

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

Correspondence

We received the following letter from our Bro. Dale Sleeman recently:

Dear Sis. Ruthie (and Bro. Freddie too).

In the words of Jude - “Mercy unto you and peace and love be multiplied: being in God our Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Thank you for your concern for my health problem and thank you for your prayers, both of which I appreciate because I understand that both of you have health issues. Everything is “corrupting”, including ourselves!

What the world needs is the return of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring “the times of refreshing” which shall come from the presence of the Lord, when he shall make “all things New,” including ourselves!

Thank you for taking the old Berean’s! I read a lot of them, but they were taking up too much room and I might have to move so I am happy if you can use them. I was always hopeful that someone would come into the Truth here and I could give them to him or her – hasn’t happened!

We will continue to pray for your well being. Without your labors I don’t know where our fellowship would be.

Sincerely your brother in the Faith which is unto LIFE,

Love, Dale

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 1–4, 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”

CANTON ECCLESIAL PICNIC.....**Aug 27–28, 2011**
Bro. Don Miller, 6695 Carriage Lane, North Canton, OH 44721 1-330-494-7717

CANTON FRATERNAL GATHERING.....**Oct 8–9, 2011**
Bro. Don Miller, 6695 Carriage Lane, North Canton, OH 44721 1-330-494-7717

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 often 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.

Yahweh Elohim - He Who Shall Be Mighty Ones REVEALED TRUTH ABOUT GOD

"This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent"--Jn. 17:3

THIS is the most solemn and exalted, and should be the most joyful and inspiring, consideration possible to man. Certainly it is the most important and fundamental.

As to the evidence of the Divine Existence, the inspired Paul said--

"The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are CLEARLY SEEN, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are WITHOUT EXCUSE" (Rom. 1:20).

God plainly says that He has given ample evidence of His existence and infinite power, and that men are therefore without excuse in not perceiving it in all things around them. This is CONCLUSIVE, and every wise man will agree heartily. He says again through David--

"The FOOL hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Psa. 14:1).

Again:"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork" (Psa 19:1).

More specifically, He says of the Jewish nation--

"Ye are my witnesses, that I am God" (Isa. 43:12).

No one who intelligently considers the 3500-yr. history of the Jewish people, right down to this very day, in connection with all the Biblical statements and prophecies concerning them, could fail to perceive their positive evidence, not only of God's existence, but of His infinite power and foreknowledge. Furthermore, His dealings with them reveal a tremendous amount about His character and purpose. Practically the entire Bible is about the Jews, and what God has done, is doing, and will do, with and through them. His whole purpose centers in them.

* * *

As a result of the absurd and godless superstition of Evolution, modern man has repudiated the idea of sin and morality, and has in effect adopted the animal philosophy of 'Might is right,' and 'Survival of the fittest.' This cold, dead outlook is essential to a consistent and logical acceptance of the Evolution superstition, based on blind force and blind chance. It has brutalized man, mocking all the finer, spiritual principles and characteristics as folly and weakness in a jungle world.

In casting away the Bible, and the rigid restrictions of God's law of holiness and purity on conduct and morals, man thinks he has cast away his chains; but in reality he has cast away his compass, and all the real values and meanings and beauties and joys of his life.

* * *

It is vitally important to have a clear perception of the relationship of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures clearly distinguish them as THE FATHER, supreme and self-existent from all eternity, His absolute Oneness emphasized over and over and over again; the HOLY SPIRIT, God's universe-filling Power and Presence, by which He does everything and is everywhere; and JESUS CHRIST, God's Son, a man born of the virgin Mary, completely subject to and dependent on God, in and through whom God manifested Himself to Israel by His Spirit, and whom He (God) has now--because of his real and actual obedience and overcoming--raised to the divine nature, and given all power in heaven and earth.

We believe the Trinity theory is incorrect, for several reasons--

1. We do not find anything like it in the Bible.
2. It is directly OPPOSITE to what we do find in the Bible.
3. It is contradictory, impossible, and absurd within itself.
4. It was developed by the Roman Catholic Church, the merciless persecutor of God's people all through the ages.

5. It was developed from Greek pagan philosophy in a corrupt age by men who could not possibly have been right in divine things.

We do not wish to ridicule or belittle anyone's sincere beliefs, but the Bible makes it clear that knowing the truth about God is vital to salvation, and we wish to strongly present what we believe to be that Truth. 'Trinity' is an invented, unscriptural word, and an invented, unscriptural theory. The Bible never, from beginning to end, speaks of or even hints at 3 gods. It is repeatedly insistent on ONE, and One only.

Orthodox writers on the Trinity always say that though the Bible does not ever actually teach the Trinity theory, yet it infers it, and takes it for granted. They strain every mention of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit into this preformed Greek philosophical mold, even though this straining makes an absurdity, as when one everliving, almighty co-equal anoints another co-equal with a third co-equal without measure; or when one everliving, almighty co-equal sends another co-equal to overshadow a woman so that a third, everliving, almighty, all-knowing co-equal will be born of her as a helpless baby, and gradually grow up and increase in knowledge and understanding. We repeat that we are not making fun: just seriously trying to point out what we believe to be error.

It was the Holy Spirit that came upon Mary, and we are told she was 'found with child of the Holy Spirit': but it is always God Himself, and not the Holy Spirit, that is said to be the Father of Jesus--the very term 'Father' indicates this. This is quite clear and harmonious according to the Bible picture that the Holy Spirit is not a person but the power of God; but by the Trinity theory it is confusion.

No one reading the Bible in its simplicity would ever come up with the idea of 3 gods in 1, or of Jesus being an almighty, all-knowing, co-equal, untemptable god who could not die: pretending to be tempted, to learn, to overcome the lusts of the mortal flesh in a mighty struggle, with 'strong crying and tears,' and to die.

It is undeniable that nearly all pagan religions had trinities. The trinitarian International Standard Bible Encyclopedia admits (as it must)--

"Triads of divinities occur in nearly all polytheistic religions."

The writer is arguing that his Platonic Roman Catholic Trinity is different, but he does concede this incontrovertible fact.

The Encyclopedia Britannica says (9th edit., art. 'Theism,' by a trinitarian)--

"The propositions constitutive of the dogma of the Trinity were only formed through centuries of effort; only elaborated by the aid of conceptions, and formulated in the terms of Greek and Roman metaphysics . . ."The evolution of the Doctrine of the Trinity was the most important doctrinal fact in the history of the Church in the first 5 centuries. The fusion of theology and philosophy was the distinctive feature of medieval Christendom."

This is the trinitarians' own explanation of its origin.

The essence of the Trinity theory (after 'centuries' of 'evolution') is that there are 3 persons in what they label 'the Godhead': all existing from all eternity, all perfectly equal, none greater or less, none before or after, not 1 but 3, and not 3 but 1--and that one must believe that or be damned everlastingly to eternal hell tortures.

The period in which the Trinity theory was confessedly 'evolved' was very corrupt religiously. The church historian Mosheim, himself a devout trinitarian, said of the Council of Nice, AD 325, at which this theory was first officially formulated (though by no means in its final form)--

"Those idle fictions which a regard for the Platonic philosophy and for the prevailing opinions of the day had induced most theologians to embrace even BEFORE the times of Constantine, were now confirmed, extended and embellished.

Of the general religious conditions of that time he says (Cnt. 4, pt. 2, ch. 2-3):

Constantine assumed to himself the supreme power over the Church, and the right of modeling and controlling it . . . nor did any bishop call in question this power of the Emperor.

There were no added, by the authority of the Emperor, grand councils of the whole Church, the emperor having first summoned one of this character at Nice.

The bishops, whose wealth and influence were not a little augmented from the time of Constantine, gradually subverted and changed the ancient principles of church government. They excluded the people altogether from having a voice, and deprived the presbyters of their authority, so that they might control everything at their discretion, and in particular appropriated the ecclesiastical property to themselves.

Constantine and his successors assembled councils, presided in them, assigned judges for religious disputes, and decided contests between bishops and people.

The Bishop of Rome exceeded all other bishops in the amplitude and splendor of his church, in the magnitude of his revenues and possessions, and in the sumptuousness and magnificence of his style of living. These indications of power and worldly greatness were so fascinating to the minds of Christians even in this age, that often most obstinate and bloody contests took place at Rome when a new pontiff was to be created. In the year 366 the contention issued in a bloody warfare, in which there was fighting, burning of buildings, and many lost their lives. Damasus came off victorious in the contest.

The vices of the clergy, especially those who officiated in large and opulent cities, were augmented in proportion to the increase of their wealth, honors and privileges, derived from the emperors and various other sources; and that this increase was very great, after the time of Constantine, is acknowledged by all. The bishops had shameful quarrels among themselves, and while they trampled on the rights of the people and of the inferior clergy, they vied with the civil governors of the provinces in luxury, arrogance and voluptuousness.

Genuine piety was supplanted by a long train of superstitious observances, derived partly from a disposition to adopt profane rites and combine them with Christian worship, and partly from the natural predilection of mankind for a splendid and ostentatious religion.

The public supplications by which the pagans were accustomed to appease their gods were borrowed from them, and were celebrated in many places with great pomp. Worship of the martyrs was modeled by degrees into conformity with the pagans' worship of their gods.

The doctors who were distinguished for their learning explained the sacred doctrines after the manner of Origen (on whom they all fixed their eye) in accordance with the principles of that philosophy which they learned in their youth at school, the Platonic philosophy. They were admirers of Plato, and held as certain all his decisions which were not absolutely repugnant to the truths of Christianity; and proceeding upon these as their first principles, they drew from them many and very subtle conclusions.

From disputes on religion, the ancient simplicity had nearly taken its flight; and in place of it, dialectical subtleties and quibbles, invectives, and other artifices had succeeded. Many endeavored to involve in obscurity the question under discussion, and to excite odium against their antagonists. So far from disguising these faults, they claimed praise for them.

The truth of doctrines was proved by the number of martyrs who had believed them, by prodigies, and by the confessions of devils. Ambrose, in controversy with the Arians, brings forward persons possessed with devils,

who are constrained, when the relics of Gervasius and Protasius are produced, to cry out that the doctrine of the Nicene Council concerning the 3 persons in the Godhead is true and divine. This testimony of the prince of darkness Ambrose regards as proof altogether unexceptionable. (End of quotation from Mosheim).

And so we could go on endlessly, from Mosheim and others. We urge that the writings of reputable church historians about this period be read. We just cannot believe that God would use such men to 'evolve' new doctrines about Himself from pagan Platonic philosophy.

The Holy Spirit was not fully added to make up the modern Trinity until quite a late date in the development of the theory. The Herzog Encyclo. of Theology (by trinitarians), describing the admitted gradual development of this theory, says (Article: 'Trinity')--

"Tertullian (about 200 AD) made the Logos the Son: he reached only a trinity of succession. Origen (about 250 AD) made the Sonship an eternal fact, but his trinity* is only one of subordination, and Arius might as well be his pupil as Athanasius.

"Up to 360 AD, the whole development was markedly dyadic [having just 2 elements: Father and Son]. Even after the Council of Constantinople in 381 AD, it took a long time before the Holy Spirit attained full equality with the Father and Son in the divine triad."

Other trinitarian writers say the same. Mosheim says Origen taught--

"That the Holy Spirit is nothing else than the divine energy or power of acting and working."

Origen is certainly no authority on Truth, but he was the most influential churchman of his century, and this shows that the Trinity theory was far from developed in his day (about 250 AD). His admiring followers would have done well to follow him on this point, rather than in his myriad speculations, but this was too true and simple.

There is much more very interesting in this Herzog article. These men sincerely believe the Church is making commendable progress in developing new doctrines the apostles never dreamed of. It says further:

"Richard of St. Victor (about 1200 AD) poured his whole wealth of half-poetical mysticism into the subject, and produced one of the greatest efforts of medieval theology...Luther, as well as Calvin, felt the necessity of regenerating and remodeling the dogma...The first really new departure in the development of the doctrine of the Trinity since the days of Richard of St. Victor was due to the Protestant philosophy, now set free from the fetters

of the Church, more especially to Jacob Boehme. His idea of an immanent process by which the Deity evolves into a Trinity is one of the profoundest speculative thoughts which ever sprung from a dogma, and has exercised a widespread, fertilizing influence both on theology and philosophy."

And so on and on and on! What a far cry from the refreshing picture of simple, unchanging, pure, revealed scriptural Truth! The final official form of the Trinity, the Athanasian Creed, which is the current standard Creed that must be believed on pain of eternal hell torment, had nothing to do with Athanasius, who flourished in the 4th century. It was long thought to be from him, but now is universally admitted not to be. It cannot be traced back earlier than the 8th century.

The Trinity theory was established as church dogma by armed force. The battle raged through the 4th century, as political power shifted back and forth between trinitarian and anti-trinitarian emperors. It was finally permanently established by the emperor Theodosius (379-395), apparently because he was prepared to be most ruthless and thorough. The historian Gibbon says (*Decline & Fall of Roman Empire*, ch. 27)--

"The ecclesiastics who governed the conscience of Theodosius suggested the most effective methods of persecution. In the space of 15 years he promulgated at least 15 severe edicts against the heretics, more especially against those who rejected the doctrine of the Trinity. And to deprive them of every hope of escape, he sternly enacted that, if any laws should be alleged in their favor, the judges should consider them as the illegal productions either of fraud or forgery.

"They were exposed to the heavy penalties of exile and confiscation. Their religious meetings, whether public or secret, by day or by night, in cities or in the country, were equally proscribed by the edicts of Theodosius. The buildings or ground which had been used for that illegal purpose was forfeited to the imperial domain.

"The theory of persecution was established by Theodosius, whose justice and piety have been applauded by the saints."

Mosheim confirms this and, like Gibbon, gives an account of the running battle between trinitarians and non-trinitarians through this period--

"Constantine was persuaded that Arius had been unjustly oppressed. He recalled him from exile, and Athanasius was banished [Athanasius was exiled and recalled 4 times in his lifetime, as the struggle surged back and forth].

"After the death of Constantine [when his 3 sons divided the Empire], Constantius in the East was very partial to the Arian cause, but Constantine

and Constans in the West supported the [trinitarians]. Councils were arrayed against councils.

"Constans died in 350, and much of the West, including Italy, came under Constantius, who involved the [trinitarians] in numerous evils and calamities. The latter made no hesitation to return the same treatment as soon as time, place and opportunity were afforded them. The history of Christianity under Constantius was a war among brethren carried on without religion, justice or humanity. The Orthodox and the Arians were constantly in the field, and they often came to bloodshed. The victorious party oppressed the vanquished with banishments and violence.

"When Constantius died, 362, the Arians' prosperous days ended. Julian had no partiality for either. Jovian (363-364) espoused the orthodox sentiments, and therefore all the West and most of the East rejected Arian views and reverted to trinitarianism.

"But the scene changed when Valentinian (West) and Valens (East) came to power in 364. Valentinian adhered to the Nicene decisions, therefore in the West Arianism (a few excepted) was wholly extirpated. Valens joined the Arians, and so in the East many calamities befell the orthodox.

"Theodosius (379-395), by depriving the Arians of all their churches, and enacting severe laws against them, caused the decisions of the Nicene Council to triumph everywhere, and none could any longer publicly profess Arian doctrines."

Such was the sorry picture of the Trinity's birth pangs. In all this period, the true believers were a small fleeing minority, persecuted by both political factions--trinitarians and non-trinitarians--keeping themselves separate from and unsullied by the ungodly fleshly strifes and wars of these 'Christians' who had entered totally into the evil, carnal politics of the world of sin, and were murdering each other as that political power passed back and forth among them, just like the warring 'Christian' nations of today. How could such worldly, warring 'Christians' possibly have God's Truth?

* * *

The Scriptures emphasize over and over, not only that there is only one God, but that God is ONE, not 3 or any other number, as--

"Here, O Israel, the Lord our God is ONE Lord" (Deut. 6:4).

And far from modifying this, the 'man Christ Jesus' repeats it word for word, and declares it to be the 'first commandment of all' (Mk. 12:29).

God proclaims several times through Isaiah (chs. 44 & 45)--

"I am God, and there is none else...Beside Me there is no god."

This testimony alone is conclusive. It is begging the question, and denying the meaning of words, to say, as trinitarians do, that in all these emphatic statements of absolute oneness, God really is trying to say the He is actually 3, and there are 2 others.

But the Scriptures go even further, and put the matter beyond any possibility of cavil by very clearly, in several places, distinguishing between this One True God and the man Christ Jesus, as Jesus' prayer--

"This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, AND Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent"--Jn. 17:3

Note: 1. Jesus is SEPARATE and DISTINCT from the 'only true God.'

2. Jesus PRAYS to this 'only true God.'

3. This only true God SENT Jesus.

The well-known commentator Adam Clarke, trying to defend the Trinity theory against the obvious absurdity of one co-equal praying to another co-equal of which he is an inseparable part, said the Jesus just prayed as an example to us. Consider the agony of Gethsemane in the light of that facile explanation; and Paul's words (Heb. 5:7)--

"He (Jesus) offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears UNTO HIM that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared."

It is IMPOSSIBLE to make any sense out of that if he were a co-equal part--an all-powerful, undying part--of an everlasting Trinity. Again, on the clear distinction between the man Jesus and the one true God--

"There is one God, AND one Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 8:6).

And even more clear and inescapable, if possible (1 Tim. 2:5)--

"There is one God, AND one mediator between God and men, the MAN Christ Jesus."

The Scriptures many times call Jesus a man, as--

"A man approved of God by miracles which GOD did BY him" (Acts 2:22).

When he was tempted (which God cannot be) he applied to himself--

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by the Word of GOD" (Matt. 4:4).

He likewise applied to himself the command (Matt. 4:10)--

"Thou shalt worship and serve the Lord THY God."

According to the Trinity theory, that is telling him to worship and serve himself. He called God his God (Jn. 20:17). He is called man now--

"God will judge the world by that man whom He hath ordained" (Acts 17:31).

This is still future: long after Christ's glorification and ascension to heaven. God is still the prime Power: Christ is still the man whom God has glorified and is using. If Christ is still a man, under God's control and subservient to God's use, where is the co-equal Trinity?

Those who are committed to the Trinity theory through tradition or position have to have some kind of answer for all the vast bulk of clear Scripture that disproves that theory. Therefore they have arbitrarily divided Christ into 2 people. These 2 people they call his 'divinity' and his 'humanity.' According to their theory, complete opposites can be true at the same time of these 2 invented people.

One can know something, and the other at the same time can not know it; one can be almighty and omnipotent, the other weak and totally dependent. One can be possible of sin; the other absolutely unsinnable; one temptable, the other not. One can be dead, the other alive and impossible of death. One an almighty, all-knowing god, the other a helpless new-born babe, knowing nothing. One eternally co-equal with Almighty God, the other completely subject to and dependent on God for everything.

Two things about this weird conception will immediately strike any rational person: 1) it has no basis in Scripture, and 2) by such an invented theory, any truth could be nullified, and any error proved. The entire complicated fabric of the Trinity theory hangs on this completely groundless assumption, this absurdity, that Christ was a host of 2 sets of diametrically opposite things at the same time.

Go carefully through the Gospels. There are literally 100s of incidents and statements showing Christ to be completely subject to and dependent on God. Over and over he himself emphasizes that God was everything: supreme, all-wise, all-powerful: and that he himself was nothing apart from God's power and presence and wisdom in him. It is impossible to imagine a picture more different from the co-equal Trinity idea.

There are a great multitude of passages which we sincerely believe the Trinity theory makes meaningless and absurd, as--

"My Father is GREATER than I" (Jn. 14:28).

"God is the head of Christ, as Christ is the head of man" (1 Cor. 11:3).

"Of that day the Son knoweth not, only the Father knows" (Mk. 13:32).

"Not my will, but Thine, be done...Father, save me from this hour" (Lk. 22; Jn. 12).

Gethsemane alone is more than enough to disprove the Trinity theory.

"To sit on my right hand is not mine to give: it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father" (Matt. 20:23).

"God made Christ perfect through suffering" (Heb. 2:10).

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mk 15:34).

"Behold (said God), my servant, whom I have chosen: I will put My Spirit on him" (Matt. 12:18). Three co-equals?

"The Son can do NOTHING of himself, but what he seeth the Father do" (Jn. 5:19).

"God appointed Jesus the heir of all things" (Heb. 1:2).

"God SHALL GIVE Jesus the throne of his father David" (Lk. 1:32).

Face these honestly, and do not hide behind the meaningless word-jingle about his 'divinity' and 'humanity.' They could be multiplied indefinitely. The whole picture in the Gospels is the very opposite of the Trinity. Just one more (1 Cor. 15:24), describing the final, eternal consummation of God's glorious purpose with mankind--

"Then cometh the end, when he (Jesus) shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God . . . And (v.28) when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject UNTO HIM that put all things under him, that GOD may be all in all."

The final picture: Jesus ETERNALLY SUBJECT that God may be ETERNALLY SUPREME. Trinitarians make little attempt to harmonize their theory with this scripture, though some, again splitting Jesus into 2 people, say his 'humanity' will be subjected, but not his 'divinity.' One confessed bemusedly: "Subjection certainly is irreconcilable with equality." Adam Clarke says "How this shall be we can neither tell nor know till that time comes." And Speakers Commentary lamely says it is: "A grand summary of sublime mysteries which their own fulfillment in eternity alone can solve." We believe it completely disproves their theory.

* * *

GOD MANIFESTATION is the theme of the Bible. To recognize this is to see the beauty and true meaning of many passages that orthodoxy endeavors to use to justify the Trinity theory.

Angels often spoke as if they were God Himself. The 'angel of Yahweh' says to Hagar: "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly" (Gen. 16:10).

"She called the Name of Yahweh that spake to her, Thou God seest me" (v. 13).

The angel was a manifestation of God, speaking God's words. The same occurred to Moses at the Bush. For nearly 2 chapters (Ex. 2-3) there is a long conversation beginning: "I am the God of thy fathers." Yet we are told (Ex. 2:3; Acts 7:30) that it was an angel. Again (Gen. 17), an angel spoken of as a 'man,' visits Abraham and converses at length with him, speaking directly and exactly as if it were God Himself.

Jesus likewise said: "The word ye hear is not mine, but the Father's Who SENT me" (Jn. 14:24).

And: "The Father that dwelleth in me, HE doeth the works" (Jn. 14:10).

And he instructed his disciples for when he left them--

"Take no thought what shall speak: it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh IN you" (Matt. 10:19-20).

We are told: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. 5:19).

God was manifested in Christ more directly and fully and personally than He ever was in an angel. Therefore Christ was named Emmanuel: 'God with us.' Christ was a perfect manifestation of God because he perfectly submitted in every way to God's use of him, and perfectly kept himself from any thought, word or action that was in the slightest way out of harmony with God. He was the flawless mirror of the Divine Perfection. It is to the constant, agonizing striving toward this ideal that we are called.

The beautiful, inspiring scriptural picture is that Christ was a man, truly one of the human race, especially created and made strong for his work (not a god masquerading as a man), and he is now glorified and immortalized, not because he always was immortal, but, as the Scriptures say, because of faith in God and perfect obedience and submission under trial--the true FORERUNNER of a great host of sons and daughters to be similarly developed, and then similarly glorified with the divine nature.

He is our glorious Example and Incentive and Promise. Here is where the confused Trinity picture is so harmful and destructive. It makes it impossible to see the beautiful and inspiring work of Christ as a real, struggling, suffering, overcoming man, by the guidance and with the help of the great eternal Creator Who was far above him, but Who was working IN him and THROUGH him in all that he did (2 Cor. 5:19)--

"God was IN CHRIST, reconciling the world unto Himself."

Those passages where Christ speaks the words of God, as did the angels, no more prove him to be part of a co-equal Trinity than it does them. These passages are far better understood in the light of the beautiful and scriptural doctrine of God-manifestation. Paul says of Christ as he is now: "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead (Godhood, divinity) bodily" (Col. 2:9).

Christ submitted perfectly and completely to God's indwelling and use; and God spoke and acted through him to Israel, just as He had--(but now to a far deeper degree)--through angels. And now, as a result of his obedience and faith, Christ is exalted to the divine nature eternally--perfect, corporeal God-manifestation. And Paul prays for the believers, using this same word 'fulness' (pleroma)--

"That ye might be filled with ALL the FULNESS OF GOD" (Eph. 3:19).

This is the eternal purpose of God-manifestation: Yahweh Elohim-- the Memorial Name: 'He Who Shall Be Mighty Ones': God manifested in a glorified and immortalized multitude from among men, of whom Christ is the Forerunner and Head, the Earnest and the Promise. (continued next Month Lord Willing.)

Encouraging Words No. 21

"JUDGE not that ye be not judged." These are solemn words: What do they mean? They mean that we are not to impute to our brethren evil motives (James 4:11). That we are not to condemn our weak brother for his imperfect service (Rom. 14:1-13). That where God holds out hopes of forgiveness we are not to withhold it (James 2:13). That we are not to anticipate Christ's judgment (1 Cor. 4:5). Let us ponder Christ's admonition, and strive to obey it.

Let us, however, not use it to stultify Scripture and violate reason. When Christ bids us to "judge not," he does not call upon us to reduce our reasoning powers to a state of mental jelly in which we shall fear to discern between right and wrong. Although we are forbidden to judge our brother's motives and the issues of the judgment seat, the Scriptures give for our guidance definite information concerning practice and doctrine, and in relation to this we are bound to discriminate or judge, and to do this in no way to violate Christ's admonition.

God has said, for instance, that neither the persistent drunkard nor liar shall inherit eternal life. In relation to the end of such transgressors there is

no room to say, "We ought not to judge." God has expressed His intentions, and if we would please Him we must declare and uphold what He has said. Paul had very definite views of the application of the judgment which God had delivered in relation to conduct. After naming certain sins (which, he says, will exclude from salvation), Paul does not say: "We ought not to judge of such conduct." On the contrary, he says, if a brother be a practiser of these things we are not to keep company with him, "with such an one not to eat." To observe this counsel is no infringement of Christ's command.

As touching doctrine we might take an illustration from Christ's words: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Here again there is no room for us to say, "We ought not to judge." The position of the rejecter of Christ has been expressed by God, and nought remains for us but to believe His word. The apostle John reveals the application that should be made of God's expressed judgment in regard to doctrine. Concerning the holder of wrong views regarding Christ, he says: "Receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." In such a matter we dare not say, "We ought not to judge." We must judge and stand aside. In doing so we do not run counter to what Christ has said.

People in the religious world are wont to make a very wrong use of the expression: "We ought not to judge," when referring to matters upon which God has expressed Himself, and concerning which He would have us judge. The reason is obvious. These people will not accept God's judgment, and seek to cover their reversal of His decree by wresting Christ's words. How do we stand in this matter? When one avers that as touching the salvation of the pious believer in immortal soulism and heaven going, "We ought not to judge," are we sufficiently robust in the truth to oppose and expose the fallacy? Can we show that the question is not an open one, and that the Scriptures have already passed judgment upon those who believe not Paul's gospel? When it is contended that in relation to the pious unimmersed "We ought not to judge," are we sufficiently alive to Bible teaching to show that this also is a closed question in view of the divine declarations upon the subject? We should be, if we have a saving remembrance of Paul's gospel (1 Cor. 15:2). There was one saving faith in apostolic times (Eph. 4:5; Jude 3; 1Tim. 4:1), and centuries of apostasy afford no warrant for adding to, or taking from it. The one faith still exists with sole power to save. It will, however, bring salvation to those only who keep it, and who earnestly contend for it. Let us, then, be followers of Paul, who could not only say: "I have kept the faith," but could also say: "I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

Sis. C.H. Jannaway—1908

Meditations – Deity’s Ways No. 20

“Do this in remembrance of me.” The weekly remembrance of Christ is a duty, but a duty which brings to the spiritually minded both pleasure and profit. Besides the good that arises from a consideration of Christ in the various phases of his life and mission, there is the unconscious benefit that accrues from the sight of others of the same precious faith. This is a benefit that we are apt to overlook. The sight of others undoubtedly stimulates to renewed spiritual energy. It is recorded of Paul, that when he saw the brethren “he thanked God, and took courage” (Acts 28:15). When Elisha considered himself to be alone it caused him deep despondency. We are subject to similar influences. A further advantage to be derived from the assembling ourselves together is the opportunity which it affords us of getting to know one another. How much hinges upon this knowledge! Apart from our gathering together we should know as little of each other as we do of the brethren and sisters of distant ecclesias, many of whom we have never seen nor heard of. Unless we are acquainted with one another, how is it possible for us to fulfil the law of Christ in bearing one another’s burdens? (Gal. 6:2.) Let us remember that it is the duty of every brother and sister, as far as ability permit, to warn the unruly, to comfort the feebleminded, and to support the weak (1 Thess. 5:14). Those who wilfully neglect opportunities for holding intercourse with the brethren and sisters are not exemplary in these obligations.

It is the worldling—not the earnest probationer for eternal life — that can go through the world smiling. Frequent heaviness of heart through the prevailing ungodliness is inevitable where the mind is in harmony and sympathy with God. It was because Christ was so perfect an exponent of the mind of God in loving righteousness and hating iniquity that he “grieved”—“sighed deeply.” For a similar reason the psalmist was constrained to lament—“Rivers of water run down mine eyes because they keep not thy law.” The more we approach Christ in character the more shall we share his sorrowful experience. There are many things which unite in producing sadness in the upright: consciousness of the daily anger of God toward the disobedient, the knowledge of the dreadful doom that awaits them, the manifold temptations and unpleasant duties which beset a walk of undeviating fidelity. Christ has forewarned us that this tribulation will turn some from the way (Matt. 13:21); let us therefore take heed. Recognising the necessity for the tribulation let us meet it manfully, and rejoice in view of its glorious outcome. Let us also comfort and sustain those of our brethren who are in heaviness, lest those who are weak be turned out of the way. (Continued on Page 201)

THE FAULTS OF OTHERS

IN speaking of a person's faults
Pray don't forget your own;
Remember those with homes of glass
Should never throw a stone.
If we have nothing else to do
Than to talk of those that sin,
'Tis better to commence at home,
And work right from within.
We have no right to judge a man
Until he's fairly tried;
Should we not like his company,
We know the world is wide.
Some may have faults—and who has not,
The old as well as young?
Perhaps we may for all we know,
Have fifty to their one.
I'll tell you of a better plan,
And find it works full well:
To find your own defects to cure
Ere others' faults you tell.
And though I sometimes hope to be
No worse than some I know,
My own shortcomings bid me let
The faults of others go.
Now let us all, when we begin,
To slander friend or foe,
Think of the harm one word may do
To those we little know.
Remember, curses, chicken-like,
Sometimes to roost come home.
Don't speak of others' faults until
You have none of your own.

How numerous—how comprehensive are the commandments of Christ! Escape from their obligations we cannot, no not for a single conscious moment. The arrangement, though it makes life hard, has for its foundation
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wisdom and love. The frequent discomforts, deprivations, and difficulties, that cross our path are not accidental. They serve an infallible purpose. The “well done” and the “depart from me” will make this very manifest by and bye. The commandments are proving us, and should be humbling us. How important that we should keep this truth always before us, that we meet them not with a rebellious face. Some of Christ’s commands are easy to observe, others are not. The latter are they that form the test! Let us think of this when the temptation comes. In the kingdom all the accepted will be able to say, and will say, for the encouragement and edification of the nations, “Thou, O Lord, has proved us, thou hast tried us as silver is tried.” What pleasure will the contemplation of past victories then afford! Now we feel the insult and the injustice, though we overlook them because Christ has said “Avenge not.” Forgive “seventy times seven.” We feel the inconveniences and rebuffs which beset us in setting forth the truth, but we endure them because Christ has said, “Let him that heareth say, Come.” We feel the pain of severing ourselves from former friends, but we suffer because Christ has said, “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.” But when we shall stand amongst those who have “overcome,” the pain will all be gone, and we shall look upon our trials as so many rounds in the ladder which will have enabled us to reach the top.

Warning the unruly (1 Thes. 5:14) is not a pleasant duty, but it has to be performed. Un-Christlike conduct is by no means to be condoned, but reprov'd (Ephes. 5:11). Our obligation in this matter is as incumbent as the proclamation of the gospel. Brotherly rebuke occupies an important place in the Deity’s providential means for the upbuilding of man in righteousness. “The fruit (and fruit includes words of warning) of the righteous is a tree of life.” In administering reproof how faithful was Christ. He was no respecter of persons. No selfish motive—neither wealth, friendship, nor fear—closed his lips. If words of correction were called for, they came, despite consequences. How manifest is this in his attitude to Peter—his companion and familiar friend: “Thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.” And again, in his answer to the rich young man whom he loved: “One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast,” etc. Christ is our example. The fearless setting forth of the whole counsel of God was his maxim, and it should be ours also. Fidelity in this, whilst creating many enemies, will perchance save many a soul from death. Fidelity, too, will lay the basis for our own everlasting joy.

“Ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill the whole assembly with hunger”—“to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey” (Exod. 16:3; Num. 14:3). Such were the thoughtless, faithless, blasphemous charges which Israel brought against God in the wilderness. Is it strange that God should say, “How long will this

people provoke Me? and how long will it be ere they believe Me, for all the signs that I have showed among them?” As we contemplate these incidents in Israel’s history, we are doubtless all moved to pass unqualified condemnation on these faithless men, and to express astonishment that they could so have acted. But do we realise the possibility of our exhibiting the same characteristics? It is not by any means an unknown experience for men to condemn others for what they themselves are unconsciously doing. Let us examine ourselves as to whether we are or are not like the faithless wilderness wanderers. A faithful adherence to our antitypical wilderness condition places us in similarly trying circumstances to those of the children of Israel. For example, a brother in business sees all around him, lying, cheating and otherwise resorting to ways forbidden by God. For such an one to say: I must do the same or I shall bring ruin on myself and my belongings, is, in effect, to charge God with having brought him into the wilderness to kill him with hunger. These wilderness trials come in many forms—the brother in a situation is perhaps tempted to fall in with the unscrupulous practices of his fellow employés lest he should jeopardise his situation—or, the sister in the service of the alien fears to refuse to join in the household worship for fear of dismissal. Whatever form our trials may take, let us remember that God is by their means proving our confidence in Him.

God has separated us from anti-typical Egypt, and has made us entirely dependent upon Him for food, guidance, and all things. God is, indeed, exceedingly kind toward us, but faith is needed to perceive it. There are many things that appear to militate against this kindness. But God has repeatedly explained and exemplified the apparent anomaly. As man is now constituted, trouble is absolutely necessary for his well-being. The inspired record of His dealings with Israel in the wilderness emphasises the point. At the close of the forty years wanderings, Moses told the Israelites that during the whole time God had borne them as a man doth bear his son (Deut. 1:31)—that they had *lacked nothing* (2:7). Note the words, “*lacked nothing,*” and yet had been suffered to hunger, thirst, and to be deprived of many comforts. For the moment, evil is not incompatible with good. It is for us to learn well the lesson that God (though he afflicts with evil) withholdeth no good thing from them that walk uprightly (Psa. 84:11). “As a father pitieth his children so the Lord pitieth them that fear him” (Psa. 103:13).
Bro. A. T. Jannaway— 1888

The Counsel of the Spirit

As long as an ecclesia is a *called-out* association, the Lord the Spirit waits to restore it from the lowest conceivable ebb of faith; so that if she of Laodicea had taken the warning of the ejection prepared for her in the future, she might have recovered, and not been spued out at all. It was to save her from this catastrophe that the Spirit counseled her to buy gold and garments of him, and to anoint her eyes with salve.

"*Gold refined by fire*" is the symbol of a *tried faith*. This appears from the comparison in 1 Pet. 1:7, where the faithful are said "for a season to be in heaviness through manifold persecutions; that the *trial of their faith*, being much more precious than of *gold* which perisheth, though it be *tried with fire*, might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Anointed." The condition of which they boasted, in which they were rich and abounding in wealth, and needing nothing, could not develop faith of this character. A tried faith comes forth of tribulation, not of worldly prosperity, which is only calculated to pervert, weaken, and corrupt. The Spirit, therefore, counseled them to buy a tried faith, which could only be purchased in those days at the cost of "much tribulation," which "worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed." To become subject to the tribulation, they had only to "contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints," which would put them into antagonism with the world without, and the lusts of the flesh within. They would not then be able to say that they had need of nothing, for they would most likely find themselves stripped of every thing, and reduced to an humble dependence on the goodness and bounty of God. To buy a tried faith, then, would be the fruit of zeal, and of a change of mind, and the cause of their justification, or investment with the "white garments" of righteousness.

But to arrive at this most desirable anti-Laodicean state, it was necessary that the eyes of their understandings be anointed with the unction of the Spirit, that they might perceive what, with all their piety and wealth, they were perfectly blind to. The Spirit's eye-salve is the word of the testimony contained in the writings of the prophets and apostles. If they would work this into their eyes, "*inoint*" them well with it, they would be brought to see how wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked they really were. They would discover that instead of having need of nothing, they were in need of every thing; and "needed that one teach them again the first principles of the oracles of the Deity; and had become such as had need of milk, not of strong meat." Possessed of a tried faith, and invested with righteousness, with the gifts of the Spirit, they would have been rich indeed, and well clothed, and enlightened, and fit to appear before the Anointed Jesus with praise and honor and glory at his apocalypse; for God hath chosen, not the rich and increased in goods, who have need of nothing, with poverty of faith, but "he

hath chosen the poor in this world, *rich in faith* to be the HEIRS of that kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him"—James 2:5.

—*Eureka Vol. 1, page 413*

The Book of Revelation

The Book of Revelation is mostly a book of symbol representing and prophesying of this to follow from John's day as revealed to him by Jesus Christ. The events of the previous chapters lead up to the events in Europe at the time of the Ottoman or Turkish power and the drying up of the Euphrates meaning the dwindling down of that power from the 1800's to the present day as we have seen in the small wars in Europe gradually throwing out the oppressive nation which occupied it in terror. We have seen the Bosian and Serbian influence rising up and trying to get rid of the oppression that the Turk's did for centuries and the Euphratian power that spread over much of Europe and Africa is mostly back to the original territory of Turkey today. Christ will come from the East as a you can see from the following by Robert Roberts, the way is being made ready for the last days prior to the return of Christ "out of the east".

"the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates: and the water thereof was dried up that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet: for they are the spirits of demons working miracles which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, and gather them to the war of the great day of God Almighty. (Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.) And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."

The historic parallel to this, in the events with which the present generation are familiar, is remarkable, and so far as these events have gone, very complete. No sooner had the effects of the first five vials subsided in the pacification and resettlement of Europe as the result of Waterloo, and in the death of Napoleon in St. Helena, than the destruction of the Turkish Empire began. To realise the full nature and signification of the fact, you must go back a few centuries—go back to the days of the sixth trumpet, which brought the four Ottoman waves of conquest over eastern and southern Europe...

The Turkish Government roused European indignation, and led to the Russo-Turkish war, which further reduced the shrinking, and drying, and dying empire. Bulgaria became a self governing country under a prince;

Bosnia and Herzegovina were sliced off, and annexed by Austria; Eoumelia also became practically independent, and all that was left of European Turkey was Albania, Thrace and Macedonia, which are all in the full throes of new insurrection, which bids fair to finish the Turkish dominion in Europe altogether. [This has happened since Bro. Robert Roberts wrote this – Albania and Macedonia are now independent] Concurrently with these political and geographical evaporations, various other causes of decay have been in active operation (such as living on borrowed money, &c), which have reduced the Turkish Government to a state of extreme poverty and impotence. The facts are so glaring, and so widely known, that it is unnecessary to do more than thus briefly allude to them as illustrating the full progress of the sixth vial, in the evaporation of the political Euphrates, in preparation of the way of the kings of the East.

A word may be appropriate as to this "way," and its preparation. The gospel of the kingdom has made you aware of the purpose of God to establish a kingdom of His own, at the return of Christ, when the times of the Gentiles have run their full course. The covenants of promise have enlightened you as to the locality of the country in which this kingdom will be manifested.

You are aware that it is the land promised to Abraham—the land occupied by Abraham's descendants for centuries—the land now in desolation. Under whose jurisdiction is this land at the present moment? You know that the Holy Land is part of the Turkish Empire. So long as that empire exists, the way of the coming kings is barred; for the land of any king ie. his "way." Is there not, therefore, a manifest reason why Turkey should be dried out of the way, in preparation for the manifestation of the kingdom of God, which is to enter into conflict with all the nations of the earth? The truth thus furnishes an explanation of the drying of the political Euphrates at this time, which you ask in vain of any other system.

[Since this writing of Bro. Robert Roberts, the Holy land has been set free and the nation of Israel has been established. You can see the outline of this in the book *Elpis Israel* by John Thomas.]

Tobacco

There are, in the Scriptures, no texts that directly addresses the use of tobacco. We haven't a "Thus saith the Lord, thou shalt not use tobacco." What little we can learn about the mind of the Deity is from a few general principles. With these in view, we may then apply such to what is known of tobacco use and the medical consequences thereof.

One such principle is that the body is a temple of the holy spirit and that it is not to be defiled. Does this apply specifically to smoking? We are aware that brethren Thomas and Roberts held different views on this question. Based upon their respective writings, one would probably answer no, and the other, yes, or by the application of principles, yes. However, to frame this issue wholly in the 19th century context would be foolish inasmuch as so much more is known today than 120 years ago. And so, from our vantage, we may draw a definitive conclusion that should leave no doubt that tobacco use is wrong.

Arguably the verse cited above has relevance. There are others that may as well. But even if there were no principles, enough is known today about tobacco use to banish it from our lives.

Tobacco kills. There is no doubt about it. The weed first addicts us, then it slowly begins a process by which the body is destroyed. Just ask a physician. Smoking begets a host of diseases, most of which can be fatal. Moreover, the unfiltered second hand smoke is even worse for those nearby.

In light of these facts, can we by any stretch of the imagination think that smoking is "of good report"? No, indeed. It hasn't received a good report in over 40 years.

Are we suggesting that the habit, if not forsaken, will result in rejection at the judgment seat? No. It is not ours to render eternal judgments. That is the Lord's prerogative. Recognizing the principles involved, we can exhort one another and so much more as we see the day approaching.

Shall we pester endlessly and denigrate the smokers among us? That would not be wise. Take it from an one who quit smoking some 35 years ago. It is exceedingly difficult to quit the habit. This is especially true of those who have used tobacco for many years.

What may brethren and sisters do to help? In a "tell the question" moment, a person once asked a smoker: "With all of your knowledge of medicine, and the harmful nature of smoking, I cannot understand how you continue to do it. Why do you keep on?" The smoker replied: "For me, at this point, it really has nothing to do with knowledge. It is a weakness."

Weakness. Now that is something we should be able to relate to. We all have weaknesses. With respect to these, what we desire is help, mercy and forgiveness from the Lord in tandem with prayer, understanding and loving encouragement to overcome from brethren and sisters.

The smoker desires no less. —*Bob Widding*

