,260 days or years). We are living at the end of the period, and can see that the word of God has been fulfilled. Exactly 1,260 years from its first institution by the Emperor Justinian, in A.D. 535, viz., at the close of the last century, during the French Revolution, it received a terrible blow, nearly fatal, at the hands of the first Napoleon. But the first institution of Papal power was only preliminary, and therefore 1,260 years from that time could not be the full termination. Its confirmation and establishment by Phocas, in 606-8, supplied another starting-point for the forty and two months. Reckoned from this date, we are conveyed to the events of A.D. 1867, when the French, on their return, rescued the Pope from Garibaldi, took possession of the so-called "Holy City", and virtually terminated the Pope's power to make war against his enemies. Three years later even the shadow of THE TEMPORAL POWER disappeared in the conflict between France and Germany; and, at the present moment, [That is, in 1880] the Pope is known among his friends as "the prisoner of the 284—Berean 2010

Vatican.” His power is gone. The government of the King of Italy has possession of the City. The Pope is reduced to the position of a mere bishop again. He is obliged to tolerate dissenting chapels before his very eyes, and is powerless to stop the free circulation of the Bible, which has never before been allowed in Rome during the forty and two months. This is a great sign that we are near the end of the present order.

In verse 11, John beholds another beast come up — not out of the sea, but out of the earth. Students of the Apocalypse have found some difficulty with this beast; but Dr. Thomas has cleared it away. That it is another form of the Papal beast is proved by the statement in verse 12, that “he causeth them that dwell therein to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed”. You may ask, why should there be another form of the Papal beast? Because, in the progress of events, the Papal ascendancy took an entirely new phase. The Constantinopolitan dragon of the east, who in the first place gave him his authority, finally became of no account; and from the interior regions of Europe — (and therefore from “the earth”, Apocalyptically speaking, as contrasted with the Mediterranean seaboard) there now sprang up a new conquering power, which obtained the controlling ascendancy in Europe, and incorporated the Papacy in itself in a new order of things. This was the Germanic Empire, springing out of the order of things established by the victories of Charlemagne, king of the French, the emperor of the Romans. Let anyone read the history of this Germanic Empire, which slowly and peacefully shifted from France to Germany, and finally to Austria, as the leading German power. They will find that it had two horns, or was constituted of two contemporary dynasties — viz., the Emperor and the Pope. These were the two leading features of the empire, to which the rest of Europe were subject. The Pope held his position subject to the confirmation of the emperor, and the emperor did not hold a valid position till he received his crown at the hands of the Pope. It was a dual empire — a two-horned beast. They were lamb-like horns (verse 11); that is, by profession, they belonged to Christ; between them they were Christendom; but the beast spake like a dragon for all that. In nature and principles it was thoroughly dragonic, though ostensibly holding a lamb-like character. Let anyone study the deeds of the Pope and emperor, and they will see the truthfulness of this symbolism. No more merciless tyranny ever afflicted earth than that which, under the name of the Holy Roman Empire, caused the tears and blood of thousands to flow in dire persecution and oppression, under a pretence of authority from Christ.

The two-horned beast “caused the earth and them who dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.” The first beast being Rome in the first stage of her Papal constitution, was now incorporate in the two-horned beast: it was merged or fused with it. This is proved by the fact that the latter “exercised all the power of the first beast”; and proved also by the history and facts of the case. The first beast was revived in the constitution of the second, in so far as imperial rank was restored to Rome, and the Roman Empire re-instated in the west, in the new empire created by the proclamation of Charlemagne as Roman Emperor by the Pope. This was the healing of the wounded sixth head, and by the public proclamation of the new empire, the earth and the dwellers therein were commanded to worship “the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.” The great wonders which the new beast was able to perform consisted of the prodigies of war, for which Charlemagne is famous in history. He was able to enforce

his will upon all Europe by the powers for destruction which he possessed, symbolized by “making fire come down from heaven on the earth, in the sight of men”. By these political miracles he deceived “them that dwell on the earth” into the conviction that divine authority was on his side, and proposed and carried his proposal into effect, that an image should be made of the killed beast that had recovered. This, of course, is not a literal image. It is part of the symbolism. It means a political likeness, or counterpart of the imperial system in Rome that had been killed by the Gothic sword: the restoration, in fact, of the old imperiality of Rome in a new form. This was accomplished on the investiture of the Pope with all the prerogatives of an emperor. In this position he was the exact likeness of the old Roman emperors of the sixth head — chief magistrate in the domain of civil law, and, at the same time, chief pontiff of the national religion. He was, to all intents and purposes, an image of the defunct imperialism of the west, but a speaking image; for the new beast which came on the scene with the victories and empire of Charlemagne, had “power to give life unto the image of the beast” (verse 15). Victorious Charlemagne (accepted and crowned by the Pope) had the power to give political vitality to the Papal image of the beast. This power he exercised, and ordered the worship of the Pope-King on pain of death (verse 15), causing all to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their forehead, that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name (verse 17). This was the symbolic way of setting forth that, under the new system, the authority of the Papal image would be made essential to the holding of any office, or the exercise of any traffic, in the emoluments or advantages of Church or State; and as this authority was conferred by signing the cross on the forehead or right hand of the recipient of official favour, the cross became the subject of this symbolism as “the mark of the beast.” The name of the beast, or the number of his name, were equivalent symbols of the same thing. Those who know the name of the beast, or the number of his name, are in the secret as to what is meant by the symbol. “It is the number of a man”, so says the last verse. That is, when you have found the system represented by the name of the beast, you will find the system is centred in a man, though the man and the system are two things. The perception of this enigma is made a feat of wisdom in verse 18:

“Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred, threescore and six.”

There has been a great deal of guessing and speculating on this subject. It is a standing joke with the scorning and scoffing class, but it is a matter of wisdom for all that. The difficulty which most people have had in finding it out is due to the fact that their theology prevents them from identifying the beast. They regard the Roman Communion as a part of the true Church of Christ, and are therefore driven to look into indefinite futurity for this phenomenon of human history which is already hoary with age. Those who know the truth are burdened with no such difficulty. They see in the leading figure of Christendom — a sovereign who pretends to hold office in all the centuries as Christ's representative and to be endowed with supernatural authority and prerogatives — an exact fulfilment of all that was shown to John, and also to Paul, as to the anti-Christ, the Man of Sin, that was coming. The only question is how the Apocalyptic identification of 666 can be discovered in him. Does any official title appertaining to him, when the

letters of that title are summed up in their numerical value, yield the number in question as “the number of his name”? It matters not if twenty other names can be made to yield the same number: it must be a name in connection with a one-man system which has wielded a compulsory authority in all the earth in centuries past. The Papal system is such a system, and there is no other system or man of whom this can be affirmed. It is, therefore, a simple question of whether a system, answering in all material points to the prophecy, presents also this feature of identification, that its name, numerically estimated, is equal to 666.

The answer is before us in the Greek name LateinoV (Lateinos), which, in plain English, may be said to mean Latindom or Latin power, kingdom, or Church headed up in the Pope. The letters of this name, added together according to their arithmetical value, give the number thus:

L ....	30
a ....	1
t ....	300
e ....	5
i ....	10
n ....	50
o ....	70
V ....	200
<hr/>	
	666

It would be a grave defect, if I were to neglect to point out the unmistakable stamp of divine reprobation placed upon the Papal system — root and branch — by the language of verse 8: “All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain,” etc. As if to give it greater emphasis, verse 7 adds these words: “If any man have an ear, let him hear.” The multitude admire various features of the Roman system which commend themselves to human appreciation — its antiquity, its numbers, its learning, its wealth, its political status, its history, etc. They think it the most odious form of uncharity to doubt the salvability of those who belong to its communion. Be it ours to accept the odium consequent on receiving the word of God. This word says — and it strikingly calls our attention to the fact — that those only worship the beast whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life. Consequently, it is impossible for anyone realizing this to have the least sympathy with the system or its ramifications. The finger of God's condemnation is indelibly placed on it by this chapter, if there were no other; and if it must be considered uncharitable to be on God's side, wise men will suffer the rebuke, awaiting in patience and submission the day spoken of in subsequent chapters, when God will destroy Christendom, in preparation for the establishment of His own glorious kingdom in all the earth.

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

## Hints For Bible Markers

The commandments this month show the picture of perfect love which is demonstrated in Matthew 5:38 – 48. We are to do good to all men as opportunity may allow. God shows us the perfect example in our daily lives. The sun shines on the just and unjust equally. The rain is given to the just and unjust. The bounty of the earth is for the just and the unjust. The saints emulate this love when they love their enemies and bless them that curse them. It is extremely difficult for the mind of the flesh to do these commands. Yet it is a daily occurrence when God provides for those who do not know Him or love Him. 1 John 4:12 “No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.” If we love one another his love is perfected in us. Recompensing no man for evil, then praying for them, showing mercy to one who has done us wrong, feeding them and doing good for them is not the way of the world. It is the way in which we are instructed to behave. We are not to do as the world does, to do the things which mankind say are acceptable. Romans 12:2 “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” We are to be just the opposite. Our conduct is our choice. Our duty is to obey.

*Bro. Beryl Snyder*

## The Commandments of Christ

As collected and organized by bro. Roberts

**Do good to all men as opportunity may allow. The Samaritan succored a stranger in distress: “Go thou and do likewise.” If even thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink.**

*As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:10)*

*But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, (Luke 6:27)*

*Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. (Luke 6:28)*

*And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. (Luke 10:37)*

*Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. (Romans 12:20)*

*But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; (Matthew 5:44)*

**Pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.**

*But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; (Matthew 5:44)*

**Recompense to no man evil for evil.**

*Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. (Romans 12:17)*

*See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. (1 Thessalonians 5:15)*

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