

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

LAS CRUCES, New, Mexico

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

Our members are still Bro. Beryl Snyder, Bro. Malachi Morrell, Bro. Michael Morrell, Sis. Leslie Morrell, Bro. Jonathan Morrell and Sis. Maria Morrell.

We moved our Sunday meeting to be at 9:30 AM rather than at 9:00 AM, and our private (ecclesial) Bible class to be on Thursdays at 6:30 PM rather than Fridays at that same time; these are both held at Bro. Jonathan and Sis. Maria Morrell's home. We still have our public Bible study on Tuesdays at 7:00 PM on the campus of NMSU, on the ground floor of the Corbett Center.

We also have planned on advertising our ecclesia for anyone who is interested in studying with us or obtaining information through the local outlets (NMSU student paper and Craigslist for Las Cruces).

On behalf of the Las Cruces Ecclesia, Bro. Jonathan Morrell

BRISBANE, Qld. Australia: Sunday Memorial Meetings 10.30 a.m.; Wednesday Bible Class 7.45 p.m. in Member's homes.

Loving Greetings in our One Hope in Christ,

It is a pleasure to provide some welcome news from this corner of God's vineyard. We were pleased to recently welcome as a visitor our Sister Annetta Jones from the Richard Ecclesia, Canada. It gave us an opportunity to exchange news and receive mutual encouragement in our walk Zionwards. We thank our sister for making the effort to visit us.

We have been further encouraged by an application for a return to fellowship of Sister Denise Wilson. Our sister acknowledged her failures and disappointments of the past and has now resolved to rededicate her life in the Truth. We readily and happily welcomed her back into fellowship.

Two of our sisters have suffered serious illness and disability in recent months. Sisters Beryl Rabjohns and Marguerite Mingham need our continued prayers for recovery and we commit them to our Heavenly Father, whose mercies have been our comfort in times of trouble.

With fraternal regards to all of like precious faith,

Your brother in Christ, Ted Mingham

NAIROBI, Kenya

Hello all in Yahweh's vineyard.

We are joyous to report this morning that two of Adam's race have put on the saving name of Christ and are joining all in fellowship on our walk Zionwards.

Bro. David Macharia Gatua and his wife **Sis. Agnes Nzula Macharia** have put on the saving name of Christ in the waters of baptism. We held a short meeting at the hotel pool in Webuye, where the BCAF team is staying. Along with some school children who came out for their swimming lessons, it was witnessed by Bro. David Humphreys, Bro. John Simiyu, Bro. Bob Bent, Bro. John Sanduku, Sis. Dawn Humphreys, Sis. Kaye Yuen and Sis. Mary Agnes. Bro. Epa Wekati performed the immersions.

Bro. David has been the driver and guide to the BCAF team when visiting Kenya since 1998. He has always been attending the classes and joined us on all the daily readings since that time. He has been reading on his own and has always asked deep questions to Bro. Epa and the team. This year his wife, once a Pentecostal member, decided to travel with us and see for herself what has so entrenched her husband that he has refused to worship in her church. She saw the doctrine of Truth in the classes and readings and realized she has been blinded by the Pentecostal teachings all these years. She once said, "For the first time in my life, My eyes are open and I can actually read and understand the Bible."

On our journeys to the various Ecclesias, Bro. Epa holds First Principle classes for all Bible students and visitors, to which David and Agnes attended. Then one morning at Breakfast Sis. Agnes came to us and said, "My husband and I have been reading our Bibles last night till 3AM and we are upset that we feel naked and you all are clothed, How can we be clothed?" With joy in our heart, Bro. Sid asked, "Are you requesting Baptism?" Both David and Agnes replied "Yes! we are uncomfortable in the state we are in." To which a written exam was given and followed the next day by an oral exam. It was a joyous time for all.

They would be further encouraged to get messages and email from the brotherhood. Their email address is dnyamu2001@yahoo.com. Hope all is well in Yahweh's Vineyard and we continue with our loins girded till our Lord and master returns. (text +254723813368).

One Love in the hope of Israel, Bro. Bob Bent

NAKALIRA, Kenya

Greetings all in Yahweh's Vineyard.

Once again we are happy to report another of Adam's race have made the conscious choice in putting on Christ. **Sis. Helen Wanyonyi** was interviewed and Baptised this morning (Sunday). Her along with Bro. David Gatua and Sis. Agnes were given the right hand of fellowship at the memorial service at Nakalira. Many other brethren and sisters from other Ecclesias in Kenya joined in the memorial service, after which the Nakalira Ecclesia treated all to a very delicious lunch meal.

She is a young sister who has studied the Truth since her mom, Sis. Edda Wanyonyi, was immersed in 2009. Encouraging emails would be appreciated to them, they can be sent to edanambovi@yahoo.com . (+254732253123)

Things are going well in Kenya, the brethren and sisters send their love to all of like precious faith.

Love in Christ, Bro. Bob Bent

Dear brethren & sisters;

It is a matter of indescribable joy to receive word of an event which up to now has been a matter of prayer and supplication that such a thing might someday happen. We speak of the baptism yesterday of David Gatua and his wife Agnes. David is a very skilled and professional Kenyan safari tour bus driver and guide, and for the last 13 years those volunteering their time to visit the Ecclesias in Africa have been privileged and blessed to have him as their driver. His driving skills coupled with exceptional people skills have steered us safely through many a potentially difficult if not hazardous situations.

Altogether the time spent with David has accumulated to a total of up to five months for some of us, therefore, needless to say, we have all formed a very close connection and bond with David, and also his wife Agnes and family. So for the BCAF travel volunteers it is a time of great emotion - joyful emotion - and thankfulness to our heavenly Father for "steering" these two wonderful people to the saving Truth; and we desire to share this

with all of you and pray for Yahweh's guidance and care to rest upon them and us in the "safari" to the kingdom.

Yours in Grace, Bro. Ed Truelove

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING.....**June 10–12, 2011**

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

RICHARD FRATERNAL GATHERING.....**July 1 – July 4, 2011**

Sis. Christine Jones, RR# 1, Richard, Sask, S0M 2P0, Canada,

sc.jones@sasktel.net

HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING..... **July 25–31, 2011**

Bro. Mark Braune, 209 Ranger Dr., Buda, TX, 78610, 512-577-1119,

markbraune@gmail.com Study: "Zechariah"

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.

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.

The Image and the Stone - 4

“And he chose five smooth stones out of the brook”—1 Sam. 17:40

“Five smooth stones.” First, why five? Wasn’t one enough?—he actually only used one. David said to Goliath (v. 45)—

“Thou comest to me with a sword, and a spear, and a shield: but I come to thee in the Name of Yahweh of hosts.”

—the Memorial, Covenant Name. David’s sling and five stones represent the power of the Name of Yahweh set against Goliath’s spear and sword. Paul, speaking of the armor of faith (Eph. 6:17) says the sword of the Spirit is the Word of God.

David has no sword—its place being taken by the stones of his sling—so these in his case stood for the Word of God. They could not represent anything else; the man of God has no other weapon.

What was the Word of God in David’s day? In what way was five connected significantly with it? The answer is obvious—at that time the Word of God was the Book of the Law—the *five* books of Moses—the five smooth stones out of the brook of living waters—*“Written and engraven on stones,”* as Paul testified (2 Cor. 3:7). Of Jesus it was foretold, in the Psalm (110) that is the keystone of Paul’s argument concerning Christ’s Melchizedek-greatness—the Psalm that speaks of his enemies becoming his footstool:

“He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head . . . He shall fill the places with dead bodies: he shall WOUND THE HEADS over many countries.”

The Psalms tell us of what brook he drank—

“How sweet are Thy words unto my taste!” (119:103).

“Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures; for with Thee is the fountain of life” (36:8-9).

“As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God” (42:1).

And Proverbs 18:4 (RV)—

“The wellspring of wisdom is as a flowing brook.”

The five books of Moses are the entrance-way to the Old Testament, as the four Gospels are to the New. So we find that the *outer* veil of the Sanctuary entrance was upheld by *five* pillars with brass sockets (Exo. 26:36), while the *inner* veil of the Most Holy Place was upheld by *four* pillars with silver sockets (v. 32).

The principal subject of the five books of Moses is *sacrifice*—all the types and ordinances of *typical* sacrifice (just as the four Gospels portray all the elements of the *true*, living sacrifice and its great central fulfillment and example). From Eden forward—through Noah’s offering and the consequent confirmation of the everlasting covenant—Abraham and Isaac on Mt. Moriah—all the sacrifices of the Law—everything centers in the “*Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*” The *first* of David’s 5 stones struck the Sin-Image in the head and heralded victory—directing our thoughts to *Genesis* and the *beginning* of the promise of the seed to smite the serpent’s head.

Now the *sling*—the weapon used to destroy the adversary—required a death for its preparation. Like the garments that God prepared to cover Adam and Eve’s nakedness, it was made of the skin of a slain animal.

It was the sling that gave all the power to the stone in fulfilling its mission. By just throwing the stone himself, David could (naturally speaking) have accomplished nothing. But the sling developed a tremendous striking power—almost incredible accomplishments as to force and accuracy of aim are related of ancient slingers. (We realize that the power and aim in this case, of course, was supplied and directed by God, even as it was in the great antitypical sling that cut down the mighty enemy Sin.)

But there seems more to the number five than just a linking with the Law of God. When we think of *stones*, we think of—

“*The stone which the builders (the elder brethren) rejected, and which became the head cornerstone*” (Psa. 118:22); and

“*The stone cut out of the mountain without hands that smote and destroyed the image*” (Dan. 2:34).

Here is a smiting that is strangely parallel to this latter verse—though with one significant difference: one stone smites the Goliath-image on the *head*, one strikes it on the *feet*. But the result is the same—the Image is destroyed, and Israel is delivered.

The Nebuchadnezzar image represents the accumulated history of the *four* world empires that collectively make up the Kingdom of Men. David’s selection of five stones relates his victory, therefore, to that of the *fifth*, Stone Kingdom that filled the earth.

We note that they were “smooth” stones—nothing about them sharp, coarse, irregular or rough. *But they were not made smooth by the artifice of man.* They were “cut out without hands.” They were made smooth by the grinding and polishing action of running water. Where the term “running” water is used in the regulations of the Law (as Lev. 15:5, 6, 50-52), the original is *chai* —“living.” The fitness of the symbol is very striking.

It may be noted too that—contrary to possible first impressions—a smooth stone accomplishes the slinger’s purpose much better than a rough one. It leaves the sling more freely and accurately, and flies truer in its course. Surely an impressive lesson here!

“And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him, for he was but a youth” (v. 42).

It seemed an impossibly unequal contest, and the Philistine champion was angrily insulted that Israel should send out such an opponent to make a fool of him. How God delights to humble the pride of the pompous and the mighty, in order to teach His eternal lessons! How often does He in His wisdom use *weakness and fewness* to confound great numbers and apparent strength!

And how often a faithful young boy is the honored Instrument of His purpose, used to abase the mature in power and wisdom.

Joseph, Samuel, David, Joash, Jeremiah, Daniel, Jesus—seven who were hardly more than children when the burden of the divine purpose began to rest upon them in their generation.

What purer faith is there than the faith of a simple child? This priceless characteristic is so often lost in the hardened adult—

“Unless you turn, and become like children, you will never enter the Kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 18:3 RSV).

* * *

“And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves?”

Knowing how the term “dog” is used in Scripture—to represent those of the world outside the divine covenant—we see far more in this statement than Goliath meant. In David’s sight—and in God’s sight—*that is exactly what he was!*

We see this in David’s word to Saul (vs. 34-37). If God had helped him defend his father’s sheep against a lion and a bear—great and noble animals, as animals went—then he could surely with the same help defend God’s

sheep against this uncircumcised barbarian, this “dog” which was frightening them with its blasphemous barking. There is no stronger term of contempt in the Scriptures than “dog.” We get the feeling of the word more in the current use of the word “cur.”

The crucifixion Psalm (22), which antotypically parallels this encounter, makes clear the meaning of “dog” (vs. 16-20 RSV)—

“Dogs are round about me; a company of evil doers encircle me ... Deliver my soul from the sword, my life from the power of the dog!”

And in the last chapter of the Bible we are told, as the final consummation of the age-long struggle—“OUTSIDE are the dogs . . . murderers. . . idolaters” (v. 15 RSV).

* * *

David’s reply to Goliath shows a faith that did not contain the slightest shade of doubt or fear—

“I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee, and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth—that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel!” (v. 46).

“Without faith it is impossible to please God” (Heb. 11:6). If the cause is right, there can be no thought of failure, regardless of apparent odds or appearances. The earth *must* be taught that there is a God in Israel, and this can only be done by works of faith—for works of faith are works of God. He works by and through the faith of the faithful.

As we trace the symbolism of these events, let us compare the statement of David to Goliath with the prophetic wording concerning the destruction of Gog. The similarity is striking—

“Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble . . . that ye may eat flesh and drink blood.”

“And the nations shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel” (Eze. 39:17, 7).

And again, of the same event in Rev. 19:17—

“And he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come ... and eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains ...”

* * *

*“And David **hasted**, and **ran** to meet the Philistine”* (v. 48).

—another impressive evidence of the entire absence of fear or doubt, and an indication of eagerness to do God’s work.

There are many interesting and instructive cases of *running* in Scripture. Who is the first man spoken of as running, and for what purpose? It was Abraham, the “*father of the faithful*.”

And the incident gives evidence of his robust eagerness to serve that was among the things that pleased God about him. When he saw strangers (that later turned out to be angels), he *ran* to offer them his hospitality (Gen. 18:2). His heart was in it—he was alive—nothing of the abomination of insipid lukewarmness. And when he had greeted them warmly and prevailed upon them to tarry and eat, he “*hastened*” to the tent to tell Sarah to prepare (v.6), and then he “*ran*” to the herd to fetch a calf, and “*hasted*” to dress it (v.7). Then as they ate he stood by them, waiting to be of further service.

Truly an inspiring example of zealous activity! *Abraham was at this time 100 years old*—“old and well stricken in age,” as he is described in the previous chapter.

To walk in the way of God is duty. To *run* in that way with joyful, tireless eagerness is pleasure. In David’s beautiful picture of the Sun of Righteousness (Psa. 19), he says—

“He is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.”

In the Song of Songs, the Bride exclaims (1:4)—

“Draw me; we will run after thee, and be glad and rejoice in thee.”

But sometimes, though the spirit is eager and willing, the flesh is weak, and running is not the pleasure we would like it to be. Then let us remember the inspiring promise (Isa. 40:31)—

“They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”

It is they who are portrayed in Ezekiel’s glorious vision of the Four Living Creatures—

*“They **ran** and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning ... whithersoever the Spirit was to go, they went.”*

* * *

“The stone sank into Goliath’s forehead”—1 Sam. 17:49.

Here is typically fulfilled the Edenic promise that the woman’s seed should bruise the serpent’s head. The antitype stretches from Calvary to the

destruction of Nebuchadnezzar's image. Smiting the *feet* of Nebuchadnezzar's image indicates the time and circumstance of the smiting. Smiting the *head* in the case of Goliath indicates (as in the Eden promise) the mortal, final nature of the blow.

The location of the blow teaches us that, to illustrate another aspect, the application of the time symbol is reversed—Goliath's *head* represents the same latter-day period as the Image's *feet*. Perhaps one thing this indicates is that in the time of the end human knowledge will have reached its apex, as Daniel was caused to prophesy (Dan. 12:4). Looking at the race in the figure of a man, the present is the period of its greatest mental accomplishment—the forehead period. It is very fitting that the Little Stone should strike it there—at the height and culmination of its pride.

Goliath was six cubits—and a span. The striking down of the image is at the end of the 6000 years of human rule—the transitional *span* period, when, like the original head-kingdom of Babylon, it was “*measured and found wanting*” (Dan. 5) and therefore given into the hand of Cyrus who proclaimed the return of the captives and the rebuilding of the Holy City.

“*And he fell on his face to the earth*” (v. 49).

To fall on one's face is an indication of the humblest subjection and obeisance. Such will be the position of all who constitute the kingdom of men when the Little Stone's work is done.

Christ destroys the kingdom of men, but he does not destroy all the individual people that make up that kingdom. So we can see a little more in this stone *sinking into the forehead*. The forehead represents the mind. To be sealed in the forehead (as in Rev. 7:3) is to have something impressed on the mind. So the Little Stone impresses itself into the minds of all people—

“*The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord.*”

“*All shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest.*”

—and this knowledge and recognition will bring them to the position of humility and worship: they will “fall upon their faces to the earth.”

“*But there was no sword in David's hand*” (v. 50).

He had no military weapon. His sling was just that of a shepherd—just designed to keep prowling animals from his sheep. He faced Goliath with just the equipment of his natural, peaceful occupation. Two principles are here emphasized—one applying to the first advent of Jesus and our present dispensation; the other to the future manifestation of divine, irresistible power.

*“The weapons of **our** warfare are not carnal”* (2 Cor. 10:4).

It was David’s *faith*, rather than his skill or strength, that slew Goliath. Indeed, for this combat he deliberately *refused* the armor and weapons of warfare, realizing that his only hope lay in complete dependence on the help of God. As he himself said:

“The battle is the Lord’s . . . God will deliver thee to me” (vs. 46-47).

It is the lesson of Gideon, reiterated by Jonathan (1 Sam. 14:6)—

“There is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few.”

But the cryptic remark about there being no sword in David’s hand applies also to the day of Christ’s power (Zech. 4:6-7)—

“Who art thou, O great mountain? . . .”

—*“Who is this uncircumcised Philistine?”*—

“Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain . . . not by might, nor by power ...”

—that is, not *by human* might or power—

“...but by MY Spirit, saith Yahweh of Hosts.”

“There was no sword in David’s hand.”

* * *

“Therefore David ran . . . and drew out Goliath’s sword . . . and cut off his head therewith” (v. 51).

In the destruction of the great day of God’s wrath—

“Every man’s sword shall be against his brother” (Eze. 38:21).

The armies of the great image are cut up by their own weapons. Then shall be fulfilled the warning and the promise—

“All that take the sword shall perish with the sword . . . Here is the patience and faith of the saints” (Matt. 26:52; Rev. 13:10).

* * *

“And David brought the head of the Philistine to Jerusalem.”

Heads stand for rulerships. This is the obvious and natural meaning—often used in the Scriptures. So David’s act symbolized the cutting off of all ruling power, and transferring all the world’s headship and authority to Jerusalem— *“the city of the Great King.”*

“But he put Goliath’s armor in his tent” (v. 54).

This is recorded in *contrast* to the taking of the head to Jerusalem. It surely must have some significance: what is the point in it? Perhaps the connection of thought in Isa. 2 gives the answer:

“Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem . . . Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Isa. 2:3-4).

Here the rulership being centered in Jerusalem is connected with the worldwide abolition of war. Throughout the Bible, *“tent”* signifies a passing, impermanent condition of things—something temporary. Paul points out in Heb. 11 that because of faith Abraham, Isaac and Jacob dwelt all their lives in tents, thus testifying that they were but pilgrims in a passing state of affairs.

The Rechabites in Jeremiah’s day dwelt in tents instead of houses like the rest of Israel (Jer. 35:7) as a testimony to their separation and pilgrimage among the corruptions of Israel; as a witness that the present was not permanent—*that it was not the promised eternal Rest of God.*

So to put the armor and weapons of war in the tent, in contrast to taking the head to Jerusalem, shows that they represent a passing state of affairs—that war must pass away and be superseded by eternal peace—

“They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord” (Isa. 11:9).

The final verses of this chapter (1 Sam. 17) have occasioned difficulty to some—the fact that Saul does not appear to recognize David, though David had formerly been with him, and had been accustomed to play before him to soothe his troubled spirit.

But there are several possible factors that could explain these circumstances. A year or two (perhaps more) could have elapsed between. This would be most likely the time that David would be changing from a beardless youth to a full grown, bearded young man. Moreover, Saul’s mental condition was subject to violent changes, involving recognition.

Possibly, too, the spirit of Saul’s enquiry may have been: *“Who is this person who has such fearless faith, and through whom God has wrought such wonderful deliverance?”*—after the spirit of the disciples’ awed exclamation (Matt. 8:27):

“What manner of man is this, even the wind and sea obey him!”

Whatever may be the solution of this point, this closing incident forms a striking and fitting conclusion to a chapter of great figurative significance. *David comes before the rulers of Israel after having wrought deliverance*

in the face of a menace that had terrified the nation. Saul the ruler says to Abner the captain of the host: “Who is this?” Do not our minds turn irresistibly to a similar event?—

“WHO IS THIS that cometh from Edom?” (Isa. 63:1).

—that comes from the slaughter of the oppressors of Israel.

“What are these wounds in thine hands? . . . Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends” (Zech. 13:6).

David had previously appeared before Saul in the position of a healer whose ministrations were designed to soothe Saul’s mind and banish his evil spirit. On later occasions we know that in these fits of evil, Saul more than once attempted to slay David who was trying to heal and help him. It is quite possible, therefore, that Saul had made similar attempts before, for we know that something had caused David to leave Saul, though Saul’s malady and need for David’s help continued. How fitting, then, is this final scene in which the mighty deliverer reveals himself as the one who had previously been among them as the gentle healer from Bethlehem!

“And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul” (1 Sam. 18:1).

Jonathan—the faithful, unselfish, spiritually-minded member of Saul’s household—his soul was knit to the soul of David. His love for David was greater than the love of women (2 Samuel, 1:26).

This spiritual union of Jonathan and David, following David’s great labor of deliverance—the *most striking instance of mutual love in Scripture*—is it not typical of the joyous marriage supper of the Lamb? *“The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David.”*

“Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul” (1 Sam. 18:3).

We have been called out of the perishing world to be a party to a love of which this—however wonderful—is but a shadowy type. There is no power in the world like the ennobling, transforming love of God—

“God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 4:6).

Let us therefore draw near to God with a pure heart—eager to receive, and absorb, and deeply enjoy the full measure of the power of divine love.

“For the things which are seen are temporal: But the things that are not seen are eternal.” (2 Cor.4: 18) *—Bro. G.V. Growcott*

14 Generations

Every year we begin our readings with a list of names. Many times over the years we have heard the same disparaging comments about reading, or saying them. While I will be the first to admit my pronunciation is probably incorrect, there is a reason the Spirit put the names in the scriptures—more than one, most likely. One reason is to prove the lineage of Jesus Christ. In the first few years after the death of Jesus the apostles were mainly disputing with or preaching to the Jews. They understood the Messiah must be from the lineage of David. “The LORD hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.” (Psalms 132:11) So it became imperative that they prove the lineage of Jesus to be from him. It is interesting to note that the early writers, both Jew and Gentile, do not dispute the genealogy as given. Indeed, many of those who opposed the truth were intelligent, learned, and able to dispute with a quick witted mind. There is no evidence that they ever cited them as having an incongruity. Remember also, the Jews were in a position to show that the lineage was incorrect and most certainly would have done so if it were possible.

Matthew gives us the ancestry of Joseph from Abraham to Jesus. Some of the people listed have a quite a bit written about them in the scriptures, while others have little, if nothing. We should be knowledgeable of the events surrounding Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and therefore they need no elaboration. Judas the son of Jacob, however, is easily read over without thought. This would be Judah the fourth son of Leah (Genesis 29:35) who was one of the more prominent sons of Jacob. It was Judah who suggested selling Joseph to the traders rather than killing him. (Genesis 37:26) Judah is the one who pleads with Jacob to allow Benjamin to go with them on their journey back to Egypt. It is his passionate appeal, concerning his brother Benjamin, to the man he knew to be great, even as Pharaoh (Genesis 44:18), which causes Joseph to reveal himself. It is Judah who receives Jacob’s blessing instead of his older brother. “Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father’s children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion’s whelp: from the prey,

my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” (Genesis 49:8-10)

Judas was a popular name in the time of Jesus. The New Testament has several people by that name in it. One is “Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.” (Matthew 10:4) Another is the half brother of Jesus, “*Is not this the carpenter’s son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?*” (Matthew 13:55) A false leader, “*After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed.*” (Acts 5:37) Judas was the owner of the home Paul went to, after meeting Christ and losing his sight. “And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,” (Acts 9:11) And lastly, Jude. “Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.” (Jude 1:1) The same Greek word, Judas, is used for the tribe of Judah. It is used in the Apocalypse to describe Jesus opening the seven seals. “And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.” (Revelation 5:5)

Judah had three sons, the oldest Er, who was given a wife named Tamar. (Genesis 38:6) “Er, Judah’s firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD slew him” (v7). She was then given to Judah’s second son, Onan, who also displeased the Lord and died. (vv 8, 10) “Then said Judah to Tamar his daughter-in-law, Remain a widow at thy father’s house, till Shelah my son be grown: for he said, Lest peradventure he die also, as his brethren did. And Tamar went and dwelt in her father’s house.” (Genesis 38:11) Judah did not follow through on his promise, so at the time of the shearing of sheep Tamar tricked Judah. She then bare twins with Pharez being in the line of Christ. We can see that the law which was given in Deuteronomy 25:5-6 was in practice during the times of the patriarchs “If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband’s brother shall

go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother unto her. And it shall be, that the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel." It was validated by the elders in the time of Ruth when they said to Boaz, "And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem: And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bore unto Judah, of the seed which the LORD shall give thee of this young woman." (Ruth 4:11-12)

It is interesting that Tamar is included as one of three gentile women in Matthew's genealogical listing. It could be that Matthew was listing them so the Jews would realize that Gentiles were to be numbered in the coming kingdom. They are definitely present so all will understand that there is no glory in ancestry or in the flesh. It is a demonstrable lesson for all to realize that those who are considered of low estate by those of the world are capable of joining together with Christ.

Pharez had a son name Esrom. Not a lot is known about him except if we check in Numbers (26:21) we find his name to be Hezron in the Hebrew tongue. Next in the line of Jesus we find the son of Esrom who is named Aram. Aram is the ancient name for Syria, but the territorial name is believed to be derived from the son of Shem, not the son of Esrom. Aram's son is called Aminadab. When we think about it, one of the more fascinating things about Pharez, Esrom, and Aram, and Aminadab is that they were of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt during their 225 years of sojourning there. It is more than probable that these were among those who helped keep the word of God in remembrance during the Egyptian years of darkness and distress.

Aminadab had a son and daughter. As a side note, although the daughter, Elisheba is not in the line of Christ, she is worthy of comment, because she married Aaron the brother of Moses. Two of the sons of this union, Nadab and Abihu, are remembered in scripture as offering strange fire before the Lord. But Aminadab's son Naashon, Naasson being the Greek form, is in

the lineage under discussion. By my loose reckoning of family Naasson would be the brother-in-law of Moses and Aaron. He was also a leader of the tribe of Judah during the wilderness wandering (Numbers 1:4, 7). It should be noted that he is the grandfather of Boaz. This brings up a question. If Joshua and Caleb being the only 2 of those who came out of Egypt to enter the land, how does Naasson fit into the picture? If we look at Numbers 1:1, 3 “And the LORD spoke unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of the congregation, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying, (3) From twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel: thou and Aaron shall number them by their armies.” we find this was two years after they came out of Egypt. Those who murmured against God, at the time of the spies returned from searching out the land of Israel, and destined to die in the wilderness were twenty years old and older (Numbers 14:29) This would mean Naasson was under twenty at the return of Joshua and Caleb from searching out the land, but twenty or twenty one at the time of numbering (Numbers 1:1, 3).

Naasson’s son was Salmon. The scriptures do not provide a lot of information about him or his life except that he is in the line of Christ and one other important fact, he married Rahab. In the book of Joshua, particularly in the second chapter, we read of her. Rahab is mentioned three times in the New Testament. Before proceeding to the events in Joshua our minds should be filled with the New Testament declarations about Rahab. Firstly, she became the wife of Salmon, a prince of Judah, a mother in Israel, and an ancestress of David and Jesus the greater son of David. Secondly, Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews lists Rahab along with Abraham, Moses, David, and many others in his lineup of faithful examples. He says “by faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace,” Lastly she is mentioned by James as an example of those who proved their faith by the evidence of their works.

In Joshua we read of the fear that the inhabitants of Jericho had at the approach of Israel. Indeed, Rahab indicates their thoughts in her speech to the spies: “We have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what ye did unto the two kings of

the Amorites that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we heard these things our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man because of you; for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and in earth beneath.” (Joshua 2:9 – 11) This verse declares that the things done by God for Israel was known in the earth. Rahab has the beginning of knowledge (Proverbs 1:7). She demonstrated this by saving the spies out of the hand of the king of Jericho. We have all known of Rahab’s scarlet thread bound and hung out of her window. This being how her house might be known to Israel and spared. Jesus Christ has bound the scarlet thread of his blood into all those who will be found righteous at the great day of the coming of the second Joshua. The purpose of Yahweh is clearly understood by Rahab, for she said to the spies: “I know that the Lord hath given you the land.” As for Jericho the walls fell. Rahab and her relatives were saved but were left outside the camp. Perhaps they were considered unclean. Afterward they were joined with Israel. Jericho looks as if it was thought to be the first fruits of the conquest and therefore it was devoted to God.

The son of Salmon and Rahab was Boaz. Boaz was the husband of Ruth. Much has been written about Ruth, so, although she was one of the three gentile women in Matthew’s genealogical listing we will not comment on her. There has been much written already, for those who care to search. It can be said Boaz rejoiced in her faithfulness, and prayed a reward might be given her by the God of Israel, under whose wings she had come to trust. (Ruth 2:12) “The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.” When we examine the Scriptures with an eye looking to the study of the character of Boaz we find him, devout, beloved, diligent, kind to his dependents, generous, courteous, good to the poor, respectful of the rights of others, pleased in the good done by other men, law abiding, humble, quiet and far-sighted. A marvelous example of what God delights in. Boaz and Ruth produced a son, Obed, who would be the grandfather of David.

Obed fathered Jesse. Jesse in turn had eight sons, the eighth being David. Isaiah directly foretells that the Messiah comes from the loins of Jesse in chapter 11:1 “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:” “David, the son of Jesse...of this

man's seed, hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Savior Jesus" (Acts 13:22, 23). It is also interesting to note that both Jesse and Boaz were Bethlehemites. Joseph's family had a history in the town of Bethlehem. It then comes as no surprise when he returns there during the time of taxation, the time when the "rod out of the stem of Jesse" should be born. As it is recorded, (Luke 2:4) "And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; because (he was of the house and lineage of David:)" Which then brings us to Jesse's son, David, who would become "the man after God's own heart." (1 Samuel 13:14)

Thus is the first of those who would form the family tree of Jesus. In some we have much to consider, in others there is not as much detail. The Spirit has not left a great amount of detail but by the lives of their wives there have been left the lessons for us. Every name was given to us for a reason. We were not told the names of the spies who went to Jericho but we are told of the harlot Rahab. Of her faith and manifested works. These people were placed in the written word of God for our learning. (Romans 15:4) "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." We should not skip or pass over lightly these hard to pronounce names. Give them the time, thoughtfulness, and due diligence they deserve. "A wise man will hear, and will increase learning;" (Proverbs 1:5)

Bro. Beryl Snyder

Encouraging Words No. 18

"MY son (or daughter) . . . forsake not the law of thy mother." Mothers! have you ever pondered these words? The law inculcated by true Israelitish mothers, which the Spirit here admonished children not to forget, was the law of God. Were the spirit now to speak, would it admonish your children not to forget your law? It would do so, if you made the training of your children in the fear and admonition of the Lord, your first concern.

There is much need for mothers who have been brought up in Gentile ways to examine themselves in relation to their attitude to their children. Mothers, do you, like many Gentile parents, encourage or permit your sons and daughters to worship at the altar of Venus? Ah, it is a sad sight on a

summer's eve to see boys and girls of tender years engrossing their immature thoughts and energies in the enervating, purity-sapping occupation of flirting. Contrast this state of things with Israel's divine law which enjoined parents to keep their children within the sphere of their own influence and society, and to seek to utilise every opportunity lovingly, tenderly and interestingly to instil into their young minds the holy, righteous thoughts of God—"These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up." These are God's methods. Think not that you can improve upon them.

Mothers, the future chastity and pure-mindedness of your sons, no less than your daughters, is largely in your hands. Drive not your children from you to gratify their own untutored instincts, and to seek vitiated, unclean society. Provide for them companionship which is befitting their age, and lawful in the sight of God. Guard them from squandering their energies in unholy, youthful lusts (2 Tim. 2:25; Psa. 119:9). Teach them to use their strength so that they may become more and more pleasing in the sight of God. Lead them so to occupy their leisure that they may build up character, and become, in proper time, exemplary husbands and fathers, wives and mothers. Remember that flirting and Bible study are mutually destructive—they cannot go hand in hand. Remember, too, that the boy or girl who is engrossed in flirtation is more or less incapable of attending to business or home duties. The time of courtship is not when boys and girls are of tender years, and the time of flirtation should be never.

Mothers, are you diligent in instructing your sons and daughters in God's most holy law as touching His children in relation to marriage? You know, or should know, God's mind concerning marriage with the unbeliever—it is introduced into nearly every book of the Bible. Do you seek to enforce this law, or do you go directly contrary to it, by welcoming to your houses attractive young aliens, with whom, from a worldly point of view, alliance would be extremely advantageous? Do you sanction and encourage intercourse at the houses of friends where your sons and daughters will meet with such aliens? To sink the obligations of the truth for a worldly advantageous alliance is not to uphold the law of God. It is to follow, in more ways than one, the wicked policy of Balaam. Obedience to God would have kept Balaam back from honour, and so it will us to a large extent, for God would not have us seek for honour from modern Moabites. The present

is not a finality. God will bestow honour, riches and all that the heart can desire in His own good time.

Mothers, has it ever struck you how largely God holds parents responsible for the marriages of their children? And justly so, for it is the parents, whatever the marriage customs of the times may be, who, to a very large extent, hold in their hands the destinies of their children. If parents were more faithful to God's wishes, we should hear of far fewer alien marriages in the brotherhood.

Mothers, face your responsibilities. Foresee the evil, and avert it. If your husband is in the truth, take godly counsel with him, as Rebecca did with Isaac, and, like her, remove your son or daughter from evil influences, and direct them towards those which would find favour with God.

Sis. C.H. Jannaway—1908

Meditations – Deity's Ways No. 17

THOSE who speak of the righteousness of Christ as a kind of make-weight—as a quantity to be drawn upon to bring up their own deficiencies to the perfect standard—show very clearly that they have not yet learned the truth as it is in Jesus. The righteousness of Christ must be received in its entirety or not at all. Salvation is a free gift—not of works lest any man boast. Christ is the alpha and omega of the righteousness which justifies. Those in Christ have united themselves to that righteousness and because of it are accepted—are accounted perfect or complete (Ephes. 1:6; Rev. 16:15; Col. 2:11). The act of union has cleansed them, and they remain clean to the end (if faithful) through the advocacy of their Great High Priest. Enlightened men speak of Christ as “our righteousness”—not as part of our righteousness. Personal righteousness is essential, but only in the sense that before God will endorse a man's union with Christ, or acknowledge its continuance, the man must be an admirer and willing follower of Christ. But it should ever be borne in mind that Christ's righteousness is available only for those who “abide in him.”

The whole burnt offering of Lev. 1, was a type of Christ. It pre-figured that complete surrender to the will of God which the law commanded. No one save Christ was able to meet this demand, hence to him the type pointed—“I am not come to destroy but to fulfil.” In reading the details of this offering, it must be remembered that Christ as the antitype was the victim, offerer, and priest. The animal was to be “without blemish.” This Christ was—he was “without blemish and without spot” (1 Pet. 1:19; Heb.

9:14; John 1:29). The sacrifice was to undergo a preparation, to be “flayed,” “washed,” “cut up,” and, finally, entirely consumed upon the altar. Christ fulfilled all this. From the cradle to the cross was a continual period of preparation—he was perfected through suffering. The offering was to be a “voluntary” one. Christ’s offering was this— “*offered himself*” “*not my will,*” “*obedient unto death,*” “*I lay down my life.*” As the typical offering was well pleasing so was the antitypical— “*a sweet-smelling savor*” (Lev. 1:9; Ephes. 5:2). There are two lessons to be drawn from this type.

1. “Christ is “the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.” The blessings of Christ’s work are imputed to those in him. As he is, so are we—complete in Christ Jesus. 2. Christ is our example. We should endeavour to follow him in the manner indicated in the type, to exhibit, as did he, holiness, thoroughness, steadfastness, and willingness—to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God” (Rom. 12:1).

Sorrow for the righteous dead is natural. To refrain from it entirely would require the insensibility of a stone. If Jesus wept on the occasion of Lazarus’ death, no marvel if we are similarly moved under like circumstances. But we should learn to weep not overmuch for the dead; we should also learn to dread not death ourselves. The comfort which God has given us should regulate our feelings, and buoy us up whilst experiencing the bitterness of the temporary removal of loved ones, or whilst having to face approaching dissolution ourselves. We should not sorrow as those who have no hope. What is death from the saint’s standpoint? A perfect rest—to be followed by a glorious awaking. Although death has been inflicted as a curse, it is nevertheless a curse tempered with great mercy, and this should be remembered in our grief. Christ is doubtless joyed as his faithful brethren are laid aside in the calm repose of the grave to await his certain and blessed advent. Life, surely, is not so satisfactory under existing circumstances that we should desire an unlimited prolongation of it. The probation of Christ was a period of sorrow, and is it not the same with his brethren? Fidelity means suffering—”much tribulation.” The more we apprehend Christ—the more we realise his power, his purpose, and his affection toward us—the less anxious shall we be about death. Christ has said, “Fear not—I have the keys of the grave and of death.”

Jeremiah’s lot was, indeed, cast in unpleasant places. But what endurance—what life-long devotion he exhibited! Those who are given to murmuring as soon as the even tenor of their way is ruffled, and others too, for the matter of that, would do well to particularly study the life of this exemplary man. Who has trials that reach beyond the limits of Jeremiah’s? Have we black looks from enemies—false accusations—bitter taunts—

deprivations and physical sufferings? Manifold were those which Jeremiah had to experience. Truly he was an example of “suffering affliction and of patience.” To an extent, the position of the prophet and that of nineteenth century saints is identical: both are the messengers and witnesses of God: both fulfil their mission in the midst of a superstitious, immoral, proud, cruel, godless people. Do we display Jeremiah’s faithfulness? Are we fearless in making known the whole counsel of God? Men of the prophet’s stamp do not sacrifice the truth for popularity, for ease, or for fear of evil consequences, though the latter may involve the horrors of a dungeon or even death itself. What animated Jeremiah? The hope of Israel. It was in this that his comfort lay—comfort which will surely find its sequel in “that day of sweet surprise.” Let the mind picture the occasion. Jeremiah in the Kingdom of God and his adversaries cast out. Christ—the avenging judge—present to justify the righteous and to punish the wicked. What glory! What shame!

Of Zion it is said, “they shall prosper that love thee”—that is if the love for Zion is coupled with a love for God. This is an unmentioned qualification which underlies the majority of Bible promises. Prosper—when? Now or hereafter? Both, though prosperity for the moment is not visible to the natural eye. From the standpoint of the wisdom from above, the highest prosperity is not incompatible with temporal adversity. What greater present prosperity could there be than a successful making meet for the kingdom through the in-working of God? A prosperity to be followed by glory, honour, and an everlasting possession of the earth and its treasures. The worldling esteems a steady increase of wealth or popularity, prosperity—a thing which he has to give an eternal good bye to when the grim visitor knocks at the door. Well may the Scriptures count such an one as a fool! If we want to know what true prosperity is, let us look at the 144,000 enthroned in Zion, in enjoyment of the zenith of prosperity. Christ will be among that number, and he “wept” for Zion (Luke 19:41). Others will be among them of whom it is recorded, “By the rivers of Babylon there we sat down; yea, we wept when we remembered Zion” (Psa. 137:1). Jeremiah will not be missing, whose lamentation runs, “For this our heart is faint, for these things our eyes are dim, because of the mountain of Zion which is desolate” (Lam. 5:17–18). The question is, are we lovers of Zion? Or, have we more love for places upon which God has set no affection?

Bro. A. T. Jannaway— 1888

Let Me First Bury My Father

“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it”—Luke 9:23-24.

There are some Scriptures which require time for us to adjust ourselves to them. They embody the essence of a multitude of minor precepts and require a multitude of minor adjustments. We must return to them again and again to check our course and our progress by them.

Such are these words of Christ. It requires time even to find out all that they mean—in fact, it seems that this process of fathoming their full implications is endless—and it takes further time to adjust ourselves to these implications as they unfold. No one could ever feel within himself that he had completely exhausted their meaning and satisfied their requirements.

* * *

“The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected and slain” (Luke 9:22).

“Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of Man shall be delivered into the hands of men. But they understood not . . . and they feared to ask him” (vs. 44-45).

Why were they afraid to ask further light? Because these things that Jesus was saying were disturbing and did not fit in with their conception of what lay before them. They did not want to face the implications of his words. Their minds were full of his coming glory, and their respective ranks of honor around his throne—see the next verse, where they contended among themselves who should be greatest.

It would have been better for them to have faced their fears, and asked him what he meant. They would have been better prepared for the ordeal to come, and braced against the hopeless despair that engulfed them at his crucifixion.

“Fools and slow of heart to believe all the prophets have written!”

How natural to close our eyes to unpleasant truths, but how comforting on the other hand to be fortified in a time of trouble by a clear perception beforehand that all is in harmony with a glorious divine plan!

* * *

As they continue on their journey they come to the village where the Samaritans refuse to receive them, and the disciples say,

“Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?”

Our minds go back a little way: *“And they said, Lord, teach us to pray. And he said, Pray ye on this wise: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us.”* How quickly this beautiful lesson of love was forgotten!

“Even as Elias did.” How glibly we justify our natural desires by some eagerly-grasped Scripture that suits our end!—“Abraham was rich” . . . “Daniel had great authority” . . . “Solomon lived in splendor” . . . “Moses led an army.” The whole life and teaching of Jesus was of the spirit of lowly gentleness and kindness, but it is this fiery instance in the life of Elijah that immediately comes to their mind—*because it fitted in with their feelings.*

They little realized the exalted nobility of the purpose that centered in Christ. There was no room there for petty personal resentment. He saw men broadly as sheep without a shepherd, seeking rest and finding none. *Even in their blind abuse of him, he pitied them,* for they but vented on him the bitterness of their own frustration and futility.

This instance illustrates how difficult it is to seek scriptural guidance with an open mind, and how easy it is to find just what we are looking for. What assurance then have we ever that we are not self-deceived? Narrow is the way, he said, and few there be that find it. **Few there be that even FIND it!** But still the unchanging promise is—

*“Ye shall find Me—when ye **seek** for Me with **all** your heart.”*

Millions are seeking with varying degrees of earnestness and effort, *but few put their whole heart and soul into it, to the exclusion of all else.*

This is the only guarantee of success. This is the only possible *hope* of success. One sole and all-exclusive purpose—

“If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.”

“A double minded man is unstable in all his ways” (Jam. 1:8).

Divided interests and affections lead only to endless mental turmoil. Lukewarmness is an abomination to both God and man. God gives us a positive guarantee of failure before we start if we do not throw ourselves into His service with wholehearted zeal. Those who attempt to serve two masters lose any real enjoyment and satisfaction that they might have derived from either service.

* * *

In the last few verses of the chapter, Jesus speaks to three men. Here again, the words of Jesus are of the type to which we must keep returning, seeking to adjust our outlook and our lives. They are not what we would naturally expect Jesus to say in the circumstances. They must be slowly digested. They are lessons in a type of thought and viewpoint directly opposite to the natural.

Natural man's thoughts are based on maudlin sentimentality that has no solid framework of reason and which a slight irritation soon exposes as superficial. Natural man is all for goodwill and fellowship—until his little personal interests are jeopardized or his touchy sensibilities are affronted. To the natural man the words of Jesus were often very hard—

“This is an hard saying—who can receive it?”

He was always seeking to drive them deeper—force them to think down through the common shallow veneer—shake them out of the rut of paralyzing habit and unthinking conformity with an unthinking brute existence. Consider what he says to these three men, especially the second. The man asked—

“Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.”

Jesus replied to him—*“Let the dead bury their dead.”*

What a thing to say at such a time! A hard saying, indeed. Of course, human commentators explain it away. They say that the man meant, “Let me stay with my aged father until he dies.” Instead of letting it “sink down into their ears,” and seeking to extract divine wisdom from it, they attempt to water it down and thus escape its searching, transforming power—

“Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the Kingdom of God.”

Would he stop to bury his father if a flood or tornado were sweeping down on him? Would he stop to care for the *dead* if his *living friends* were in dire and immediate need of his help? It is all a question of relative values.

He took his call too lightly. Men had been living and dying for thousands of years and were to do so for thousands more. Many had been buried and many had not, it was all the same in the end. *But here was the turning point in God’s plan of the Ages that would triumphantly sweep death from the earth.*

In the fullness of time God had sent forth His Son, and *this very moment* he was saying personally to him, **“I need you NOW, follow me!”** The words still rang in the air. And the man said, “I can’t make it right away, I have something else to do first.” And so his great moment passed.

He did not realize—and how *hard* it is to realize—the utter insignificance of natural things. He was not ready when the call came. He hesitated. He had other things on his mind. Suddenly confronted with a decision, he failed. How important to be ready beforehand—to have laid the right foundation during the time of opportunity!

The lesson and the type is clear. *“See that that day come not upon you unawares.”* Be ready. Keep your lamps trimmed and full of oil. Get mentally adjusted to the relative values of natural and spiritual things, so that when He once more shakes not the earth only, but heaven also, and many things that seemed well-grounded begin to rock and sway, and a decision is suddenly thrust upon us, we shall have the discernment to distinguish what to hold fast to—and what to let go.

—Bro. G.V. Growcott

The Law Entered That Sin Might Abound

We cannot doubt that God foresaw as a consequence of introducing law—first in Eden, then at Sinai, that —

“All the world would become guilty before Him.”

—and, therefore, utterly lost, giving the opportunity for His kindness to come into play, with the result of drawing eternal gratitude and glory to
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Himself, and conferring unspeakable and appreciated benefit on such as should be redeemed.

But does He show this kindness by dropping the law out of sight, and doing the offender good irrespective of its condemnation? By no means. This would have been worse than admitting man to life without law at all in the first instance.

God came to the rescue on the principle of upholding the law to the uttermost. By His Son, He did what we could not do. In our nature, He fulfilled the law. The Son came for this purpose — *“To do Thy will, O God.”* “Mere man” could not do it.

“What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God (hath done) sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.”

The Son said, “Think not that I come to destroy the Law and the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil:”

And fulfil them he did to the letter; and then what? He died for those who had failed — took upon himself the curse which the law imposed upon them. This God requires at his hand: “to lay down his life for the sheep:” by this only, under His arrangement, could the sinning sheep live.

The law was upheld. Christ died. “Through the Eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot unto God,” and Christ was then raised and offered to sinners as a meeting point with God. Belief, acceptance and love of him, submission and obedience to him, are the conditions under which God is pleased to admit perishing sinners into relation with Himself.

We look to the uplifted serpent and are saved from the serpent’s bite. Believing in him as God’s appointed sacrifice for sin, and as the fountain of every blessing covenanted in the promises to the fathers, and taking upon us his Name, God extends forgiveness of past sins, and promise of life through Christ in the Kingdom and Age to Come.

The law is upheld: yet it is all of grace; we could not claim such a glorious arrangement. We were condemned. There is no room for boasting. Yet are we saved by obedience. The glorious result is achieved, that God is magnified as the source of all the benefit, while sinners are justified by believing; and with the answer of a good conscience, and the joy of immortality, ascribe all the glory to God —

“For of Him, and to Him, and through Him are all things.”

But this point of glory could not have been reached without the law entering that sin might abound, that where sin abounded, grace might also much more abound.

—*Bro. Robert Roberts*

Analecta Apocalypticae (58)

Living and Reigning with Christ

The political sequel is the suppression of human government and the establishment of the kingdom of God in all the earth. This is shown in the symbolism of Rev. 20:1-6, which comes within the purview of this article.

“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given unto them: and, I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power: but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

The significance of this symbolism becomes evident enough after what has gone before. It shows the elements of previous scenes in new combinations. Just as the marriage scene gave way to a picture of war, in which the marriage parties appear in a new guise; so here we have the combatants in the war under a new figure, illustrative of the altered relations resulting from the war. The heaven-descended angel is Jesus and the saints; the key and chain, power to open and shut at will, and to bind or reduce to a condition of powerlessness; the dragon, the Devil and Satan, or human nature in organized opposition to God, and here represented by the symbol of the eastern section of the Roman Empire (the dragon), because that is the part of the earth (Turkey occupied by Russia) in which the closing opposition is offered. Also called the Old Serpent, because the Edenic serpent was the beginning of human rebellion, and became the symbol of the system resulting from it. For such an angel to lay hold on the dragon and

bind him, is for Jesus and the saints to seize on human government, and impose on all its officials such a restraint as will effectually prevent them from re-asserting their authority, or making any attempt to re-establish their power. To cast him into the abyss — (translated bottomless pit) is to eject human nature — (sin's flesh, alias the devil) — from all share in the government, and to cast all its officials into privacy among the common people. To shut him up, and set a seal upon him, is to establish such a system of repression and watchfulness as will leave no loophole for the escape of human Satanism from the abyss of powerlessness into which it will be thrown.

The adoption of such a system would be simple and easy to such a class of rulers as Jesus and the saints, who control the power of the Spirit of God. There are several historic illustrations of the practical use of this power in dealing with men. The Syrians could not succeed in their plans against Israel, because, as one of the servants of the king told him, "Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telling the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber" (2 Kings 6:12). Gehazi sought in vain to conceal his private movements from the prophet, who said, "Went not mine heart with thee when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee?" Peter, by the power of the Spirit, knew the private understanding between Ananias and Sapphira to misrepresent facts, before they came to tell their tale (Acts 5:1-7). Jesus knew the whereabouts and the attitude of Nathanael at a distance, before he was called to come and see Jesus (John 1:48). These are some of the illustrations of the power by which the government of Christ and the saints in the age to come will be able to detect the smallest germ of sedition without the employment of spies; while the falling down dead of Ananias and Sapphira illustrates the power by which they will be able to enforce their authority, thus admitting of that entire abandonment of the art of war, which is the prophetically-declared characteristic of the reign of Christ (Micah 4:1-4; Hosea 2:18; Zech. 9:10).

The work of binding and shutting up the dragon accomplished, the next scene in natural order is that presented in verse 4 — a picture of thrones — the thrones of the house of David and their occupants. "I saw thrones, and they sat on them..." Who are "they?" They are defined in the amplification following: "The souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God." On the strength of this, some say that the millennial thrones will only be occupied by "martyrs" — those who have actually suffered death for Christ. That this is a mistake you are all aware from two things: 1, Christ judges and rewards the living, as well as the dead, "at his appearing and his kingdom" (2 Tim. 4:1). The living, found in the act

of faithful service, are made rulers, as well as those who have gone to their graves by violence, or otherwise (Matt. 24:46). This is only reasonable; for the kingdom is awarded, not for being killed, but for faithful service in life, which is often more difficult than to die. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (2 Tim. 2:12), whatever form the suffering take. Secondly, the 4th verse of Rev. 20 does not limit the occupants of the throne to one class. There are not only those who were "beheaded for the witness of Jesus," but those "who had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands:" that is, who had stood aloof from all complicity with Roman Babylon. There is a special appropriateness in classifying the occupants of the millennial thrones in this way, in view of the preceding portion of the vision, which exhibits the beast and his image in the ascendant in all the earth, and prevailing against the saints, "even unto death." The time has now come in this chapter for a reversal of parts. The saints rise from the dead; the beast and his image are destroyed, and the saints reign. They reign a thousand years, — hence the period of their reign is called the millennium, from the Latin word signifying a thousand. Some have suggested a day-for-a-year interpretation of this period, making it 360,000 years; but there is no ground for the suggestion, beyond the fact that the day-for-a-year principle is observed in the definition of some of the Apocalyptic periods. This is by no means a conclusive evidence of every period being on the day-for-a-year principle. It all depends upon the association of the period. The life of the beast, signifying an empire, requires a condensation of the time, for the sake of decorum: so with the depredation of locusts, or the exposure of corpses, symbolizing political events: symbolic time was a necessity to suit the fitness of things; but here, in Rev. 20, it is a question of "reigning," which is a literal function, as those who reign are literal persons, requiring a literal statement of time. The surroundings of the case necessitate a literal understanding of the thousand years. It is in harmony with the Sabbath type, six days followed by a seventh of rest: six thousand years of turmoil, followed by a thousand years of rest and peace. 360,000 would be incompatible with the mission of the kingdom of God, which is to bring the mortal population of the globe into reconciliation with God, and a state of readiness for the immortal state beyond. 360,000 years of mortal propagation would cram the earth many times over, even at the present rate of increase; but what shall we say to the rate of the increase when human life is greatly lengthened, as we learn it will be from Isaiah 65:20-22, and when the enriching blessing of God will be on the earth with its increase, and the family of man everywhere? (Psa. 67:6-7; Hosea 2:18-22; Jer. 31:12-14; Ezek. 34:26). God's plans are wise; and therefore a thousand, and not 360,000 years, are required for the reign of Christ and the

saints. A poor salvation, some say, if it is only to last a thousand years. The criticism is founded on a mistake. It is not salvation, but only its opening phase, that is to last a thousand years. When mortal man has been divinely governed a thousand years, the time will have come for the final form of things on earth. Man's mortality will cease in the immortalization of the mighty harvest of obedient men and women, generated by the millennial reign, and in the destruction of such of the races as do not, after that wonderful era of privilege, answer to that description. But this is anticipating the subject of the last lecture.

"The rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years were finished." This shows that after Christ comes and raises his brethren and associates them with himself in the government, there will be no further resurrection till the period of their government is at an end. "The rest of the dead"* does not necessarily mean those left unraised in their graves at Christ's coming, though it may include some such; because the bulk of them will never see the light of resurrection at all, not being in circumstances making them responsible (Isa. 26:13; Psa. 49:14-20). "The rest of the dead" must be understood of the entire reign of death on the earth. The time for death to cease has not arrived with the setting-up of the kingdom. Death continues in the kingdom of the thousand years (Isa. 65:20; Ezek. 44:25). When the saints are immortalized, there is a remainder of Adam's mortal race, who like them will at a subsequent time become immortal; and the force of the statement seems to be in the intimation that there will be no more admission to immortality till "the thousand years are finished." The Revised Version of the New Testament omits in this verse the word "again," and the omission strengthens the meaning of the verse in the direction now suggested.

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." This verse is usually understood in a way that nullifies important truth in other directions. It is taken to mean that all who come out of the grave at the coming of Christ are "blessed and holy," in disregard of the plainest declarations elsewhere that the unworthy servants of Christ as well as the worthy come forth to judgment at his coming (Dan. 12:2; John 5:29; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:1). What the verse says is that "Blessed and holy is he that hath part (meros, portion, inheritance, or lot) in the first resurrection."* Many come forth at that time who, like Simon Magus, have "neither part nor lot in the matter" (Acts. 8:21); to whom Jesus says "I never knew you" (Matt. 7:23), and in whom at that time will be realized his terrible words, "Ye shall see Abraham, Isaac

and Jacob in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out” (Luke 13:28). To say that these do not rise at this time is to deny the judgment of the living and the dead at the appearance of Christ, and therefore to reject a first principle of the gospel of Christ (Acts 10:42; Rom. 2:16; Heb. 6:1- 2).

The contrast, in the verse, is between those who at the time have part and those who at that time have no part; those on whom the second death hath no power and those on whom it has the power. The contrast is not between those who rise when Christ comes, and those who rise at some other time. Such a contrast could not hold good; for millions who rise at the close of the thousand years will be as “blessed and holy” as those who rise at the beginning of that period, though doubtless a higher rank will eternally appertain to those who enter eternal life “through much tribulation” than to those who, in such an age of light and blessing as the thousand years, hear a voice behind them, so to speak, at every step in their journey, saying, “This is the way, walk ye in it” (Isa. 30:21), and when “all shall know the Lord, from the least even to the greatest” (Jer. 31:34).

This “living and reigning with Christ” is a privilege which cannot be enjoyed at a subsequent stage of God’s work on earth. It is a work of subduing the evil and dispensing blessing among mankind in a thousand practical ways, while as yet the effects of sin remain. They are no meaningless words that are addressed in the parable to the man faithful in the use of the talents entrusted to his use in his Lord’s absence, “Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful in a very little: I will make thee ruler over many things: have thou authority over ten cities.” To qualify his brethren for the enlarged stewardship of the age to come, the first thing Christ does at his return after judgment, is to transform their natures into similarity with his own. This is testified with a plainness that leaves no mist on the point (Phil. 3:20-21; 1 John 3:2; 1 Cor. 15:50-53). Endowed with an incorruptible, unflagging, immortal nature and gifts of penetration unknown to mortal faculty (1 Cor. 13:12), we behold the saint enter upon the work of ruling his appointed district in the name and by the power of Christ when the word everywhere has been brought into subjection. An immortal amidst mortals; an infallible man among erring men; an omniscient judge among those who see only the outside of things — the beautiful, the dignified, the noble, the strong among the frail and lacking sons of Adam: the omnipotent and the wealthy among the weak and the poor. We can form but a faint conception of the glory of the destiny of “living and reigning with Christ a thousand years.” Such a man will be a father among his people — a god among men — revered, honoured, loved and worshipped by his grateful and rejoicing subjects, who thrive and flourish in his clemency and in his wisdom

in all their affairs. He will be a constituent of Jehovah's One Name in all the earth (Zech. 14:9), of which the kernel will be Jesus enthroned in Jerusalem (Isa. 24:23; Mic. 4:7). This the gospel of the kingdom has taught us. It is a common idea that the doctrine of the millennial reign of Christ depends upon the few verses in the Apocalypse we have been considering. When people become acquainted with the Scripture they see how totally groundless this idea is. You have experienced the truth of this remark. You have seen that the doctrine of the kingdom of God (or the reign of Christ on earth in the age to come) is the theme of divine promise from the beginning; the subject of the promises made to the Fathers (Gen. 22:17-18; Gal. 3:16); the covenant made with David (2 Sam. 7:12-17; 23:3-5; Acts 2:30); the communication of God to men by all the prophets (Isa. 9:7; Jer. 33:15; 23:3-5; Ezek. 37:21-22; Dan. 7:14, etc., etc.), and the preaching of Jesus and the apostles (Luke 8:1; Acts 28:23). You have seen that the salvation offered to us in the gospel is neither more nor less than the realization of all those glorious promises. The Apocalypse is a dramatic exhibition of the course of affairs among men with relation to the working out of this hope. It exhibits in a distinct manner the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth as the appointed consummation to which all things are working: but it is by no means the source of the idea. The idea is rooted in all the Scriptures. It is pre-supposed in the Apocalypse throughout, which is merely a communication to the servants of God for their enlightenment in contemporary matters of detail. Their hope of living and reigning with Christ would rest on substantial grounds if the Apocalypse were taken away. It rests on "the sure word of prophecy" delivered to Israel ages before John was banished to Patmos. It rests on the gospel itself, which is the gospel of the kingdom (Matt. 24:14).

It is a hope very distinct and tangible. Reigning with Christ, as exhibited in this gospel, is a reality. Popular hymns talk of reigning with Christ, but what do they mean? They know not. A mere subsistence of delight — a passive ecstasy, in which they drowsily float in the ethereal clouds of "the happy land" — a bathing in the blue and brightness of heaven — an imaginary bliss. This is not the Bible "reigning with Christ," though the Bible reigning with Christ will have all the happiness about it that was ever imagined in connection with the orthodox heaven. The Bible reigning with Christ is a regulating of human affairs as they ought to be regulated: a guiding of mankind with power into ways of enlightenment and righteousness, joy and peace, in the then present time, with an unbounded prospect of eternal day beyond. Such a reigning with Christ is exactly adapted to meet the wants of the afflicted human race who will be blessed

by it, and to give scope to the noble aspirations of those who will be called upon to take part in it.

Berean 2011-107

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

Hints For Bible Markers

In this month we are looking at the command to put away anger. This command goes to the heart of our battle to overcome the mind of the flesh. As our brother Growcott has pointed out in many exhortations, “godliness is self-control and anger is an immature lack of self control.” “In man, anger is loss of control, loss of perspective, a victory for the mind of the flesh. We can accomplish nothing good when we are angry.” Look at the scriptural condemnation of anger. It is written: “But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.” (Colossians 3:8) “Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.” (Ecclesiastes 7:9) Some may say that anger correctly directed is good and useful, but this is the thinking of the flesh. The scriptures expressly forbid anger. The quote from Matthew is used to justify anger but when the matter is looked into we find that is not the case. *“But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment.”* (Matthew 5:22)

The qualifier “without a cause” is left out of many bibles including The Revised Version, the Diaglott, and The American Standard Version to name a few. *“For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.”* (James 1:20) Can scripture be against scripture? Is that not a house divided “which can not stand”? (Matthew 12:25) Again, quoting our Bro. Growcott, “There is much that is self-condoned (and even self-glorified!) as “righteous anger” which is really but an ugly giving vent to the evil of the flesh.” Is anger that fruit of the Spirit we are to walk in? (Galatians 5:16) “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance:” (Galatians 5:22-23) There are certain things we are to hate, the works of the flesh (Romans 7:15), [avoid those works by giving God the highest place in our lives – Luke 14:26] and the doctrine of the MOTHER OF HARLOTS (Revelation 2:6). The command is love your enemies (Matthew 5:44), not to be angry with them or anyone else. What a great sadness it is to see brethren losing their tempers with other brethren, family or children. Or hearing brethren say, “Oh yeah, we have our knockdown drag-outs at our ecclesial business meeting too!” If we are not going to say or do something out of love for our brothers then it should not be said or done. Our principal desire should be to understand our brother’s viewpoint with patience, love, and compassion. With patience and kind words giving guidance and instruction. *“A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.”* (Proverbs 15:1) When we react with annoyance, irritation, anger, or rage it is another triumph for the works of the flesh. It also may cause bitterness to well up by those on the receiving end of our emotional outburst. We are commanded to put bitterness away. *“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;”* (Heb. 12:14-15)

—Bro. Beryl Snyder

The Commandments of Christ

As collected and organized by Bro. Roberts

V. CONCERNING YOUR OWN CHARACTER

Put away anger, wrath, bitterness, and all evil speaking.

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: (Ephesians 4:31)

Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, (1 Peter 2:1)

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