

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

Milam County, TX Ecclesial News

Dear Brethren and Sister of the Household of Faith, Loving greetings.

It is with great pleasure and gladness we report from our corner of the Vineyard that one of our Sunday School Scholars has obeyed the command to be baptized.

On Sunday, August 8, 2010 **CALEB ETHAN HURST** asked for immersion into the saving name of Jesus. After a good confession of his faith of the Things Concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ, our small ecclesia gathered at the pond to witness the baptism of Caleb, then returned to welcome our new brother with the right hand of fellowship, and proceeded with the Memorials of our Lord's broken body and shed blood. Truly a joyous occasion on this First Day of the week.

May our new brother walk, with zeal, in the newness of life until the Lord's return to set up his Father's glorious Kingdom.

Cards or letters of welcome may be sent to Caleb at: 5301 Quail Hollow Dr., Temple, TX. 76502.

Let us all renew our zeal while we patiently wait our Savior's soon return, that we may be found faithful servants and hear those cherished and welcomed words, "Enter ye into the Father's Kingdom."

Your fellow servant in Christ Jesus, on behalf of the Milam County Ecclesia, bro. Bob Wolfe

Boston, Massachusetts—Meeting at Dedham Community House Dedham MA. S.S. 9:00 A.M. Memorial 10:15 A.M. Mid-week Study classes Thursday (South) and Friday (West). Recording Brother James Sommerville, 34 Birch Hill Rd. Northborough. MA 01532

It is with sadness that we announce that Brother Len, Sister Pam and Brother Ben Naglieri together with Andrew, an active Sunday School scholar, have moved from our area and re-located to Texas. We commend them to the ecclesia at Goldthwaite, knowing that their hard work and enthusiasm, although missed by us, will be welcomed by them.

On a happier note, we have received two new members to our ecclesia. Sister Leah Morrell has relocated from Lampasas, Texas to this area and we welcome her to our ecclesia. We also announce with joy that **Jared Kelley** gave a good confession of his faith on Wednesday evening July 14. He was immersed into Christ in the pool at the home of Sisters Claudette Kelly and Sister Michelle King on Saturday morning and received into fellowship Sunday morning July 18, 2010.

On Friday July 23,2010, Brother Jared and Sister Leah were married and are now residing at:1349 Main St. Whitinsville MA. 01588. If you would like to welcome Brother Jared and congratulate the new couple you can use the above address or the following email. Emerald_oceaneyes@yahoo.com

We have welcomed the following visitors around the table of the Lord this year. Brother Scott and Sister Lara Ricks of the North Carolina Ecclesia, Brother Rusty Stephen of the Lampasas, TX Ecclesia; Sister Leslie Morrell of the Las Cruces, NM Ecclesia; Brother Harry Phillips of the Canton Ohio Ecclesia; Sisters Jessie Prentice and Norma Rankin of the Worcester, MA. Ecclesia. We have also been meeting with the sisters in Worcester on a quarterly basis. We close our meeting to spend the day with them. We have Sunday School, Memorial Service, lunch, and a Public Lecture.

We are making arrangements for our fall gathering, God willing, to be held at The Hilton Garden Hotel in Burlington MA. The subject will be: "God Manifestation." All talks will be exhortations causing us to examine ourselves as we sojourn here. Although God is not visibly present; when we consider how He has manifested Himself in the past, continues to manifest Himself in our days, and how He is about to be manifested in the future, we should consider our ways and leave the gathering determined to make straight paths for our feet. This will be held on the weekend of October 9, and 10 with an outing planned for Monday the 11th., God willing. We welcome any that will be able to attend.

I have just received final pricing on our planned trip to Israel and Greece, God willing next May. This information will be posted on the Richard web site for any interested: www.richardbereans.com

It looks like we have about 30 people interested at this time, the largest bus we can get holds, I believe, 42-44 people. Please contact me with any questions you may have.

With much love in the Bonds of the Truth,
On behalf of the Boston Ecclesia,
Bro Jim Sommerville, Recording Brother

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)

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

The Berean Christadelphian Audio Archives, or BCAA for short, has made available a large selection of talks on MP3 online. The address is www.bcaudioarchives.blogspot.com. Please check this link as we will be updating with new material as much as possible.

The 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.

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.

Let A Man Examine Himself

We have come here this morning to learn. Our salvation depends on learning. We must learn what is wrong with ourselves—wherein we do not correspond with the pattern that God requires in those He will alone accept.

Every factory has a place of final inspection. Those products that conform to the required pattern are accepted; those that do not are rejected. God has given us a very clear pattern. He has told us just what to do; just what flaws to watch for, and how to correct them.

Suppose a piece of steel slips through without passing through the purifying, tempering and hardening process—what happens when it reaches the inspector? It **looks** the same as the rest: it is the same **basic material**—but **what a difference** when the keen and searching inspection tests are applied! It turns out to be just the raw, natural, original material—weak, impure and faulty; totally unfit for the purpose intended, so—it is **cast aside**.

In connection with our purpose of assembly this morning—the memorial supper—the apostle says, by the inspiration of the Spirit (1 Cor. 11:28)—

“Let a man EXAMINE HIMSELF,” and v. 31, *“If we would JUDGE OURSELVES, we should not be judged.”*

If we would have the wisdom to inspect ourselves and correct what is wrong, we should not fail in the final inspection. And how CAN we inspect ourselves? David asked this question—and answered it:

“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto ACCORDING TO THY WORD” Psa. 119:9.

That last part is the important part. There are thousands of sources of information that tell you how to improve in various ways. Many devote endless precious hours to study for temporal self-improvement that will perish with the using, but there is only ONE place that tells how to get ready for eternal life—how to develop and train ourselves so we will be accepted as useful and valuable in the final inspection.

We must take heed to ourselves **according to God's Word**. We must study that Word, and compare ourselves with the pattern it gives. In all points where we fail to measure up to the pattern—and there are thousands of them—we have a job to do, and the period allowed us to do it is getting shorter all the time.

The portion of God's Word laid out to assist us in our self-examination today is Psalms 41-43. Beginning that portion, we read:

“Blessed is he that considereth the poor.”

The word here translated 'consider' is usually translated '*understand*' or '*behave wisely*', and we note in the margin that for '*poor*' is also given '*weak*' or '*sick*'. So there is a lot more meaning in this verse than just giving something to those in poverty.

God says here that those are blessed in His sight who concern themselves about the problems of others—those who seek to understand and act wisely for the benefit of those who are poor, weak, or sick, whether this condition be physical or spiritual. The spirit's instruction is to—

“Bear ye one another's burdens” Gal. 6:2.

This is described as *“fulfilling the law of Christ.”* We have noted that the real meaning of this word '*consider*' is to '*act wisely*'. This should ever be borne in mind. It is easy to be well-meaning but to act very UNwisely in this matter, making helpfulness an unconscious pretext for officiousness and self-gratification. What is intended is—instead of seeking our OWN pleasure and amusement and advantage—to devote our time and efforts to intelligently considering where help and comfort are really needed, and to apply ourselves to supplying them in an acceptable manner. As to the acceptable manner, a good guide is that of Jesus—

“Do to others as ye would that they should do to you.”

In examining ourselves, therefore, as we meet around this table, how do we measure up to this clear requirement of God? DO we love our neighbors as ourselves, devoting ourselves to their welfare, and carefully avoiding all that might offend them, or are we so busy with our own affairs that we cannot be bothered to think of helping to carry the burden and solve the problem of others?

Paul said, writing from his prison cell—and it portrays a sad state of affairs—

“I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's” Phil.2:20-21.

It meant nothing to them that he had lost everything, even his liberty. All were so tied up with their own plans for benefitting themselves and getting ahead in this life that they had no time to devote to the benefit of the brotherhood and the Truth. *“of course,”* said they, *“We'd LOVE to help. But we are SO busy. We're sure you'll understand.”* Paul understood, **only too well.**

“Love seeketh not her own” 1 Cor. 13:5.

This is one of the many tests of value and usefulness that WILL BE APPLIED in the final day of inspection. He said again, earlier in the same epistle, (1 Cor. 4:10).

“We (the apostles) are fools for Christ's sake, but ye (the Corinthians) are wise, ye are rich, ye are full: we hunger and thirst and are naked and buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace”...“Be ye followers of me”...“love seeketh not her own.”

And now a thought from the first verse of Psalm (42).

“As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?”

How do we fit HIS pattern? This is a description of the ONLY type of person God will approve in the day of final inspection. But some will say, *“How can I help it if I do not feel that intense longing? Can I MAKE myself feel that way?”* **Yes, you can—and you must.** The scriptures explain how to begin, we must clearly recognize that this IS what God expects, that is the only really intelligent and reasonable frame of mind, and that it MUST be achieved. What stands between us and it is either natural, animal ignorance or the deceitfulness of other things. Jesus said:

“Lay not up treasure on earth: lay up treasure in heaven, for where your treasure is, there will your heart be” Matt. 6:19-21.

Here is first, a plain COMMAND; 2nd, the REASON for that command; 3rd, the assured RESULT of obeying that command. It has two parts—one thing to carefully avoid, one thing to carefully perform. If all our treasure is invested in an enterprise, then we shall be very much concerned about the progress and interests of that enterprise. Here then is clear instruction on how to develop a thirst for God—just arrange your life like Paul so that all your material advantage and interests are wrapped up in the establishment of God’s kingdom. It does not just mean possessions, but All the activities we are involved in and interested in.

Again, it is useless to expect to develop a thirst for one thing while continually drinking something else. God says worldly things must be put away by those who would seek a place in the divine scheme of things. Why? Because they interfere with and obstruct the development of spiritual appreciation and desire. If we carefully **follow the divine rules**, we shall get the desired results, and **no other** way. And the divine rules are very different from natural thinking.

The Spirit through Solomon gives another guide for developing a thirst towards the things of God. He records (Eccl. 7:2-3):

“It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart. Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.”

The lack of a thirst toward the things of God reveals the lack of a perception of the emptiness and sadness of natural things, and the fullness and joy of spiritual things.

Of the present life, David said, (Psa. 39:5-7):

“Verily every man at his best is altogether vanity. Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them. And now, what wait I for? My hope is in thee.”

So brief, so insecure, so overcast with sorrow, so filled with trouble and evil, so far short of what could be! Go to the house of mourning, the endless funeral procession, the hospitals, the asylums, the institutes for the blind, the numberless victims of selfish, senseless warfare, the inevitable bitterness and strife in all human activities, if you would develop a thirst for the new order of God. Cease to live in heedless self-entertainment, and a busyness to

eat, drink and be merry; and stop to THINK.

Who was this man David who wrote these Psalms? What kind of a life had he, that he should see so clearly through its utter emptiness and delusion. Obscure in his youth—a quiet, meditative man of God. Thrust into sudden notoriety, not by his own choice, but as a result of the nation's faithlessness, and his own abundant faith. Thereafter he experienced treachery, ingratitude, persecution, peril and hardship, because of jealousy—fearful jealousy that fumed against the calm, successful courage of his faith. Cast out from his own people, a hunted fugitive in an alien land.

Then came prosperity, popular acclaim, power and authority as the divinely-anointed leader of the divinely-chosen, holy nation—the national vessel of God's tabernacling with men. What opportunity now for the fullness of life's purpose of joy! And so it seemed for a time, but while adversity had brought out his strength, prosperity revealed to him his weakness, whose shadow he was never again permitted to forget. The years that might have been so bright were stained as a result with strife, murder and civil war.

But against this dark background of human failure, God made with David the covenant of divine success, *“ordered in all things and sure.”* How much, in the light of his own discordant life, must these words have meant to him, *“ordered in all things and sure.”* And as he compared his own sad reign with the glorious picture of God's Kingdom, would he not thirst after God and exclaim, *“THIS is all my salvation, and all my desire?”*

In the third Psalm for today (43rd), he says, v. 3:

“O send out thy light and Thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto Thine holy hill, and to Thy tabernacle.”

Here is an earnest desire to be guided by God's Word, and an anxiety to be present at His assemblies of worship. Whenever the brethren and sisters are met together, the true godly mind is anxious to be there. SOME brethren and sisters are of this character, and some are not. The pattern recorded in the Word clearly reveals that it is only the former type that God will approve. Now is the time of opportunity to teach ourselves the wisdom of being such. We have read recently (Psa. 16:11)—

“In thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”

This is our assurance and our goal. When we start to practice or study anything, there is no pleasure to begin with, but wisdom says, *“Continue at*

it, the pleasure will come with familiarity and accomplishment.” How much truer and more important in divine things! There is fullness of joy in store for those who by God’s guidance learn how to appreciate and evaluate TRUE joy—joy that has no sad aftermath, nor is snatched away at its height, but is perfect and unending. It is only for those who learn how to remove from their own lives and characters all those carnal things that are out of harmony with godly joy.

In the NT reading (Matt. 25) there is ample instruction for a man to examine himself by: the parable of the 10 virgins, the parable of the talents, and the separating of the sheep from the goats—as searching and solemn a series of warnings as can be found anywhere in Scripture.

If God were to say to us, *“Leave your own pleasures and profit-seeking for half-an-hour, and do exactly as I say, and I will fill the rest of your present life with abundance and happiness,”* would we have any difficulty in obeying? But actually in proportion we are asked to do much LESS and are offered much MORE. If we could only bring ourselves to fully realize the magnitude of what is offered for faithfulness—but we cannot, it is too gigantic, it is beyond our comprehension, we are too wrapped up in present things.

Somehow the fact that for 6000 years an endless parade of men have lived brief snatches of life and passed on to nothingness does not impress us as it should with the utter brevity and unimportance of this life’s affairs. We plan and worry and labor and fret, and what does it amount to? NOTHING. A breath. A vapor. A striving after wind. The one perfect life was lived without a place to lay his head.

There were 10 virgins, and 5 of them were wise, and 5 were foolish. This is a very sad parable, as indeed are most. We are apt to forget that the foolish virgins represent REAL people, brethren and sisters we have known, it could very easily be OURSELVES. They knew the bridegroom was coming, they believed it and were looking for it, they THOUGHT they were ready. They looked like the other virgins, they traveled along with them, they had lighted lamps just the same, **but**—there was very little oil in them—just enough to deceive themselves, but not enough to carry them through.

The lesson is SO clear; all the virgins read it over and over; but still there will be foolish virgins revealed at the judgment seat—self-deceived and unprepared. Why? Because the flesh is so deceitful, and so clever at making us believe we are what we are not. Let us look to our oil. We know what the

oil is. It is the Spirit. We must be filled; not just enough to make a showing, but **FILLED** with it—filled with the knowledge of God, permeated with its divine characteristics so that it shines forth from us in faithful labor, patience, wisdom, self-control, kindness, gentleness, purity, holiness, and godliness.

“If THESE things be in you, AND ABOUND ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful; but he that lacketh these things is blind” 2 Pet. 1:8-9.

The next parable presents a different aspect of the same lesson—the man who entrusted various talents to his servants.

Our English word '*talent*' comes from this very parable. Talent is a Greek word, denoting a certain unit of money; the original meaning is '*something weighed out*'. Jesus used it to represent the various gifts or abilities that men are given to use for the glory and service of God, and it has come into our language with this meaning.

We are taught here that all men's abilities and possessions are carefully **WEIGHED OUT** to them for a specific purpose, and that in the day of inspection they will have to give account of how everything has been used. This idea of stewardship is very prominent in Scriptural teaching and if it were better comprehended much future sorrow would be avoided.

V.19: *“After a long time the Lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.”*

The unprofitable servant in this case is not charged with anything as serious as false use of his trust. He is not charged with any open wickedness—simply a slothful failure to put his abilities and possessions to his Lord's use. It is not enough that we simply abstain from what is forbidden; it is equally, or even more, important that we **DO** what is commanded.

Consider the excuse he makes, *“I knew thee thou art a hard man, and I was afraid.”* How common, and yet how unreasonable! *“I knew you expected a lot, therefore I made that an excuse to do nothing. I consoled myself with the assumption that I could not possibly satisfy you, so I did not try at all.”* What a mean way of putting the blame for his failure on the one who had given him everything that he had!

He may have thought, *“I have only been given one talent. It is clear that the Lord does not consider my part very important. I will explain to him that I knew he expected wise and careful dealing and would be angry if I made a slip and lost it, so I did not feel capable, or confident enough to try. I know*

that the capable, 5-talent brethren will take care of everything. My small bit will not be missed if I do not do it, nor noticed if I do."

What did the Lord answer? *"You wicked unprofitable servant. You have condemned yourself by your own self-deceiving excuses for your spiritual laziness. You admit that you knew I would require an accounting and a bringing forth of fruit. You should have done the best you could, even though it were very small. Cast him out. Take his possessions and abilities away from him—he has not used them in my service. My kingdom is only for faithful workers."*

In the final part of the chapter Jesus drops the clothing of parable and speaks with unmistakable plainness, driving home the warning.

"Come, ye blessed of my Father, I was hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick, and in prison, and ye ministered unto me."

This is the thought with which we began: *"Blessed is he that concerns himself to understand and act wisely in behalf of the poor, the weak, and the sick."* Many in the brotherhood, and even the brotherhood itself, are thirsty, weak, sick, strangers and in prison. In various aspects, and at various times, the descriptions fit us all. We all need mutual help. Only those will be approved and accepted who concern themselves about those things and devote their lives to help and improvement in the ecclesia and in the brotherhood.

The main thing is the Spirit of Christ—the oil in the lamps. That is what is always mostly lacking—and mostly needed. The Spirit of Christ does not worry about its own advantage or welfare or pride or justification. It does not mind even if it has no place to lay its head. It is anxious to help and heal and comfort, to stir up zeal, to promote harmony and righteousness and peace, to be about its Father's business, to labor in the vineyard, even though it be in but the humblest capacity.

Therefore let a man examine himself and see how HE compares with these things. And wherein he finds that he does not correspond with the divine pattern by which all will finally be measured, let him diligently set himself to DO SOMETHING about it. Let him put it FIRST on his list of things to be done, before all temporal activities and schemes of advancement that perish with the using.

"For if we would JUDGE OURSELVES, we should not be judged."

—Bro. G.V. Growcott

Ye Are The Salt Of The Earth

“Ye are the salt of the earth,” said Christ to his disciples. Christ further said, *“But if the salt has lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and trodden under foot of men.”* Our responsibility is to be an example of the Truth and purity in an increasingly corrupt and degenerating world. We are to be the salt or element that keeps God from destroying the whole earth, as in the Flood, or Sodom and Gomorrah.

But if the salt has lost its freshness and tangy saltiness, what good is it? This represents our zeal and dedication and fervent activity for good toward all, without which we are nothing.”

It is very disappointing to find out that someone we looked up to as “fine salt” has become tasteless by their behaviour. There are some people in whom we feel no taste of salt as we get familiar with them. Some just barely taste of it. Others are nicely seasoned. It is a treat to get hold of them.

There is no secret about the salting process in the faithful. Those who are salt are so for one reason only, and that which makes them salt will make others salt also. They shine forth the light of the Gospel to those around them. They are those who live by example.

“Ye are the light of the world,” Christ says, *“Men do not light a candle to put it under a table or under a bushel.”* The very object of lighting it is that people may see by means of the light. Now all who have heard or learned the Truth by the word of the Apostles are so many candles lit by Jesus, for the Apostles laboured for Christ. Now, saith he, *“Let your light shine before men.”*

It is with this thought in mind that we begin our consideration of salt – Rock Salt is similar to clear quartz. In many areas of the world, salt is known as a crystal powdery substance used to savor food. But in the north, where we have harsh winters, salt is also used to melt the ice and snow on the roads and walkways to be trodden under foot. It is mined from huge underground deposits that extend over 170,000 square miles under Michigan, Ontario, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and West Virginia. It is believed to have been formed from sea water deposits under pressure from the glaciers that were over the region many years ago.

It is mined in several different ways. Mostly by caverns created by drilling and digging it out with large machinery such as in coal in mining. However, the caverns which are created are very stable and thousands of miles of huge tunnels have been created which resemble crystal palaces with

their lights and roadways. In an area near where we live it is also mined by pumping steam down into drilled holes and pumping back up a brine solution which is then dried out and crystallized. Many areas of the world still get their salt from the sea and evaporate it in ponds and scrape up the crystals.

The early Chinese used coins made of salt and in Europe many Mediterranean people used cakes of salt as currency. Roman soldiers were sometimes paid in salt and it is from this word that we get the word “salary” which comes from “sal,” the Latin word for salt.

The main sources of salt in ancient times were dry coastal areas near the Mediterranean. Early trade routes centered in Spain, Italy, Greece and Egypt. Many of the caravan trade routes were developed to transport salt, and Genoa, Pisa and Venice became centers for the salt trade.

Throughout history, salt has been bartered and taxed. Wars have been fought over it, and lost because of a lack of it. According to some historians, Napoleon retreated from Russia partly because he lacked salt for his troops and horses. It was the salt necessary to dress the wounds of war.

Colonial America got most of its salt from England and with the onset of the Revolutionary War Benjamin Franklin made a secret deal with Bermuda to supply salt to the American forces. It was part of the British strategy to cut off the colonies from access to salt.

In 1783, after the war had been won, salt works were set up along the Atlantic Coast. Major salt deposits found near Syracuse, New York, provided one of the main reasons for the construction of the Erie Canal.

Salt then, or to give its full and proper title—Sodium Chloride, or Halite, is widely distributed in nature where it is found as rock-salt deposits, brine springs and of course as the main ingredient of sea-water.

It is useful as a purifying or preservative agent for foods. While, of course it will not restore anything that is in process of corruption, it will prevent or retard the start of that process. We know that some articles of food may be preserved almost indefinitely by merely being packed in salt. Packing some fish in salt for 24 hours will slow cook it.

Medical authorities tell us salt is essential to the life of the human body. It is necessary to supply the natural secretions and to maintain the bodily fluids in an alkaline state. Without it, the harmonious workings of that body, which Solomon said “is fearfully and wonderfully made,” will seriously suffer; the bodily functions will be impaired and in time would cease altogether. Sodium is an electrolyte that is essential for the heart to work

properly. It has been used medically throughout the ages and thus we have heard the expression of salt in wounds. Ezekiel says, in speaking of Jerusalem,

“And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all.” Ezekiel 16:4

Apart from its use as the name of a place, Siddim or the Salt Sea, the first time the word occurs is in Genesis 19:26 - the well known case of Lot’s wife, who it says “became a pillar of salt” because she looked back to Sodom. Jesus later said about our looking back in Luke 9:62 :—

“No man, having put his hand to the plough and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God.”

It is when we come to the history of the Jews from the giving of the law, that the use of salt becomes more apparent.

As indispensable as salt is to ourselves, it was even more so to the Hebrews, as a condiment, as in the reference of Job 6,

“Can that which is unsavory be eaten without salt, or is there any taste in the white of an egg?”

But in the warm climates it was a valuable preservative for various foods and meats. It was a requirement of the religious services of the Jews as an accompaniment to the various offerings under the Mosaic Law.

In Leviticus we are told that every meat offering had to be “seasoned with salt.” “Neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat-offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.” This was part of the instructions that the Children of Israel were instructed to comply with in preparing their offerings to the Lord. The intention of the salt was two fold – it was to preserve the offering and to make it savory to use. Jesus uses it in this sense: *“Have salt in yourselves,”* but he adds, *“If the salt have lost its saltness, it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be trodden under foot of men,”* To require salt in all meat offerings was therefore understood that they were offering a hearty, pleasant-tasting offering in a loving manner. An offering that was not salted would have no pleasure to God or man.

In this we see the intention of the expression, “the salt of the covenant of thy God.” The salt is our state of mind, which is one of the conditions which God has required in His covenant with man. The saltiness of a quick, enlightened earnestness in the Truth, is a condition of the covenant. The

whole ground is covered by the precept: *“My son, give me thine heart”, “Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.”*

As a covenant, salt symbolised hospitality, fidelity and purity. Abijah spoke to Israel and said: *“Ought ye not to know that the Lord . . . gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, even to him and his sons by a covenant of salt.”*

Another case in this connection is found in Ezra 4:14. The Revised Version reads: *“Now because we eat the salt of the palace, it is not meet for us to see the king’s dishonor.”*

They meant that they were bound by a sacred trust of fidelity to the king. The Persian term for traitor was one meaning “faithless to salt.” It was probably with a view to keeping this idea prominently before the minds of Israel that the use of salt was used in their offerings to God.

This seems so because, in the first instance salt was specifically ordered for the meat offering, and this meat offering consisted mainly of flour and so was not liable to be affected by corruption in the way that other offerings containing flesh would be. The salt in this case must have had some symbolic meaning—fidelity to God, and purity of conduct in His sight. The extension of the use of salt with burnt offerings, that is offerings of animal flesh, was to be a future addition as indicated in Ezek. 43. This describes an offering in connection with that great temple which the prophet saw in vision.

Mentioning a bullock and a ram it says, “and the priest shall pour salt upon them and thou shalt offer them for a burnt offering before the Lord.” This is in harmony with the sacrifices mentioned in Leviticus, “with all thy offerings thou shalt offer salt.”

An interesting incident in association with salt is in the ministry of Elisha the prophet who was at Jericho where the water supply was very bad. The wells were there but the water was unfit for use. Elisha, by the power of God that was upon him, and in accord with his faith, cleansed those wells, using salt to do so.

“And he went forth to the springs of the waters and cast the salt in them and said, thus saith the Lord I have healed these waters.” 2 Kings 2

There again we see the use of salt as symbolic of the purifying influence and power of God following faith in His word, and when a right spirit has been created within.

From these few O.T. references we see that to have salt is to have the right spirit of the law of God in one's heart, as Paul says in his second letter to the Corinthians (3:6): "who hath also made us able ministers of the new testament, not of the letter but of the spirit, for the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life."

That is where Israel went wrong, they may have kept the letter of the law, as did the Pharisees in the days of Christ, but they left out the significance of the salt.

It is when we come to the N.T. that we can see the significance of salt in connection with ourselves as professed followers of Jesus. The association is not only very definite but very serious, it is laid down by our Lord himself in the sermon on the mount, when speaking to His disciples and to them only, he said "*Ye are the salt of the earth.*" Bearing in mind what we have already said about salt, this a sobering thought.

The followers of Jesus are the salt of the earth. They are the preserving agents in the world. If it were not for such, the wrath of God would have destroyed them, that destroy the earth. For their sakes the judgments of God are withheld, or at any rate lightened. God has provided a remnant throughout all ages to preserve His Word.

And how do we become the salt of the earth? By the action of the Word of God—the gospel of Jesus, but it can only work through us to the saving of the world by its effect upon the minds of the righteous who obey God's precepts. Those who have ears to hear, by using the salt of the Word become themselves the salt, and in the position to influence by deed and words dying humanity to accept the gospel call. In other words it is to preserve them, or rather to enable them to preserve themselves from the corruption that is in the world through lust. The natural salt would preserve that which otherwise would decay, so in the spiritual, apart from the operation of the Word of God upon our minds, we are doomed to decay, but being salted with the salt from above and in a figure become salt ourselves then there is hope of being preserved even to the resurrection of life by the gift of immortality.

Salt cannot help that which is already gone far in decay, in like manner those who are the salt of the earth cannot hope to regenerate the world as a whole, the greater part of it is beyond their efforts, but they can, act so that they may thereby arrest some and direct them away from those paths which are leading to eternal oblivion. Hence that saying of Jesus: "*Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction and many there be that go*

in thereat, because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

Toward the end of Jesus’ ministry we have the incident where Jesus was invited to the house of Simon and a woman came and anointed his feet. Simon commented that if Jesus were a prophet, he would know that this woman was a sinner. Calmly Jesus turns to the woman, and calling the Pharisee’s attention to his remarks, says to him: *“Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears.”*

She was a sinner who had faith to come in love to the master before his suffering. We are reminded of the words of Isaiah, *“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings that publisheth peace.”* She followed in the faithful manner of Abigail, who was a woman of “good understanding,” and counted it an honour to wash the feet of the righteous. She washed his feet with tears—tears of salt. As we have seen, the offerings of the Law were to be seasoned with salt. Her “sacrifice of thanksgiving” did not lack salt. This woman became a fountain of water to wash his feet. She gave the best of herself — the tears of salt. She is an example of *“the salt of the earth.”* *“Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt.”* *“Seest thou this woman?”* Her offering has become a seasoning with salt of the very *“Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world,”* even her own sins. She fulfilled the command: *“Neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering”* (Lev. 2:13).

As was pointed out in an article on this subject of tears – it was the custom for a person to collect tears and preserve them in a bottle. The “tear bottles” found in many ancient tombs, were made of thin glass. They were all very slender with a broad base and a funnel-shaped top. Many would own a personal “tear bottle”. These were very cherished possessions which took years to accumulate and to pour the tears on Jesus’ feet would indeed be an expression of love. David would have had this in mind when he prayed that God would, *“Put thou my tears into thy bottle, Are they not in thy book?”* Psalm 56:8

Reverting back to our opening verse, let us note that after saying *“ye are the salt of the earth”* Jesus added this, *“but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it (the earth) be salted.”* And so it is possible for those who have become the salt of the earth to lose their saltness or savour; that again is another serious thought for us to contemplate. *“Salt is good, but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it, have salt in yourselves and have peace one with another.”*

As natural salt is now essential to the present life, so is the spiritual salt essential for the life that is to come. For without it, it is impossible to receive that life which Jesus describes as being more abundant.

Bro. Fred J. Higham

Search The Scriptures

“Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn. Thy commandments” (Psa. 119:73).

Without the books of Bre. Thomas and Roberts, the Truth of God would still be buried in the rubbish of clerical apostate theology, and Egyptian darkness would still prevail throughout the earth.

But thanks be to God, we have been drawn into this Great Light that has newly arisen in the earth, that a people might be prepared for the coming of the Lord, to give light to the watchers on the walls of Zion, so that they might answer with authority the query—

“Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come” (Isa. 21:11-12).

May we all have in our libraries all of the books of these two pioneer brethren, and study them carefully; for we cannot believe, in view of the divine purpose that there would be “watchers” in these latter days, with the divine light to understand what they see, and also that there would be those who would “not sleep,” but be alive and remain to the coming of the Lord: we cannot believe that their work was anything less than a complete unveiling of the whole Truth, as once for all delivered to the saints in the first century. To diverge from the basic principles set forth in their works is to compromise our position, and so stand on dangerous ground.

Of all the books that have ever been written expository of Bible Truth, none other can compare with Eureka, by Bro. Thomas. To study and understand this great work is to acquire a profound and comprehensive insight into the whole Bible, so that a complete picture is developed before our eyes depicting the unfolding of God's eternal purpose from the creation till the new heaven and new earth have come, and “the sea is no more.”

The present day unstable condition in the brotherhood could well be attributed to the current trend to consider such works out of date and unsuited to the times, and the placing of emphasis on a more “modern” approach to the eternal truths of the Scriptures.

In connection with our studies in the Truth, and in order to keep our minds pure, and our thoughts free from all entanglements and associations with false ideas, we must keep our reading material pure - our libraries at home, clear of any taint that might lead us into the wrong channels of thought.

“The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him.”

We know we have the Truth. We are sure that the basis upon which we worship and serve God and fellowship with Him and His Son, and with all of like precious faith with us in the world, is the same as that originally brought to light by Bre. Thomas and Roberts.

In order to maintain the purity and holiness of the Truth in our midst, LET US BE SEPARATE in the matter of reading and studying as in all things else. This will exclude from our studies the books, magazines and tracts currently sent out by those from whom we must stand aside because of their relation directly or indirectly, with false teaching.

We need to study systematically, along a well-planned course of study. Beginning with the first principles of the Truth as a foundation, we lay one stone upon another from day to day until the whole superstructure of the house of God which we are building is completed and we stand full-grown in the Truth.

It is well to understand that studying and searching the Scriptures is not to be confused with mere reading of the text as contained in the daily Bible lesson. We can read the Bible through many times and still know pitifully little about its great message.

Studying is best done when we are alone, and under peaceful and quiet conditions, so that the mind can be fully absorbed in the work. Reading our daily lessons on suitable occasions together with others is good, but those passages that do not readily yield their full meaning as we read, must be dealt with at such times as we can give ourselves wholly to them in private study.

As we pass from one book of the Bible to another, we should be able to fit each one into its place and purpose in such a way that the continuity between them all will be perceived. Thus a complete and composite picture is formed, link by link, from Genesis to Revelation, and the history of God's dealings with man, and the revelation of His will and purpose are well impressed on our minds.

In studying any of the books of the Bible, and more especially the writings of the prophets of Israel, we need to understand the history of the

times contemporary with the writer. This is so because much of the material so written has a literal application to the times then current. Before we try to make a figurative or typical application of scripture, let us be sure first that the message is understood in the light of its primary or literal meaning, taking into consideration who the writer was, to whom he was writing, and the conditions extant at the time of writing.

“Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wonderful things out of thy law” (Psa. 119:18).
—Bro. Emitt W. Banta

Rules of Order

FOR ECCLESIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

“Let all things be done decently and in order”—1 Cor. 14:40

The purpose of rules of order is to facilitate the making of group decisions as wisely, and fairly, and quickly as possible. These have been worked over thoroughly from the standard rules of order, and are specifically designed for Christadelphian ecclesias. They have been tested, and they work well. Taking the time and trouble to become familiar with them (they are really very simple), and using them intelligently – in the spirit of Christ and of desire to serve God to the best of our ability – will greatly expedite and improve ecclesial decision making. And they will, as a side-benefit, increase the enjoyment of, and sense of benefit from, ecclesial business meetings. They will be found about ideal: less would reduce efficiency undesirably; more would increase complexity unnecessarily. No rules can take the place of the spirit of Christ, but good rules, well used, can greatly improve our united service to God.

These rules were previously printed in the 1979 Berean Magazine. We now reprint them with the addition of notes from Bro. Growcott to expand and explain the rules in reference to an ecclesial setting. The Rules of Order will be in **bold type**, and the notes in regular type. The underlining is his. We now begin our brother’s notes:

Be sure everyone gets the spirit of the opening paragraph. Rules are not restrictions but helps. They are to save time and frustration, and to make sure everyone is satisfied that the will of the majority has been carried out as well as possible under human circumstances.

In the Truth, with its vital, eternal importance, there is always a potential conflict with the will of the majority and what any one individual may strongly believe is right and wise. Certainly there increasingly comes a

point where we must stand for what we believe is right and wise, even to the point of standing alone, if necessary.

But we must be very honestly careful not to confuse our wishes and our willfulness with our convictions. Wherever faithfully possible, we must seek the will and welfare of others and not our own. And even in matters we sincerely believe to be important, we must have infinite patience, and we must make sure the good we seek is not marred or destroyed by the harm we do in seeking it.

The purpose of rules is 2-fold: 1) To accomplish the best for the Truth; 2) To work out a course that is most satisfactory to the greatest number. And perhaps I should add 3) To do it as quickly as possible consistent with proper attention and consideration.

Certainly No. 1 is by far the most important, and should be the overriding goal of all. Nos. 2 and 3 are secondary but highly desirable.

Business Meetings require a more prayerful awareness of our position and responsibilities before God than any other type of meeting because of the greater possibilities of difference of opinion, and of the reactions of the flesh. If the Body cannot go home feeling that it has been a Christlike, beneficial experience contributing to the Body's unity, then it has been a tragic failure, whatever may have been accomplished.

ABBREVIATIONS USED HEREIN:

AB – Arranging brethren

PB – Presiding brother

RB – Recording brother

D – Debatable (or, for Discussion)

ND – Non-debatable

A – Amendable

NA – Non-amendable

Maj, 2/3 – Majority, or 2/3 required vote

GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS (1-7)

1. TIME—Open 8p.m. unless otherwise arranged. Close 10p.m. Up to ½ hour extension upon motion (24k and 34).

These are Detroit times. We found them practical. They are certainly not binding on others. However, from experience, I would strongly recommend a specific closing time, and a specific binding limit on overtime. We found half an hour was best. If business cannot be finished in half an hour, best to meet again when fresh. If there is not an assurance that there will be a definite reasonable stopping time, some will cease to come, and some will

start to go home before the meeting is over, patience will fray, and God's work will be done under unseemly pressure and tension, and important decisions will be made by those who stay behind, to the dissatisfaction of those that leave.

If the rules are well understood, and smoothly used to expedite without rushing, and if the Body knows ahead of time what it is coming to discuss and has given it the proper thought they should, then 2 ½ hours should be plenty in all but the most exceptional circumstances. The secret is to be prepared, and to avoid surprises.

More will attend if the atmosphere is Christlike throughout, if business moves along quickly and smoothly, and if there is a set time beyond which the meeting will not be prolonged. It should be a joyful, satisfying occasion, with a sense of efficiency and accomplishment.

A separate evening is best for any matters of importance. To tag a business meeting on to the end of another meeting is, as a general rule, likely to be harmful to both. It's best to be fresh, and have no time pressure. However, with wide distances of assembly involved, this is subject to wisdom and discretion, and experience must guide. A business meeting shouldn't ever be a tense or unpleasant experience. We must labor to avoid anything like this.

2. QUORUM—Regular meetings: no minimum. Special meetings: one-third of membership.

This just means the agreed necessary number to carry on a meeting. For regular meetings there need be no minimum (though in very extraordinary circumstances such as a flood, etc), those who make it would be wise not to make any arrangements or decisions that others might not favor.

But normally, all have had adequate notice of the meeting, and can come if they wish. Those who do come, even though few, must do the business and make the decisions.

But for a special meeting (that is, not a regularly scheduled periodic one) a minimum attendance is necessary. A special meeting means something of importance, and something over and above, and out of schedule. Matters at such meetings should not be decided by less than 1/3 of the total ecclesial membership. Much more is highly desirable, but if you set the proportion higher, you may not be able to handle necessary decisions. There is an automatic safeguard of sorts: it is those who are most interested and concerned who make the effort to be there, and generally speaking those

are the most qualified to act, but it is a far healthier and happier condition if all are concerned and make the effort.

Special meetings should be 1) fully publicized and 2) scheduled far enough ahead so that all have opportunity to arrange to be there. Unless absolutely necessary (very rare), they should never be on short notice.

3. ATTENDANCE—Limited to brethren and sisters in fellowship. Voting limited to ecclesial members.

Any in fellowship may attend. This was a decision based on our experience. It can add to the unity of the total Body. Visiting brethren should be allowed to take their turn in speaking, but a wise visitor will have little to say unless he has something very useful to add to the discussion.

This provision is good and healthy if not abused. There is always a chance that it may be abused (in times of stress, as in considering fellowship-wide problems), but we found the danger was minimal, far outweighed by the benefit.

As to the final ecclesial decisions, I believe it is self-evident that this must be restricted to the voting of the ecclesial membership, though visitors may have had a profitable part in helping to come to that decision. (To be continued, God willing next month.)

—*Bro. G.V. Growcott*

Encouraging Words No. 12

“AS for me and my house we will serve the Lord.” What a motto to inspire us for the coming year! Have we sufficient faith to live up to it? Joshua did not utter these words lightly. He of all men knew the cost of serving the Lord. Against great odds he had, at the Word of the Lord, drawn his sword against Amalek. At the same Word, when others were bent on war, he had placed his sword in its sheath. For forty years, with equal courage, he had endured the seeming stagnation of the wilderness wanderings. Loyally, manfully and well nigh alone, he had stood his ground against an influential majority of Israelitish rebels. He had even tried to stem the violence of a whole congregation whose readiest and most forcible argument was stones. In what way does all this bear upon a sister and her household serving the Lord? No one has now to encounter physical force at the hands of the truth’s enemies. Very true; nevertheless, the evil principles which in Joshua’s day set in motion the physical force are as living and

active now as then. This will become manifest directly Christ takes up afresh the work of claiming Israel's divinely - given possession. Unbiased common sense can perceive this. A responsible, experienced officer in the army (an agnostic) recently said to the writer, in reply to an outline of Christ's future work in the earth—"I admit that if Christ is what he is represented to be in the Bible, he would have both the wisdom and the power to rule the world, but I am convinced that the nations would never willingly submit to him." Let us not delude ourselves into thinking that the world's righteousness has advanced and that the truth's warfare has ended. It is the method of fighting only that has for the present changed. In the conversation just alluded to, the officer remarked that his study of history, coupled with his experience of active service, had impressed him with the fact that human nature does not change. Alexander's problems concerning his men were the problems of Napoleon and of the British officer to-day with their men—"a little more humanity is now shown in the treatment of prisoners, but that is all. Human nature does not change, and it will never do so by Act of Parliament." Nothing but the sentimentalism of a false religion would deny this obvious truth—a truth which is attested alike by experience and revelation.

Let us, then, face the fact that we live in a world of wickedness and antagonism to God, and that we, no less than Joshua, have in the midst of these evil surroundings a mission to fulfill. Our task is not to take up Joshua's actual work, but to make known the truth that it is to be resumed, and that Christ is coming for this express purpose. In addition to this we have to frame our lives in harmony with our expectations, and strive to fit our children to do likewise. If we are faithful to our charge, we shall soon find that the tongue can pierce as well as the sword, that words can strike as well as stones. We shall know something, too, of standing alone against influential majorities, and may be, alas! of rough treatment by rebels within the camp. A sister's warfare, no less than Joshua's, calls for courage, determination, and purpose of heart. How did Joshua build up his faith? Was he to be found at the feet of learned Amalekites and Moabites, poring over their tablets and inscriptions, drinking in their mythology, and using these things to determine whether he should receive or reject Moses' words? Far from it. Where Moses was, there was Joshua. What Moses bade him do, that he unquestioningly performed.

Have we sufficient faith to adopt the sentiments of a Joshua? It depends upon the influences to which we are subjecting ourselves. The world and its literature will inspire us to value the present and to leave God out of account. Moses—Joshua's companion—and the prophets will teach us to

use the present in providing the Lord's requirements for the kingdom. In relation to this how do we stand? Should the closing or the opening year bring the Lord's return can we say: "As for me and my house we have served the Lord"? *Sis. C.H. Jannaway—1908*

Thoughts Gleaned By The Way

"And some fell among thorns; and the thorns SPRANG UP WITH IT, and choked it" (Luke 8:7).

We should not get the idea from the parable of the sower that the Saviour is teaching—that there are certain types of people whose nature is such that there is on the one hand no possible hope of regeneration or reform, and, on the other hand certain types for whom it is an easy matter for them to live in harmony with divine precepts - though the matter of one's tendencies does have much to do with the teaching of the parable.

The hard path which could not receive the seed got that way from being constantly pounded by many feet until it became sterile. In like manner the human mind is rendered incapable of divine perception by being rendered sterile through false teaching and worldly ways and associations.

It would seem that one should have a good understanding of the effects certain kinds of soil and certain conditions have on the growing of crops to get the full meaning of the parable.

As a matter of fact, no soil in its natural state is suitable for the proper growth of plants, though some soil is more responsive than others, just as some natures are more responsive to the Truth than others, but a certain amount of clearing, tillage, fertilization and watering is necessary for every kind of soil.

It is also possible to prepare and enrich very poor soil so as to make it yield a good crop, just as the best of soil may make a complete crop failure unless properly tended.

The same principle holds good in spiritual things. The natural mind, like the natural soil, must be cleared of natural and mental growth detrimental to spiritual growth before the mind is fully susceptible and fitted for spiritual growth.

And just as poor soil must be enriched, by proper fertilization, so the mind, barren and sterile because of ignorance of divine teaching, must be

enriched by the word of God so that one may grow to Maturity and produce fruits of righteousness in abundance.

The soil which produced the thorns was good ground, capable under proper conditions of producing good crops. The thought here is that the soil was capable of producing grain in abundance, but the thorns or other noxious weeds were allowed to spring up with it and prevent the wheat from growing to full maturity.

Just so, there are some who accept the Truth, as the soil received the seed, but they had not cleared their minds and affections of the worldly briars and thorns. There is some growth, but a weakly, sickly plant incapable of reaching spiritual maturity because of the stifling effects of the “cares and riches and pleasures of this life,” and, like the plants smothered by thorns, they are barren plants, only fit to be plucked up by the roots and destroyed (Heb. 6:7,8).

* * *

“For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid that shall not be known” (Matt. 12:2).

The Saviour spoke these words in connection with his denunciation of hypocrisy. Doubtless he had chiefly in mind the revelation of all things to be made known at the judgment. Nevertheless, it is a rule which applies also to life in this age. Hypocrisy and deceit are not only sinful, but supreme folly, and never accomplish, for any great length of time, that which is intended; that is to present persons or things as something which they are not, and to deceive and mislead others in regard to the truth of the matter.

Sooner or later the truth will come out, revealing the hypocrite for just what he is in actual truth of the matter in question. Surely the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment, in more ways than one.

* * *

It is immaterial whether we are honored now or not. The one thing that counts is whether or not we are worthy to be honored before the Father and the angels at the judgment seat of Christ.

* * *

There is no strength nor stability in a system of morals which does not recognize personal responsibility to a supreme being - that an all-seeing eye scrutinizes our every word, thought and action.

* * *

“Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth” (1 Cor. 8:1).

It has been said, “knowledge amazes the simple man, humbles the great man, and puffs up the little man.” And we may also say that the same is true of honor and flattery.

* * *

A righteous character comes not by the accident of birth or natural godly qualifications, which the natural man does not inherit; but it comes through the triumph of self-denial and bodily discipline over the natural tendencies to go contrary to divine law.

—*Bro. Oscar Beauchamp*

The Name Christadelphian

It is not the name you may take, but the belief you entertain, and the things you say, and the actions you perform, that will determine the divine estimate of you. At the same time, names define things; things are known by their names, and wrong names would lead to the confusion of things. You would not like to be called a Mahometan, for example; nor a Roman Catholic, nor, a Wesleyan: nor a Theosophist. Why? Because you object to the things signified by those titles. You naturally wish to be known by a name that will identify you with that which you actually are and own to. In our day the original apostolic faith is known as “Christadelphian”, and the word itself expresses the relation which Christ declared arose out of obedient subjection to the faith. I cannot understand a man objecting to be known by that name unless he do not hold the apostolic faith, or unless he thinks the common run of “Christians”, hold it, who do not; or unless he dislikes to be distinguished from his neighbors in the profession of the Apostolic faith, because of its practical inconvenience. While the acceptance of a particular name is not a condition of fellowship, it might be that the reasons for objecting to it would be a bar to fellowship. No doubt the divisions among those professing to be Christadelphians interfere with its expressiveness. We have to put up with this temporary inconvenience, which will shortly be swallowed up, with a good many other evil things, by the revelation of the august Possessor of the name above every name.

—*Bro. Robert Roberts 1896*

One Taken And Another Left

It is not every one that is responsible to the judgment-seat of Christ; very few of mankind are, by reason of their great darkness. Hence, at the coming of Christ, two men or women engaged in similar occupation may be differently affected by that event, and—one “taken,” the other “left.” The one taken will not necessarily be taken for benefit, since rejection may be in store: yet not to be taken is to be left in hapless plight, in being left face to face with the calamities that will involve the world in a time of trouble such as there has never been. The one “taken” may be taken “that he may escape all these things and stand the accepted before the SON OF MAN”: the one left is left without hope or comfort.

—*Bro. Robert Roberts 1896*

Lovers of Their Own Selves

Self-importance is fatal to all true spiritual life. When men are “lovers of their own selves”, everything they handle catches the ignoble bias. The best work shines with a yellow light in their hand. Or is it green? They suspect other men of their own deformity. They cannot understand disinterested service. They cannot see through the diffracting and discolouring atmosphere of their own jaundiced state of mind.

Hymn 155

“As dew upon the tender herb,
Diffusing fragrance round;
As showers that usher in the spring,
And cheer the thirsty ground.

“So Shall His presence bless our souls,
And shed a joyful light;
That hallow'd morn shall chase away
The sorrows of the night.”

This thought came to me as the scent of the fresh rain came through my window tonight. Our association to God's ways comes from thoughts, words, music, smells, sights, memories and many other facets of our everyday life.

“Long hath the night of sorrow reign'd;
The dawn shall bring us light;
For Christ shall come, and we shall rise
With gladness in His sight.”

Analecta Apocalypticae (52)

The First Two Vials

This month and next we look at the 15th and 16th chapters of the Apocalypse. In the 14th chapter, which we had under review last month, we were face to face with the events connected with the solemn proclamation, "The hour of judgment is come" — events which characterize the time occupied in the transition from the kingdom of men to the kingdom of God, a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation upon the earth. Now, while still engaged in the contemplation of the end, we shall find ourselves, in the first part of the subject, taken back a hundred years. The cause of these perplexing retrogressions we have spoken of before. We are so often brought to the end of the matter and taken back again, because of the structure of the Apocalypse, which has been well likened to a telescope shut up. When a telescope is shut up, the outer case contains all the inner ones. The end of the outer ones is the end of all the inner ones; yet in the drawing out of the inner one, the instrument is several times lengthened beyond the space which at first contained the whole. The whole of the contents of the Apocalypse are all contained within the seven-sealed scroll. At the seventh seal you are at the end of the programme in a general sense; yet, as this seventh seal contains seven trumpets, you have to traverse the trumpets to get to the end of the seventh seal; and yet in the seventh trumpet, you are not at the final end, for the seventh trumpet contains seven vials (the next slide of the telescope, so to speak); and these, again, seven thunders. The exhibition, in succession, of these various interior sections of the whole structure involves the arrival several times, so far as the order of narrative goes, at the end of the whole; and therefore necessitates the going back again.

The events we were considering in the last article form the details of the seventh trumpet. The seventh angel, you recollect, sounds in chap, 11:15, the general result of which is declared to be that "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." The long and dreary experience by which this is prefaced on the part of the saints is exhibited in chapters 12 and 13: and the events directly leading to the accomplishment of the change are displayed in chapter 14. But a new symbolism remained to be employed, to represent the events and scenes condensed into the last century of the Gentile dispensation. The last slide of the telescope is the smallest. The last sub-section of the Apocalyptic scheme is the briefest and minutest, both as regards the scale of events and the time occupied. And the symbol employed is in harmony with the nature of the time represented - - the pouring out of the vials. If you reflect upon it, you will see that there is a gradual increase in the intensity of the symbol as events thicken, and God's purpose matures in the progress of time. There is first the opening of the seals, imparting power to the opener to control European events, and exhibiting the nature of their occurrence. Then there is the blowing of trumpets, implying a more direct causation, after the analogy of a military

summons, bringing hosts into action in aggressive operation against the powers regulated under the seals. Then there is the pouring-out of vials, suggesting the intenser and speedier destruction effected by the employment of solvent chemical agents. And, finally, there is the roar of the seven thunders, consummating the overthrow of the kingdoms of men, and opening the way for the kingdom of God.

It is the pouring-out of the vials we have to look at to-night. We may find them, in some respects, more interesting to us than some parts of the Apocalypse, because they belong to the age in which we live; though in truth, the older we grow in our acquaintance and love of divine testimonies, the more do we come to feel an equal interest in all parts of the divine-work—whether ancient or modern. We will, first, dwell for a moment on the preliminary scene by which the vials are prefaced.

“And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues: for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass; having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, thou King of saints (Greek, ethnon, nations). Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name: for Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee, for Thy judgments are made manifest?”

Here there might seem to be a difficulty. We have already had occasion to see that the sea of glass, having been clarified by fire, is a symbol of the purified populations of the earth, as they will be when the change from the present to the future age has taken place: and the victors over the beast, standing thereon, the symbols of the saints who reign with Christ over them. With this in view, it might be asked, how is it that the world in that glorious state is introduced in connection with the first view of the seven vials, whose judgment-work comes before the establishment of the kingdom? It seems to me that the explanation is that in this scene, we have the work of the seven vial-angels, and the state of things that comes after as the result, all included in one complete general picture, without reference to details. The details come after. The seven vials, in their details (as afterwards given), are all crowded, as it were, into the general statement that John saw seven angels with plagues, in which were filled up the wrath of God; and the picture of the sea of glass is a symbol of the state of things that comes after their work. It must be so, because while John in verse 1 sees the seven angels, “having the seven last plagues”, he afterwards sees them (verse 7) receiving the vials containing the plagues: and whereas, at the same time, he sees Christ’s victors in glory, “standing on the sea of glass, with harps of gold”, and therefore “in the temple”, in the sense of Christ’s promise that he would make the victors pillars in the temple (Rev. 3:12), he informs us in

verse 8 that “no man was able to enter into the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.” From this it follows that we are not to read chapter 15 as if describing a scene that is to become a fact before the pouring out of the vials described in chapter 16, but rather as a general presentation of the vials and their glorious sequel in the establishment of the kingdom of God.

The victors “sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb”. Why are Moses and Christ thus united in the final triumph of the saints? There are various reasons. They cannot be separated. Christ and Moses stand and fall together. It is not only that Moses wrote of Christ (John.5:46), but Moses was the shadow of Christ: and the first covenant, the shadow of good things to come. You cannot separate substance and shadow when the light shines. The light in this case is the glory to be revealed: a future brightness. Christ stands in it so to speak, and the watcher for this coming day of light looking forward to it from ancient times would have the shadow of Christ thrown forward towards himself, and this shadow is the Mosaic economy and Moses himself. Christ is the end of the law (Rom. 10:4). “The substance (of the Mosaic ordinances) is of Christ” (Col. 2:17). In Christ, Moses is consummated: and the song of his triumph is also the song of Moses, the servant of God. Then, the song of Moses, which Moses and all Israel sang on the morrow of the overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea (see Exod. 15), was the song of Jehovah's triumph over His enemies through Israel, His people. The song of the Lamb will be a song of Jehovah's triumph over His enemies through Israel. The song of Moses was the celebration of the accomplishment of events preparing the way for the occupation of the promised inheritance: saying, “Thou in thy mercy hast led forth thy people whom thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength to thy holy habitation Fear and dread shall fall upon them (thine enemies). By the greatness of thine arm they shall be still as a stone, till thy people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over that thou hast purchased. Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.” This song of Moses the servant of the Lord is exactly descriptive of the events to be celebrated in the song of the Lamb, events having to do with the manifestation of the judgments of God, “according to the days of Israel's coming out of the land of Egypt”, and resulting in fear towards God and the glorification of His name and the yielding of worship on the part of the nations. Both Moses and the Lamb have to do with the occupation of the land of promise; and although in the case of the Lamb, the whole world will be subdued and subjected to the divine authority, the headquarters of the government established over them will be in the Holy Land, towards which Moses led Israel and in which Joshua (Jesus — the names are the same) will establish them. The song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb is a political song having reference to the purpose of God with the house of Israel amid the

nations of the earth — a song perfectly unintelligible from an orthodox point of view. I once heard a minister say in a public meeting that Abel, on being murdered by Cain, went to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb before the throne. It evidently did not occur to him that Moses was not born till ages after. This is an illustration of how unintelligently mere phrases of Scripture are used by the teachers of the people.

Let us now retrace our steps a little. Having witnessed a general scene, representing the complete work of the seven vials and the sequel to come after, John sees the picture taken to pieces, so to speak, and exhibited in its details. "And after that I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony was opened: and the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles." "After that I looked" — not that what he saw was in the order of events to come after the scene he had just witnessed: but that after having seen that scene, he now sees another scene representing details involved in the first. This must be recognized or confusion will result. It must be so; for in the first scene he sees the servants of Christ in glory, whereas under the sixth vial (chapter 16:15), they are still watching. "Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest, etc.," shows that under the sixth vial the glory is yet ahead.

The angels, though messengers of the plague, were invested in "pure and white linen" — the constant symbol of righteousness: intimating that the curses and judgments poured out upon the nations of Europe are all in truth and righteousness, and with a good intent and not done in malignity. The "golden girdle" connects their mission with the exercise of faith; for gold is the symbol of faith tried in the fire. The import may be discerned in the words of Christ, "Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" (Luke 18:7). The servants of God patiently exercise faith in the purpose of God to vindicate them against the oppression and unrighteousness of men, and the symbolic angels before us intimate that this element is present in the divine counsels which direct the infliction of judgment on mankind.

"One of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever." Why were the vials handed to the angels by one of the four beasts? We get the answer in the recollection of what is signified by the four beasts full of eyes. They represent the commonwealth of Israel. God told Cain that Abel's blood cried from the ground for vengeance. This was a figurative description of moral relations. In the case before us, the representative of the commonwealth of Israel is made to hand to the divine executioners the vials of wrath to be poured out upon their enemies. What can this signify but that it is for the sake of the Israel of God that all these things are done? Paul told those of them living in his day "all things are for your sakes", and also that Christ had become "the head over all things to the Church which is his body" (Eph. 1:22-23). There may not appear to be any connection between the public

events in Europe and the interests of the obscure class in the earth who believe in Jehovah's testimonies and do His commandments, but the connection is revealed by this peep behind the scenes, so to speak, which we get in looking at that exhibition of the secret forces at work which God vouchsafed to His servants for their information and comfort by the hand of John in the solitude of Patmos.

Having received the vials, the angels proceed to empty them one by one upon the various objects obnoxious to their contents. Let us look at the results briefly.

THE FIRST VIAL

"The first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image." Here we have the Papal populations brought to view as the sufferers of judgment. Some might think that this cannot yet be historic. Such assume that all judgment upon the Papal imposture and its friends is reserved till the Lord comes. They are right in thinking that it is when the Lord comes that its destruction is effected: but it would be a mistake to imagine that nothing is done in the way of vengeance till then. All God's works are gradual, culminating in striking terminations. Take His judgment on Judah's commonwealth: this ended with the tragic and utter destruction of Jerusalem and Israel's nationality: but there was a long preliminary period of misfortune and pulling down. Moses told them that in the event of their disobedience, God would work against them in their ordinary affairs in their land. He did so during centuries, and then, as foretold by Ezekiel (Ezek. 22:19-22), gathered them into Jerusalem as a smelter gathers material into the smelting pot, and blew upon them in hot anger till they were consumed. This is the analogy of His judgment on the Gentiles whose times of power and privilege have been current so long. Judgment is determined against the Papal blasphemy: it ends in the tragic and utter extermination of the institution from the face of the earth by fire and sword at the Lord's coming. But before then, there is a gradual harassing and punishing of all connected with the institution, extending over a considerable time, represented in another symbol under the figure of a woman being eaten and burnt by royal paramours. The vial under consideration has to do with the outpouring of the preliminary affliction. The date of its commencement coincides beautifully with the chronology of the case. It will be recollected that the name of blasphemy, after long germination was finally developed and established by the decree of the emperor Justinian, recognizing and confirming the claim of the bishop of Rome to be the head of all churches and spiritual lord of, mankind. The date of this decree was A.D. 533, added to which, 1,260 years — (the appointed period of its "power to make war") brings us to A.D. 1793, when all Europe was convulsed by the anti-Papal French Revolution, which developed that spirit of hostility — private and public, religious and political — to the Papal pretensions which has since steadily strengthened with the lapse of every

year, till now the Church stands despoiled of her possessions throughout Europe, and its chief deprived of all power, and restricted to the Vatican as a private palace, which he calls his prison. We have already had occasion to see why France should stand in the foreground in all that affects the Papacy. She has been in all her history the principal section of the Papal spiritual dominions. Her position in this respect is indicated by the official title which the head of the French State has held from the Pope — the Eldest Son of the Church. Other States hold other names from the same source. Thus, the Austrian emperor is “His Holy Apostolic Majesty”; the king of Spain, “His Most Christian Majesty”; the monarch of England, “Defender of the Faith”; etc. These are imposing titles, but “The Eldest Son of the Church” points to the most important position in the Papal family; the eldest son is always an important member of any family. To afflict the firstborn is to bring trouble in its most direct form, as in the last and worst of the plagues of Egypt. When therefore the time arrived to subject the worshippers of the beast to special judgment, we should on this principle expect to find France most intimately affected, and it was so. She was not the Republican France of our day, but the priest-ridden, Pope-worshipping heretic-slaying country which befitted her position in the Papal family. At the close of the eighteenth century, events well answering to the infliction of “a noisome and grievous sore” — or ulcerous sores — on the worshippers of the beast, occurred in France. They filled Europe with dismay. They were truly dreadful, and without parallel in the history of the world. They were the events that developed the First Napoleon, the especial tormentor of the men who worshipped the beast and his image. The people came into power for the first time in French history; they dethroned and imprisoned and finally murdered the king; they beheaded thousands of his sympathizers; they chased the aristocracy out of the country; they disestablished and disendowed the clerical orders; abolished all titles, pulled down monasteries, sold and divided the lands of the clergy and nobles, melted down church bells to make cannon balls, revolutionized the laws and institutions of the country, and generally made war against “the church” and its friends. They even went so far as to suspend religion of every name, proclaiming God a myth, and futurity a dream. France became a slaughterhouse and her public life a “reign of terror.” It was the most awful turmoil the world ever witnessed. More than a million beast-worshippers perished on the scaffold or on the field of civil carnage; and the survivors were brought under a tyranny as harsh and odious as ever flourished under despotism. Life was deprived of its comfort, and society of its attractions; existence was barely durable. France for a long time was a pandemonium. The Papal interests were those that suffered everywhere. The convulsions in France vibrated throughout Europe, and everywhere carried injury and torment to the worshippers of the beast and his image. The attempts of the European powers by military power to tranquillize France and restore the overthrown order of things, only aggravated the situation ten-fold. The armies of France, after long delays, were victorious at all points, and swept

like a tornado over all the countries of Europe, extending everywhere the ravages of “the noisome and grievous sore” which fell with such severity on the worshippers of the beast and his image. Europe had no settled peace for twenty-five years after the outburst of the storm inaugurated by the first vial. The progress of the storm is marked and regulated by the succeeding vials.

THE SECOND VIAL

“The second angel poured out his vial upon the sea, and it became as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul died in the sea.” The events of the first vial affected the land: the Roman habitable in its entire extent was afflicted, but the sea was to be brought under the operation — yet not the sea as a physical element but as the basis of the maritime interests of nations, in which there is a mingling of both the literal and figurative, without causing confusion, however. To stop trade by sea would be to inflict much suffering on those living on land. As the result of the vial, the sea was to become as “the blood of a dead man.” The blood of a dead man is stagnant — non-circulatory. The sea would be stopped as a medium of national-life circulation. What could have this effect? It could be effected miraculously in various ways, but the events foreshadowed in Apocalyptic symbolism were not to be miraculous events. We must find the counterpart in natural events. Whatever difficulty, as a matter of speculation, we might have in finding an application for the second vial, it is ended when we ask if the sea was the scene of national events after the pouring out of the first vial. You have all heard of British naval achievements. You have heard of Hood, Nelson, and other naval celebrities, who swept the fleets of all nations from the sea and laid the foundation of the national song that “Britannia rules the waves.” These traditions take us back to the time in question. Before the end of the last century, Britannia did not rule the waves. She was strong on the ocean, but not “Queen of the sea.” She shared the strength of the sea with several European powers — France, Holland, Portugal and Spain: but the events springing out of the French Revolution brought England to the first position. These events comprised many bloody naval engagements (the battles of Trafalgar, the Nile, Aboukir, etc., etc.), in which England cleared the ocean of all rival fleets. During these operations, 200 ships of the line, appertaining to the beast-worshippers, between 300 and 400 frigates, and an incalculable number of smaller vessels, were destroyed, and countless multitudes of lives lost. The vial covered a period of several years, in the course of which Britain, everywhere triumphant, became ruler of the waves. The vial was poured out by the instrumentality of England, with the effect, in relation to the beast-worshipping jurisdiction of the Continent, that every living soul died in the sea; that is, every living soul on the sea belonging to the Continent (which was the subject of operation), died in the symbolic sense of ceasing to have a permitted life on it.

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

Hints For Bible Markers

Rarely do we realize how much we conform to this world. It is in our very nature to desire the things of this world. Truly, without the Word of God we would not know what are the fruitful works of light and the unfruitful works of darkness. The more we know and understand of the Scriptures of truth the better our ability to obey these commands. Israel is constantly condemned in the Bible for looking towards the things of the world. Not being obedient, walking after their own lusts, and not desiring the things that be of God. How much different are we? Are we doing things of the world because everyone else does? How does this show the reproof of dark works or the vital state of separation? (1 Tim. 5:6) "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." This is a warning to all the brethren and sisters. We can not, nay dare not, take our salvation for granted. We know not how long we have in this period of probation, but we do know for certain that when it is over, we will go to give account of it at the judgment. Our minds and our hearts must be on the word on life. We are transformed by the renewing of our minds, no longer wandering aimlessly, seeking to please self, but with a clear, positive goal, to please our heavenly Father in striving to obey His commands. Walking differently from the people around us, walking honestly, blameless, and harmless.

Bro. Beryl Snyder

The Commandments of Christ

As collected and organized by bro. Roberts

Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness;

"Be not ye therefore partakers with them." (Ephesians 5:7)

"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light." (Ephesians 5:8)

"(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)" (Ephesians 5:9)

"Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord." (Ephesians 5:10)

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." (Ephesians 5:11)

Be not conformed to this world.

"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." (Romans 12:2)

Come out from among them and be ye separate.

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you," (2 Corinthians 6:17)

Walk honestly toward them that are without; give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully; be blameless and harmless, as the sons of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

"That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing." (1 Thessalonians 4:12)

"I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully." (1 Timothy 5:14)

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;" (Philippians 2:15)

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