

# 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

**HENGOED, Wales UK** Breaking of Bread – 10.45am; Sunday School – 12.45pm; Lecture – 2.30pm; Bible Class and Elpis Israel Class – held alternately in the homes of the brethren and sisters. Children’s Evening – held every 2 weeks on Friday at the home of Sister Alison Hopper at 6.30pm

Beloved Brethren and Sisters in the bonds of the Abrahamic Covenant,

Once again it is our pleasure to submit ecclesial news from the Hengoed ecclesia. As usual, the things that relate to the passing present continue to change. Joys and sorrows, health and sickness, life and death, spiritual heights and spiritual lows are the lot of the servants of the Deity. Nearly all of these things are the common experience of the world around us. The difference lies in our realisation that our affairs are in the hands of the Creator of all things. He has invited us to eternal life and joy, but before that, He has in his infinite wisdom and love, allowed the trials and tribulations of life to mould our characters. “Probation is the indispensable ordeal to which every man is subjected in the providence of God,” are the words of Bro. Thomas.

Since our last ecclesial news we have had the company of Bro. Ben Naglieri and Sis. Amy Hughes (nee Hurst). We enjoyed their company very much and particularly as they helped us with our Bible Exhibition in Penderyn - a farming town on the edge of the Brecon Beacons National Park. Bro. Ben and Sis Amy helped us distribute leaflets drawing attention to the fact that the King James Version had been in the hands of the people for 400 years. They helped us to set up the exhibits, “man” the exhibition during the opening hours, and disassemble it at the conclusion. This was a great help to us. A number of people came to visit the exhibition and contact continues with one individual. We continue to sow and water and allow Yahweh to give any increase as He sees fit.

We have actually held the Exhibition in a number of different venues and have received a great deal of interest with two individuals attending seven Bible addresses. We were really surprised at how many people are still interested in the Bible. It is still a day of small things – exceedingly small, but we were all encouraged by the responses we have had. God Willing, we hope to hold two more before the year concludes.

We also held in May (2011) a study weekend based on lessons from the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews. The study was instructive and we were uplifted by words of exhortation during the weekend. We would like to thank Bro. Ben Naglieri for providing one of the study addresses

(and also for providing a Lecture on the Promises to Abraham on one of the Sundays he was at Hengoed).

Bro. Stephen and Sis. Vivien Ford have also visited Hengoed and supported the Exhibition. We would also like to thank Bro. Stephen Ford for providing the exhortation at Hengoed for those who were unable to attend the Hye Gathering.

Last of all (but my no means least of all), we were delighted to welcome Sis Amy to become a member of the Hengoed ecclesia. Those who were able to stay after the Hye Gathering were able to witness the marriage of Bro. Matthew Hughes (of Hengoed) to Sis. Amy Hurst (of Goldthwaite). It was a memorable occasion in the company of many brethren and sisters, and reflected the organisation of Sister Amy's family. Sis. Amy is now a member of Hengoed. We know that this is sad for Goldthwaite and particularly Bro. Curtis, Sis. Cindy and family who will miss Sis. Amy very much. We do realise however, that all our affairs will shortly be interrupted by the return of the Master and we look forward to the unbroken companionship of the Kingdom after the marriage of the Lamb. As we wait that day, we pray that Yahweh will bless Bro. Matthew and Sis. Amy in their new life together.

With love in Elpis Israel and on behalf of the brethren and sisters of the Hengoed Ecclesia,  
Bro. Phillip Hughes

### **LAS CRUCES, New Mexico**

Greetings to the Brothers and Sisters,

It has been a while since we last submitted our happenings (I believe January was the last time). Not much has changed, we still have just six members: Michael and Leslie Morrell, Malachi Morrell, Beryl Snyder, Jonathan and Maria Morrell.

We usually have Thursday Bible class and Meeting at Bro. Jonathan and Sis. Maria's house, however, we are now having it at Bro. Michael and Sis. Leslies' place. We switched it over due to an unfortunate but brief hospitalization of both Bro. Michael and Sis. Leslie in the beginning of the summer. Both are doing much better now!

On a sad note, both of Bro. Michael's parents passed away this summer, due to separate tragic events. Our thoughts are still with the family they left behind.

We are very excited to announce that after starting Isaiah as our book of study for Bible class and Sunday school, we are expected to finish this month. We started in the middle of January and are very grateful to have been able to see this knowledgeable book through to the end as a group. We have decided to study the Key Bible Lessons after.

Our Bible class is at 6:30 pm for one hour, and Sunday meeting starts at 10:00 am instead of 9:30 am. We are also starting up our open Bible class on Tuesday evenings, on the campus of New Mexico State University at 7:00 pm.

Thank you, and love in Christ,  
Bro. Jonathan Morrell

**GOLDTHWAITE, Texas**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings in the Hope we share,

Lord willing, the Goldthwaite ecclesia will host its annual November Gathering over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend, which you are hereby cordially invited to attend.

“God’s 7000 Year Plan” Dates: Friday, Nov 25 – Sunday, Nov 27.

Location: The **new** location is:

The Comanche Community Center

100 Indian Creek Drive

Comanche, TX 76442

The building is located next to the new overpass on the west side of town (the Brownwood side) on route 377. This is also the building where the Comanche Chamber of Commerce has their offices (you will see their name on the building as well). For the children please note that the meeting hall is within walking distance (about 1/4 mile) to the Comanche City park where there are playgrounds and fields to play.

Please note there is information about the schedule and updated driving instructions on the web site: [www.christadelphian.com/gw/gathering](http://www.christadelphian.com/gw/gathering)

Love in Christ Jesus,

Bro. Len Naglieri

2575 Highway 3381

Comanche, TX 76442

lnaglieri@gmail.com; Phone: 254-879-2009

## **OWERRI, Nigeria**

Dear brothers and sisters

For a very long time you have not heard from us Owerri Berean Ecclesia. Truly, many things have taken place. Some positive and some negative.

The interest in spiritual affair by the majority of the people here is at its low ebb. Many are not ready to learn the Truth. Some that are interested are hindered from completing the lessons by some difficulties.

Generally Owerri Ecclesial members are emotionally stable and spiritually alert as the days roll by to usher the peaceful reign of Christ on the earth.

Bro. Ted Mingham, Bro. Ed Truelove, Bro. Mike Morrell and Sis. Jeanne Fuhr are in constant communication with me. They have taken care of our welfare whenever we go to them.

Again, I want to inform you that Bro. Robert Norman Bent is visiting us from 28 October to 3rd November 2011. By the time you will read this he will be with us.

Since the notification of his visit, I have been in constant communication with him. To facilitate his coming to Nigeria, a letter of invite was sent to him.

The rest will be History when he comes and writes his report. Thank.you.

Yours in Grace, on behalf of the Owerri Ecclesia, Bro. Sylvester Ebere,

## **FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES**

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

- GOLDTHWAITE STUDY WEEKEND**..... **Nov 25–27, 2011**  
Bro. Len Naglieri, 2575 Hwy 3381, Comanche, TX 76442, 254-879-2009
- KENYA FRATERNAL GATHERING**..... **Feb 16 to 19, 2012**  
Bro. Epa Wekati, epawekati@yahoo.com - Facility: Mabanga College, Mabanga, Kenya. Theme: "Worship the Lord in the beauty of Holiness"
- HOUSTON FRATERNAL GATHERING**.....**April 7–8, 2011**  
Bro. David Lauck, dblauch@myexcel.com.
- LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING**.....**June 9–10, 2012**  
Bro. Ricky Hurst, PO Box 1381, Goldthwaite TX, 325-451-4075
- HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING**..... **July 23–29, 2012**  
Bro. Mark Braune, 209 Ranger Dr., Buda, TX, 78610, 512-757-3088, markbraune@gmail.com Study, "Ecclesiastes"

## **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](http://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 Bro. Craig Kiley (craigkiley@yahoo.com) and we will be happy to transfer the talks to mp3 format and post them.

## **The Man That Hath Seen Affliction**

### **THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH**

*“Though He cause grief, yet wilt He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies: He doth not willingly grieve the children of men.”*

### **PART TWO**

### **JEREMIAH AS A TYPE OF CHRIST**

THE name Jeremiah signifies “Appointed of God; Yah has established.”

Each of the Old Testament prophets may be considered as in some way typifying Christ—for they were all the messengers of God. They all sought to turn their countrymen from their wicked ways, and they were all received with hostility by the majority.

Several things in the life and writings of Jeremiah, however, are especially indicative of Christ and his mission. In his birth, Jeremiah certainly resembled Christ and his miraculous origin (1:5,9)—

*“Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee.*

*“Then the Lord put forth His hand, and touched my mouth ... and said unto me, Behold, I put My words in thy mouth.”*

Jeremiah, because of his teaching, fell into such disrepute that he likened himself to—

*“A lamb that is brought to the slaughter”* (11:19).

In this also we see Christ in prophecy (Isa. 53:7).

Jeremiah, by his preaching, incurred the special displeasure of his own kindred (12:6), again as Christ (Ps. 69:8; Jn. 1:11).

Chapters 7-9 present several allusions to the experiences of Christ. Jeremiah, just as his greater successor, was faced with deeply-rooted wickedness, found especially among the religious leaders, the priests and elders of the community. In his efforts to reform a cynical, hypocritical

priesthood, and to cleanse the Temple of its idolatry, he firmly pointed forward to Christ.

In these three chapters, we find the following familiar phrases—

*“Is this house, which is called by My Name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the Lord.”*

*“They (the priests) have healed the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace.”*

*“In the time of their visitation, they shall be cast down.”*

*“No grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree.”*

One of the reasons Jeremiah was hated was that he taught the Jews to humble themselves before the Babylonians, realizing that this was God's way to chasten them for their wrongs (Jer. 37: 8-12). He was therefore despised by the haughty “patriots.”

In the same way Christ's teachings of humility and submission were scorned by the many Jews of his time who felt Rome's yoke must be cast off.

Both Jeremiah and Jesus saw that true peace and true freedom could come only through obedience under God's hand, a “*bearing of the yoke*” (3:27), and a patient waiting (3:26).

Lastly Jeremiah's lament for his people (9:1) evokes great similarities to Christ and his lament for the judgments to come upon his stubborn generation. The whole of the book of Lamentations is this type of sustained sorrow.

And it is a sobering exhortation and warning for us. God has always given His people instructors and ample warning to change their ways. If His people refuse to listen, judgment is certain.

Jeremiah typifies Christ and his reward—and our future reward as well: Jeremiah was at last put in prison (37:15), just as Christ was killed by those he came to help, and was placed in the prison house of death.

Jeremiah was freed from his prison, typifying the resurrection and immortalization of Jesus—

*“So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon” (35:13).*

The last few chapters of Jeremiah deal with the destruction of Babylon and her allies, in the last days (last days of Judah). Christ also will bring

judgment upon spiritual Babylon and her allies, in the last days (the kingdom of men), at which time the lamentations for the Hope of Israel will be at an end, when mourning will be turned to joy—for the saints and the faithful Jews.

(See also on this subject, the introduction to chapter 1.)

## THE TITLE OF THE BOOK

THE word “Lamentations” is not found in the book itself. (The word translated “lamentation” in 2:5 is from a different root.)

The title “Lamentations” was used by LXX, Talmud, Syriac, and Latin versions, as well as later Greek versions. The Syriac, Latin, and later Greek versions used the complete title as we have it: “The Lamentations of Jeremiah.”

The title word “Lamentations” is from the Hebrew word *qinoth*, meaning “dirges,” as a funeral dirge, from a root meaning “to wail.” This would be an appropriate name in that the book is lamenting the death of the Kingdom of God in Israel—the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.

This word is used several times in Jeremiah (7:29)—

*“Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on high places: for the Lord hath rejected and forsaken the generation of His wrath.”*

*“For the mountains will I take up a weeping and wailing, and for the habitations of the wilderness a lamentation, because they are burned up, so none can pass through.”*

*“Neither can men hear the voice of cattle; both the fowl of the heavens and the beast are fled; they are gone”* (Jer. 9:10; see v. 20).

The title used traditionally by the Hebrews for this book is the first word of the book—*Eeyek* (according to Strong's), which means “How.” (The books of Moses are titled by their first words in the Hebrew.) Lam. 1 begins—

*“How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people!*

*“How is she become a widow! She that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces ...*

*“How is she become a tributary!”*

Ch. 2 begins with this same note of sorrowful bewilderment—

*“How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in His anger, and cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel, and remembered not His footstool in the day of His anger!”*

And again, ch. 4 begins—

*“How is the gold become dim!*

*“How is the most fine gold changed! The stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street!*

*“The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold ...*

*“How are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter!”*

This word “How” fittingly implies wonder, bewilderment, sorrow of the speaker at the things he is witnessing. How could Judah have allowed herself to become disobedient and placed herself in the position of judgment and tribulation—the disintegration of God's rule through Zion and Jerusalem?

This word “How” would express the thoughts of the people as well: “How could these things have happened to us?”

### **The nation had been asleep to the warnings of Jeremiah.**

This book is included in the megilloth or “rolls” of the Hebrew Bible, along with the Song of Songs, Ruth, Ecclesiastes, and Esther. In the LXX it was placed behind Jeremiah and has remained there. Josephus, the Jewish scholar, included this book with Jeremiah's prophecy.

This book is read today by the Jews on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of Ab to commemorate the fall of Jerusalem.

### **THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK**

EACH chapter is divided into 22 stanzas, except ch. 3, which has 66 (3x22). Chs. 1-4 are alphabetic acrostics, with 1 stanza for each letter of the 22-letter Hebrew alphabet. In ch. 1 the letters are in order. In chs. 2-4 they are in order with the exception of 2 letters—the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Hebrew characters are transposed.

Ch. 5 is not in acrostic, but contains 22 lines corresponding to the 22 letters. (It is possible this is to manifest deepened intensity of grief—that Jeremiah was so grieved as he wrote that he did not tarry to keep the same ‘literary’ form he had previously followed.)

In chs. 1-3 each stanza contains 3 lines, with the exceptions of 1:7 and 2:19 which contain 4 lines. Ch. 4 contains 2-line stanzas. In ch. 3 all 3

lines of each stanza begin with the same letter and each line carries a verse number. This is comparable to Ps. 119.

The acrostic is common among the Old Testament writings. One purpose was that it was very helpful to memory.

The acrostic style also denotes completeness of thought—in that each letter of the alphabet suggests its own thought, all with the same message. This aid of the acrostic is lost to us in translation.

A significant feature of the Hebrew poetry is the constant repetition of similar thoughts, with only slight variations in meaning between one phrase and the next—

*“He will visit thine iniquity; He will discover thy sins.”*

*“The elders have ceased from the gate, the young men from their music.”*

Such phrases as these contribute wonderfully to the beauty of Jewish poetry, and they show how well adapted it is to be translated into other languages—where it still maintains its depth and richness of expression. Of course, one must never forget that this is not just literature or prose or poetry—but the express Word of God.

Other acrostics are Prov. 30: 10-31, Psalms 25, 34, 37, 111.

It has already been stated that the original word for “lamentations” refers to a dirge. Chs. 1, 2, and 4 are dirges or elegies. In the Hebrew form of poetry a dirge or lament is usually concluded with a prayer. We find a prayer at the end of chs. 1 and 2, and a statement at the close of ch. 4 which resembles the prayer of ch.1. Rather than include a prayer at the close of ch. 4, it's possible the prophet, caught in the sorrow and woe of the picture of afflicted Zion, concludes not just the elegy but the entire book with a prayer—ch. 5. This would be appropriate, for the book on the whole is an elegy.

## **INTRODUCTION TO DETAILED STUDY**

SEVERAL lessons recur often throughout this book. The most obvious is this: that we may see, in the plight of Jeremiah and Judah, both the sufferings of Christ and the persecutions and trials of the saints in this Gentile world.

We are the saints, the people or nation whom God has separated to bear His Name, and ultimately to bear His glory—if we are worthy.

But we have not been separated to a life of ease of luxury. Instead we have committed ourselves to the loss of worldly possessions and honors, and to the chastisement at the hand of our Father in Heaven—

*“Remember, O Lord, what is come upon us: consider, behold our reproach!”* (5:1).

We must remember that—

*“No chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous”* (Heb. 12:11).

Therefore we may have the wisdom and foresight to realize our weakness and to lean on the mercy of God—

*“Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord”* (2:19).

And we learn at last that nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ (Rom. 8:38). We must accept chastisement in order to be true sons; Paul tells us that God chastises us—

*“For our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness”* (Heb. 12:10).

*“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory”* (2 Cor. 4:17).

Another point amply demonstrated is that all nations and their affairs are controlled by God (Dan. 2:21; 4:17, 25) according to His purpose with Israel. Israel—both natural and spiritual—may *“give the hand”* to the Egyptians and Assyrians at the present time (5:6). She may be trodden down by “Edom” for now (4:21).

But when God has waited long enough, the respective fortunes of Jew and Gentile will change quite drastically, and God will elevate His people and render unto the other—

*“A recompense, sorrow of heart and anguish”* (3:64-65).

Paul told the brethren at Corinth that—

*“ALL THINGS are for your sakes”* (2 Cor. 4:15).

Jesus told his listeners of certain times being shortened—

*“For the elect's sake.”*

**If we would only let this truth sink into our hearts, never could we become discouraged nor feel neglected!**

Finally, the principle of responsibility to God is emphasized throughout Lamentations. The practical and scriptural belief is that the sorest punishment is visited upon those who are most responsible—that is, those who have the knowledge. To whom much is given, much will be required in the day of God's visitation.

The nation of Judah was more responsible to God than were the other nations of their time—

*“You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities”* (Amos 3:2).

This sense of being known of God is explained in Ps. 147—

*“He showeth His Word unto Jacob, His statutes and His judgments unto Israel.*

*“He hath not dealt so with any (other) nation: and as for His judgments, they have not known them”* (vs. 19-20).

The Jews who refused to heed God's messengers, and who followed their own evil inclinations—neglecting His testimony—received the sorer punishment befitting their status—

*“For the punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of My people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed upon her”* (4:6).

Sodom had been exceedingly wicked, but her punishment was swift, and therefore less painful than that of Judah whose final sufferings were intense and drawn out (4:8-10).

*“If God be for us, who can be against us?”* (Rom. 8:31).

A wonderful assurance this may be. But the solemn truth is that the God Who fights for us, may very well come to fight against us—as He fought against Jerusalem (2:5-7). It is for us to ponder this carefully, and to put ourselves in the place of Judah—

*“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples (Gr. ‘types’): and they are written for our admonition ..”* (1 Cor. 10:11)

*“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?”* (Heb. 2:3).

\* \* \*

THE central thought of Lamentations is found precisely in the center of the book. The proper climax is 3:19-36. Of these verses, 31-33 must be singled out particularly—

*“For the Lord will not cast off forever:*

*“But though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies.*

*“For He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.”*

The book progresses from an early feeling of shame and bewilderment to a growing awareness and appreciation of God's presence and His hand in man's affairs—both to chasten and to save.

**What man finds difficulty in remembering is that disobedience inevitably brings chastisement.**

The non-repentant will suffer the judgments, woes, and desolations brought by God. The faithful remnant are repentant, accepting chastisement as a necessity for building character, knowing that—

*“God will not forget in need, the man that trusts in Him indeed.”*

Zion, who mourns her desolation and weeps sorely in the night (1:2) is in the end comforted by the birth of new sons, whose days are renewed as of old (5:21).

Patience, endurance, and godliness are characteristics of the true Israelite. The true Israelite offers a confident prayer of deliverance from the oppressor, and a hopeful prayer—a longing prayer for justification and glorification. Sorrow gives way to a new hope—

*“Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning”* (Ps. 30:5).

In the analysis, note the emphasis on “affliction,” and the progression: Jerusalem's affliction (ch. 1) is brought by God (ch. 2), is necessary (ch. 3), because of her persistent apostasy (ch. 4), but she will at last be delivered from affliction (ch. 5).

Note also the succession of prayer at the ends of the chapters, culminating in the extended prayer, filling all of ch. 5 (see notes on structure).

## **AN OUTLINE OF LAMENTATIONS**

### **CHAPTER 1: AFFLICTION OF JERUSALEM**

**“There is none to comfort her”**

1-11: Lament of the City

12-15: God's fierce anger

16-17: “For these I weep”

18-19: “The Lord is righteous”

20-22: Jerusalem's PRAYER

### **CHAPTER 2: GOD'S AFFLICTIONS**

**“The Lord hath done this”**

- 1-9: Just judgments of the Lord
- 10-14: Tears of affliction
- 15-17: Jerusalem's enemies rejoice
- 18-22: Jerusalem's PRAYER

### **CHAPTER 3: NEW HOPE IN CHASTENING**

#### **"I am the man that hath seen affliction"**

- 1-18: Darkness, affliction, derision
- 19-21: Desired effect: remnant saved
- 22-30: The Lord's mercies, service and separation
- 31-33: The central theme—chastening is necessary
- 34-36: "The Lord approveth not"
- 37-41: Living man shouldn't complain
- 42-66: PRAYER—We transgressed (42-54);  
But judge my cause (55-66)

### **CHAPTER 4: THE REASON FOR AFFLICTION**

#### **"For the sins of her prophets and iniquities of her priests"**

- 1-12: Contrast of sons of Zion: fine gold to earth pitchers
- 13-16: Sins of the leaders
- 17-20: Vain hopes
- 21-22: The cup passes to Edom

### **CHAPTER 5: PRAYER for deliverance from affliction**

- 1-15: "See our reproach." (disgrace)
- 16-18: "The crown is fallen"
- 19-22: The everlasting throne: A hope of renewal

*—Bro. Gilbert V. Growcott*

## **The Future of Our Ecclesia**

It was a regular meeting of the arranging brethren. Routine business was finished, and then a general discussion arose regarding the welfare of our ecclesia and the serious problems that we were facing because of the war. We all felt that, although our ecclesia was increasing in numbers, spiritually it was not as high as we would like to see it in our midst. Some very frank questions were asked that caused us to think seriously. Here are some of them: —

(a) Are we, as arranging brethren, carrying out our duties as we should?

(b) Have we failed to instruct our young people in the way of life?

(c) Are we open to censure because all of our young people do not accept the truth?

(d) Have we failed in our exhortations and lectures to keep our brethren and sisters interested in our ecclesial life?

I do not know what has been the experience of the other brethren, but I do know that, ever since that night, my mind has been constantly exercised over the questions brought out in our discussion. At the same time, however, I felt that, if there is anything wrong, and our ecclesial life is below the required standard, the arranging brethren should not be held responsible. After all, we are only appointed to act on behalf of the ecclesia, and it is, therefore, the duty of individual brethren and sisters to see that we do our work faithfully. And one of the best ways to accomplish that is to attend the meetings of the arranging brethren, and the quarterly business meetings of the ecclesia.

One night, as I thought on these things, a question seemed to burn in my mind. What is to be the future of our ecclesia? Are we making headway, or are we losing ground? But it proved to be only the beginning. Other questions followed rapidly, and I found myself confronted with such personal and searching questions as:—

(a) What is my attitude towards the Scriptures?

(b) What is my attitude towards the writings of Brethren Thomas and Roberts?

(c) What is my attitude towards Christ? Do I strive to please Him, or do I please myself?

(d) What is my attitude towards the assemblies of the brethren and sisters? Do I strive to attend all of the ecclesial meetings, or do I just go to those that suit my convenience?

But why should these questions arise in my mind, and why, if they are personal problems, do I speak of them to you? Why not go about my own way and solve them as best I can? Why? Because they are questions common to all of us. Therefore, I speak to you as one of many having the same experiences and the same need. Not only so; I have a right to speak to you. Not an authoritative right, but the right of brotherly love. Such a right is a prerogative that belongs to every brother in Christ who can look past himself and see the need of his brethren. I speak, therefore, to remind you of your exalted position in Christ and what He expects of us.

Our first question should be of paramount importance to every brother and sister. What is to be the future of our ecclesia? The question is not a hard one. The answer is simple. The future of our ecclesia does not depend upon your arranging brethren or your presiding brethren. It depends upon you and me. If we are faithful, it will prosper, and, for Christ's sake, we will labour together, and our ecclesia will stand as a monument to the truth in this city. If, on the other hand, we aim to please ourselves, like wayward children, our light will fail and we will become like a certain ecclesia that had a name to live, but its works were dead. Therefore, let us give heed to what the Spirit says to the ecclesias, "*I KNOW THY WORKS.*"

What is our attitude towards the Scriptures? Do you remember when you first came to a knowledge of the Truth, and you discovered that the Bible was the most fascinating Book you ever read? Your first love burned like fire in your bones, and you wanted to cry aloud from the house tops.

Have you changed, or is the Word of the Lord still sweet unto your taste? Do you still regard it as wholly God inspired and infallible? If so, are you doing your daily readings faithfully, or are you permitting the things of this life to crowd out the most precious thing in our possession? Remember Israel, and how God declared through the prophet Hosea "*That His people were destroyed for lack of knowledge.*" The knowledge of God does not come to us naturally; it must be acquired by extracting it from His Word, and that can only be done by persistent application of the mind to the written Word.

*"For the Lord giveth wisdom; out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding"* (Prov.2:6). But, in acquiring this knowledge, we must use discretion, because the natural tendency of man is to become puffed up, or swelled with pride. Let us, therefore, as we become filled with all knowledge and wisdom of God, remain clothed with humility: for God "*resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble*" (1 Peter 5:5).

What is our attitude towards the writings of Brethren Thomas and Roberts? On a certain occasion a brother remarked, "I am tired of the names Thomas and Roberts. I could have learned the truth if they had never existed." That may be possible; but we are not interested in what might have been. Our interest centres in things which are. We have come to a knowledge of the Truth as a result of the labours of these two men. This was their life work, and we should esteem them very highly for the

sake of that work. We may as well refuse to listen to the word of exhortation as to refuse to read their works. Read them by all means; apart from the Bible, they have no equal. If you discard “Elpis Israel,” “Eureka,” “Christendom Astray” and other books by these brethren, you discard the Truth, for the Truth is faithfully expounded in them. And who among us has the mental capacity to do without them? Be not deceived, brethren; now is the time of preparation. If John Thomas could take twelve years of his time to write “Eureka,” surely we can take time to read it. Yes, we can take time if we try, and every brother and sister should read “Eureka.” It’s an amazing book of knowledge.

What is our attitude towards Christ? Is He our constant companion in every thought and deed? Is He our daily adviser and counsellor? Do we hold Him before us as a pattern—a perfect example in all things? Such questions are endless. Listen to His gracious words in the fourteenth chapter of John.

*“If ye love Me, keep My commandments.” “He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.”* If then, we do not keep His commandments, it is evident that we do not love Him, and if we do not love Him, how can we expect Him to love us? We may think because we have come to a knowledge of the truth, and have put on Christ in baptism, that there is nothing more to do; but such is not the case. Our life in Christ requires action; and to be truly entitled to the name Christadelphian we must meet with the requirements as indicated by Jesus when He said, *“For whosoever shall do the will of my Father, which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother”* (Matt. 12:50). Our attitude then towards Christ should be one of constant determination to overlook the petty things of this life, and, *“as He has loved us, so ought we to love one another”* (John 13:34).

What is our attitude towards the assemblies of the brethren? Do we attend both meetings on Sunday and the Bible Class during the week? If not, is it because there are good, sound reasons for not doing so, or do we just have some poor excuse to cover up our lack of interest in the affairs of Christ?

Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, but let us do it faithfully as well pleasing to our Heavenly Father. Of course, there are some who live at such a distance that it is almost impossible for them to attend all meetings, and some are unable to come because of ill-health.

But we, brethren and sisters, who are able to come, are we doing our part? It seems to me that if we appreciate what God has done for us, it will take more than an excuse to keep us away.

There are hundreds of questions we might ask ourselves, but, generally speaking, what are we doing to make our calling and elections sure? Suppose we work in a factory or an office. What attitude do we adopt towards our employer? Do we not try to please him? Certainly we do. We enter into a covenant with him to do certain work, and he promises to pay us for our services. Now we know that if we do not carry out our part, we cannot expect very good treatment, therefore we do all we possibly can to please him. If, then, we are so careful in worldly things, how much more should we be careful in respect to things pertaining to salvation? God has made certain wonderful promises to those who believe and obey Him. We have believed, and have entered into a covenant. Surely we cannot expect God to give us a place in His kingdom if we are not deserving of it. No; *“for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that DILIGENTLY seek Him”* (Heb. 11:6).

And that diligence should begin immediately after coming to a knowledge of the Truth, and it should not cease. Therefore, I speak to you, young brother or sister, for you must someday take the place of those of us who are older. Do you fully realise this? If so, what are you doing in the way of preparation? If you would be acknowledged by God as His children, you must be sober, wise and humble in thought, word and deed. You may think that you are too young to be serious about the Truth. But you are not. Any person that is old enough to understand and obey the Truth is old enough to hold fast and grow in it. Remember, Josiah was not more than sixteen when he began to seek after God, and at twenty he was at work purging the land from idolatry. In modern times we have a remarkable example in Robert Roberts. Do you realise that the various chapters in “Christendom Astray” were originally lectures prepared and given by Bro. Roberts when he was not more than twenty-two years of age? Do not wait for old age to remember the Lord. Remember Him now in the days of thy youth. Now is the time to become rooted and grounded in the Truth.

Some have expressed the thought that we are not doing enough for our young people. But this is a matter in which we must apply wisdom, because it is possible to do so much for our young people that they will fail to do anything for themselves. Therefore, the question is not what are we doing for the young people, but what are they doing for themselves?

How are they spending their time? Are they wasting it, or are they applying their hearts unto wisdom, and making themselves ready to take our places when we are called upon to enter into rest from our labour? We are now in a period when our young people are facing severe trials, therefore they should be employing their spare time strengthening their faith. Some have done this, and today are witnessing for the Truth in a manner that makes us feel proud of them. Arise, young brother and young sister, and remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth.

And now, as we see the day of the Lord's return drawing nigh, let us subject ourselves to a severe self-judging of character. Let us strive to be like-minded, that we may be knit together in love. Let us also rouse ourselves, and awake to the duty laid upon us by our acceptance and obedience of the gospel. Should we be called upon to assist in ecclesial work, let us discharge the duty imposed upon us in a manner well pleasing to our Master, whether it be as door-keeper or presiding brother. The God of Abraham is taking out a people for His Name and laying the foundation of a great work in the earth.

Let us, therefore, seek the Lord while He may be found and call upon Him while He is near. To meet with His approval we must develop a character based upon obedience and faithfulness. Such a character can only be attained by a careful and faithful application of our minds to the things of God. It is a slow process, during which we should not become discouraged. Let us ponder well the work the Lord is doing, and check up carefully on our habits to see whether we are really worthy of being chosen as one who will "eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

May we have the courage to recognise our weakness, and the strength to overcome, so that when Jesus returns we may be found among those who will say, "Lo, this is our God: we have waited for Him, and He will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Isa. 25:9).  
—*Bro. George A. Gibson*

## **Christ Our Passover**

When Jesus instituted the memorial supper which we have met this morning to observe, he was surrounded by his disciples in an upper room in Jerusalem, where he had met them by appointment to keep the feast of the Passover. That feast was part of the Mosaic appointments. The meeting was on the basis of the Law of Moses; for Jesus and the

disciples were all Jews, born and bred under that law, which had been in force 1,400 years. It was the last time they met together on that foundation, but not the last time they will eat the Passover together, for he said:

*“With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, **until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.**”*

The feast had been observed on countless previous occasions, and with an ostentation not to be found in that upper room among those quiet thirteen men; but never had there been such a momentous celebration of it. The whole law, of which the Passover was a part, was converging for its finish in the one sorrowful man who was the centre of that group. *“Christ our Passover, sacrificed for us,”* was about to absorb in himself the significance of all that Israel had observed for ages in obedience to the law of Moses, and therefore of the Passover which he was now to eat for the last time as a mortal son of Abraham.

The Passover was instituted on the eve of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt. It was not merely a celebration of deliverance, but a means of it, which it is well to bear in mind in judging of its fulfilment in Christ. The angel of Yahweh was about to pass through the land for the purpose of destroying the first-born in every Egyptian house, that the Egyptians might be made to consent to Israel’s departure. But there was a possibility that this destroying visitation might extend to the houses of the Hebrews as well. To avert this possibility—we need not stay to inquire in what way—every family in Israel was required to slay a lamb, sprinkle its blood on the door post, and eat its flesh before morning. The destroying angel seeing the sprinkled blood would **pass over** the household so protected, for which reason it was called Passover, as we know. Afterwards Israel were to keep the same Passover in their generations, in celebration of their deliverance, first from the destroying angel, and next from the Egyptians.

Before the sacrifice of *“Christ our Passover,”* we have here himself eating the Passover with his disciples, in token of the fact that he was involved with them in all their woes, from which his own blood, the blood of the anti-typical Passover, would deliver them all; for though it harmonises not with orthodox conceptions of the sacrifice of Christ, it is the truth that the—

*“God of peace brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant”* (Heb. 13:20).

The Passover was a memorial of the deliverance effected in Egypt, and a typical foreshadowing of the deliverance to be effected in Christ. It looked back and it looked forward. In both, Jesus was concerned. As the *“son of David, the son of Abraham”* (Matt 1:1) he was as much interested retrospectively in the Egyptian deliverance as his disciples, who were to be considered as having come out of Egypt in their fathers; as the son of Mary, partaking of their common sin-caused mortality (for death entered into the world by sin—Rom. 5:12), he stood in as much need as they of that redemption from death, as the antitypical lamb of Yahweh’s Passover (Heb. 9:12—omit ital. *“for us”*; also chap. 5:7). Where he differed was in the mental state resulting from the fact that God was his father in the generative sense. He was God’s well-beloved son, in whom God was well pleased, because he abode in His commandments, and did always those things that were pleasing unto Him (John 15:10; 8:29). He also differed in the Father’s abiding presence in the fulness of the Spirit in the vessel so prepared. He was the Father’s human manifestation in the midst of Israel, for the purpose of laying the foundation of human salvation in harmony with the principle of the Father’s supremacy which required in the blood-shedding of such as partake of human mortality, the declaration of the Father’s righteousness as the basis of the remission of sin unto life eternal to those recognising and submitting to it. The work was accomplished in his death and resurrection, by which he became *“the first begotten of the dead”* (Rev. 1:5) and a name by investiture with which men may be saved—the only name given under heaven for this purpose (Acts 4:12).

When Jesus observed the Passover, the time was at hand for his own offering up by which the significance of the typical feast would be superseded. He, therefore, takes occasion to appoint another institution by which the antitypical accomplishment itself would be kept before the minds of believers *“until he come.”* Beautifully enough, he finds the elements of the new type in those of the old, for both had their ultimate significance in the same thing. He took bread from the remains of the Passover feast and broke it and said,

*“This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.”*

This saying which must have been enigmatical to the disciples at the time of its utterance, was illustrated on the following day, when Jesus surrendered himself to the cross on which his body was cruelly and publicly impaled, underneath an accusation which was no disgrace, but the utterance of the simple truth:

*“This is Jesus the King of the Jews.”*

This agonising tragedy, so far as the human aspect of it was concerned, was the divinely arranged public condemnation of sin in the flesh—the declaration of the righteousness of God in the offering of the body of Jesus once for all—a body which was at once the condemned nature of Adam and the sinless Son of God, in whose death the righteous law of God had its execution, and in whose resurrection the perfect righteousness of Jesus had its vindication, and by which double event a man was provided through whom came the resurrection of the dead without any nullification of any of the ways of God. All this was involved in the words of Jesus,

*“This is my body given for you.”*

The whole arrangement was *“for (or, on account of) those who shall be saved,”* but of course included in its operation Jesus himself, who is the *“firstborn among many brethren”* (Rom. 8:29). By this accepted offering, all are sanctified who come unto God through him, confessing their sins, humbling themselves in the obedience of baptism, which ceremonially introduces them to the death of Christ.

The same glorious lesson comes out with equal clearness in connection with the cup, which he took after the bread, saying,

*“Take this, and divide it among yourselves . . . This cup is **the new testament in my blood**, shed for many for the remission of sins.”*

If this was a strange saying to the disciples at the time of its utterance it did not remain so, for it was the topic of conversation after his resurrection. And it is not strange to those in our day who scripturally understand the truth, for it has been the subject of exposition in the apostolic writings. But put it to the common run of Christians: *“the new testament (or covenant) in my blood.”* What understanding have they of its meaning? Ask them a plainer question: What is the new covenant? What are the covenants of promise to which believers are no longer strangers? (Eph. 2:12). What are the promises made unto the fathers which Christ came to confirm? (Rom. 15:8). To these questions there is no response on the part of the common run of Christians, or on the part

of their teachers, the so-called “Rev.” gentlemen of all denominations. If the new covenant itself is not known, how can its relations in the blood of Christ be discerned?

We have learnt from the Scriptures what the new covenant is. Its name, as the **new** covenant, involves an allusion to the old one that was established at Sinai when God, by the hands of Moses, promised to bless Israel in the land to which they were going, on condition of obedience; and Israel, on their part, undertook to submit to whatever was required of them. This old contract, or agreement, or covenant (ratified by the sprinkling of the blood of sacrificial animals), pronounced a curse on every one who should not observe its obligations in every particular: and these were very numerous and entered into every relation of life. Such a rigid and absolute observance being impossible in the infirmity of human nature, Peter styles it “*a yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear*” (Acts 15:10). No one rendered the exact obedience it required but Christ. It served its purpose, however. God did not make a mistake in appointing it. It was “*a schoolmaster*”: it established the first principles of godliness in the midst of Israel, namely, that obedience to God was the first law of human well-being, and that man was unable to bless himself. Still, so far as practical results were concerned, it cursed all who had to do with it, since none but Christ was able to comply with its requirements in the perfect manner required. This old curse-bringing covenant was about to be done away when Christ ate the Passover for the last time with his disciples. It was about to be done away in him by his dying under it after having perfectly obeyed it, and rising again from the dead because of his righteousness under it; and in him, thus triumphant over the old covenant, the new covenant was to be established and offered—a covenant, says Paul, “*established upon better promises*” (Heb. 8:6). These promises he styles, “*promises made to the fathers*” (Rom. 15:8). What these are we have learnt. They are contained in the writings of Moses and the Prophets. They are promises of future blessedness on earth to Abraham and his seed (Gal. 3:16)—a blessedness connected with the inheritance of the land of promise, and involving the bestowal of everlasting life. The new covenant is based upon these. It is a more beneficial covenant than the old. It is an agreement that if we have faith in what God has accomplished in Christ, and bring ourselves in connection with it in a humble, loving, obedient disposition, our sins will be forgiven, and we ourselves made heirs of the blessedness promised to Abraham and his seed.

But why should this covenant be offered in blood? Why should Jesus, taking the symbolic cup of wine, say,

*“This is the new covenant **in my blood**”?*

There is a simple meaning to this, which we shall get at by a few questions. In what character is blood brought forward in the Mosaic shadow from which much of the phraseology of the new covenant is derived? Lev. 17:11-14, answers this question:

*“The **life of the flesh** is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul.”*

Blood then, is sacrificially employed to represent life, which it is; for withdraw the blood, and you withdraw the life of any creature. If blood represents life, then the shedding of it represents death. To pour out the blood of any thing sacrificed was to cause its death: when a worshipper approached God with the blood of a slain animal (having placed his hand on the head of the animal before it was slain), it was a confession that before God, as a sinner, he had no right to live, seeing that *“death is the wages of sin,”* and that death hath passed upon all men through Adam. It was in fact a typical declaration of the righteousness of God, with which God was pleased to be approached; but only typical because there was no natural connection between the slain animal and the consequences of sin; consequently,

*“The blood of bulls and of goats could not take away sin”* (Heb. 10:4).

The type pointed to the purpose of Yahweh to provide a perfect declaration of His righteousness in the shed blood of an actual wearer of the nature condemned in Adam, who should be acceptable to Him in all things, and whose resurrection could therefore follow His bloodshedding. This antitypical lamb, as we know, was the Lord Jesus, who though made in all things like unto his brethren as regards mortality of nature on account of sin, was himself absolutely free from sin in his own character. Here was the Lamb of God without spot or blemish, and yet a suitable sacrifice in the possession of the very nature which had come under condemnation, because of sin in the beginning. In the shedding of his blood, there was a *“declaration of the righteousness of God”* (Rom. 3:25-26). He was not destined to return to dust: it was therefore necessary that his blood should be spilt and that death should follow, as the ceremonial declaration of Yahweh’s righteousness in the public

condemnation of sin in the flesh (Rom. 8:3)—as a basis for the offer of free pardon to all who should recognise the declaration, and identify themselves with it, and come unto God with confession and faith in the name of the crucified Jesus, as the one great sacrifice through which alone man can acceptably approach God.

In view of all these things, it is evident what force there is in the words with which Jesus introduced the memorial cup to the notice of his disciples:

“This is the new covenant in my blood, shed for many for the remission of sins.”

The new covenant or agreement, which ensures coming blessedness to the fallen sons of Adam, is in the blood of Christ and nowhere else. There can be no blessedness without covenant, because, apart from the addition of special covenant on the part of God, who only has the power to bestow blessedness, we are shut up to what we have by nature, and that is, a poor mortal body that will wear out in due course, and disappear in death. And there can be no covenant without sacrifice, for so has God willed, and we can no more get past His will in this matter than we can alter the constitution of heaven and earth. And there is no sacrifice but one with which we can approach God for covenant, and that is the one great sacrifice accomplished in Christ. And there is no way of becoming associated with that sacrifice but by enlightenment in the promises on which the covenant is established, and faith in the blood in which it is offered, and legal contact with that blood in baptism, which is the divinely appointed mode of association with the death of Christ. The root of the whole matter lies first in the greatness, and then in the goodness of God. God is a great and dreadful majesty, to whom the earth and all flesh belong, for He has made them out of His own energy. He is not only great, but He is holy, and jealous of His supremacy. He has been disobeyed on earth, and has in consequence given us over to death; and will not be approached by us except in the manner He has appointed. But He is good, and He will forgive and bestow everlasting life if we humble ourselves and come to Him in the way appointed. The way appointed is through the shed blood of a perfectly righteous wearer of our nature, in whom sin was condemned on our account. He will forgive us if we come in this way: not because that blood-shedding pacifies Him, or gives Him anything, or pays any debt; for then it would be no forgiveness—but because His righteousness is declared, and His prerogative recognised, and our position acknowledged in the acceptance of the slain lamb of His appointing.

We endorse and proclaim all these glorious things every time we take this cup into our hand and drink it, and say “Amen!” at the giving of thanks for “*the new covenant in the blood of Christ shed for the remission of sins.*” This breaking of bread signifies our acceptance of God’s ways, and is a testimony to the world that they have no hope outside of this way. We find great comfort in this way ourselves, and we would extend that comfort; but we find many obstacles in the imaginations and high thoughts that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God (2 Cor. 10:5). We have even earned the bitterest odium it is possible for men to bear—the reputation of being illiberal, and uncharitable, and narrow minded, and bigoted—because we maintain the teaching of Christ and his apostles on this vital matter. What can we do but accept the result with resignation? It is a result that has always more or less attended the testimony of the truth. It is no new thing for “*the preaching of the cross*” to be productive of offence. Paul speaks of it in his letters. He says the preaching of the cross was to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness. He accepted the reproach incident to such a situation; he refused to glory in anything save the cross of our Lord Jesus. We are in the best of company when we are in the company of Paul, and we are undoubtedly in his company when we are accused by the modern Greeks (the scientists of every grade) of being behind the age and badly informed, and old fogey and sectarian; and by the Jews, of being worse than the Christians in the rigidness of our insistence on the original teachings of Christ; and by Christians, of being gloomy retrogressionists, the slaves of a dead letter, and strangers to the broad life and charity and the true spirit of the gospel. To each and all, we can but say, “We accept Christ because he rose from the dead; and we accept the apostles, because we accept Christ; and we accept the New Testament writings as the standard of the truth, because we accept the apostles; and we challenge you all to deny that the conclusions which we maintain are the teachings of these writings. It would be pleasant to come on to your broad platform and to join in your charitable spirit and to share your freedom from the narrowness and restraint that undoubtedly hamper the profession of the gospel, as originally delivered, as regards the present evil world. We should have your pleasant society, and your encouraging recognition, and your advantageous patronage, and your general enjoyment of the broad fields of human culture, and pleasure, and good fellowship. But wherein should we be the gainers in the day when Christ arrives to sweep away the present order of things, and to reorganize affairs in harmony with divine principles only, and to give glorious place in his house to those only who do the will of his Father, as

written in his revealed word of truth? We should have a poor staff to lean on, in a respectable world which will then dissolve in terror before his face. No: we have made Christ our portion, and for better or worse, we will accept the isolation and the odium that result, confident that experience shortly to be apparent, will justify an uncompromising adherence to the written word as the only enlightened policy that can be pursued.”  
—*Bro. Robert Roberts*

## Encouraging Words No. 25

LET us not be disturbed by the unreasonable arguments of the sceptic against the Bible. His treatment of God’s Word is, as a rule, very unfair. One of his many unscrupulous methods is to wrench from their place and purpose passages which touch physical defilement and hold them aloft, to the exclusion of other subjects to which the Bible gives greater prominence, and then to say, “This is the sort of book the Bible is, what do you think of it?” His treatment of this phase of divine revelation is as though a guide, undertaking to conduct one through a city famed for its beautiful houses and noble public buildings, should show one only its sanitary arrangements and say, “This is the kind of city you have come to see, what do you think of it?” For a time one would say, “What a strange, unattractive city!” Upon discovering the trick, however, what a change would come over one’s mind in relation to both the city and the guide!

Our knowledge of Bible truth should enable us to see that the sceptic’s handling of certain passages is only an unworthy trick. We are not ignorant of Bible teaching in regard to morality: “Having therefore these promises (that on certain conditions God will receive us as His sons and daughters — see previous chapter) dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord” (2 Cor. 7:1). This is the instruction that is uppermost in both Old and New Testaments. Any amount of evidence could be brought forward to prove it. One more Scripture, by way of example, must suffice: “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things.” It rests with us to familiarise ourselves with such evidence and to fortify our minds with it. Let us ever remember that if the sceptic followed the rules of interpretation which the Bible itself lays down, the passages to which he objects would never pass his lips until a legitimate

use had been discovered for them, far less would the passages be printed in flaming colours, held up aloft, and all men be invited to occupy their minds with them.

When the sceptic has finished his deceitful handling of the Word, what advance has he made? Not any. The Bible remains where it always stood. The sceptic has not got rid of the fact that it is a book which it is beyond the power of man to produce. He has not disposed of the nation of Israel, whose history, from the time of Abraham down to the second coming of Christ and beyond, the Bible has given in advance. Nor has he done away with Bible prophecies concerning matters such as the destruction of Babylon, the unique history of Egypt, the first appearance and life of the Messiah, the uprising of a dreadful apostasy upon the scene of the apostles' labours. He has not disproved the resurrection of Christ. Neither has he demolished the fact that the moral teaching of the Bible is on a plane so high that the wisest and best can never attain to it, though they might spend a life-time in the endeavour. As a life-long Bible student the writer can testify that one trembles not lest one's morals should be corrupted by the Book, but lest one should lack the courage of one's convictions in reaching towards the high standard which it reveals.

The apostle made no vain statement when he said, "I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Let us, however, recognise our need of being up-built and eschew in ourselves and in others all pulling down processes which are directed against the truth and against its ardent lovers. If we do this we can meet with serenity all hostile attacks. If, on the other hand, we put the Bible on the shelf and lend our ears to the unholy cavil of despisers of good men (whose lives have been spent in the fear of God and in toiling for the truth) we open the gates to the enemy and are the active agents of our own destruction.

—*Sis. C.H. Jannaway—1910*

## **Meditations – Deity's Ways No. 25**

*"An evil speaker shall not be established in the earth"* (Ps. 140:11. R.V.) This is definite. If we would inherit this beautiful earth we must have our tongues in subjection. However trying the ordeal may be to us, God will make no exception in our favour. How numerous are the warnings and admonitions of the Spirit on this subject. Let us open our eyes wide to them that we be not put to shame in the great day of account. The earth is for the righteous only. The righteous do not join in

slander, foolish talking, or ribaldry. Their effort is to speak to edification or not at all. They follow David's example, who said: "I will keep my mouth with a bridle (muzzle) while the wicked is before me" (Ps. 39:1.) They have respect unto Paul's words, "*Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth*" (Ephes. 4:29.) They regard every form of speech which has been forbidden as corrupt. The righteous also refrain from much talking, for they know that "*in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin.*" They know that much volubility is inconsistent with reflection. They do not talk simply for the sake of talking. They are careful to be accurate in statement. They do not say that which they do not mean. They are not given to exaggeration. They have a trembling regard for the proverb: "*Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord.*" Solomon's description of the righteous runs as follows: "*The mouth of the righteous is a well of life.*" "*The lips of the righteous feed many.*" "*The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom.*" Let us pause and enquire if these statements apply to us. If they do not, then we lack the characteristics of those who will inherit the earth.

Israel's history presents a practical exemplification of the unfathomable goodness of God. Let us take our stand among the oppressed in Egypt, bowed down, as the record reads, with anguish of spirit and cruel bondage. Let us imagine that we witness the appearing of Moses, that we hear him tell his wondrous mission, how that God had heard the groaning of His people, and had sent him to deliver them and to lead them into a land of unparalleled rest. As we heard the prophet dilate upon the blessings in store for us—the inheritance of a land upon which the rain of heaven was to regularly fall, causing it to unfaillingly yield its increase—a land in which we should enjoy perfect peace, none daring to make us afraid—a land in which all sickness would be removed—a land in which we should be fruitful, prosperous, happy and long lived—should we not from the bottom of our hearts have felt and exclaimed that God was wonderfully good? God has been equally good to us, though we are sadly deficient in the realisation of the fact. Our relationship to Christ has brought us into connection with prospective joys infinitely more glorious than those promised by Moses to Israel. "*There remaineth a rest to the people of God*"—a rest in which the once promised temporal blessings to Israel will be overwhelmingly eclipsed, even in the bestowal of "*long life,*" "*fulness of joy,*" and "*pleasures for evermore.*" Why should God have called us to this glory? Was he under any obligation so to do? How pointed are the Psalmist's words, "*What is man that thou art mindful of him?*" Let us keep continually in mind the condescension and goodness of God, and let that goodness constrain us

to love Him in the practical way which the Scriptures require. *“This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.”* (1 Jno. 5:3.)

Let us give, but let us give with judgment. God does not command thoughtless or reckless giving. Benevolence must be coupled with wisdom, or evil and not good will be the outcome. We must not be mere creatures of feeling in the matter. If we help, let us not be afraid to open our eyes to the use that will be made of the help. No man is rich enough to squander his substance on worthless objects. Obedience to Christ’s precepts does not include supporting evil-doers. Let us not encourage the idler, nor confirm the beggar, nor prop up the drunkard, nor support the prodigal, nor assist in any other unwise or foolish expenditure. Some will never help themselves whilst they can get others to help them. Such are evil-doers, and need to be reprov’d and not assisted. Some, through incompetence, will repeatedly take and injudiciously spend what they take. Such are wasters, and need to be kindly and firmly guided. These and similar dangerous vortexes for the little that we have at our disposal need to be rightly handled. The foregoing are unquestionably qualifications that are to be introduced into Christ’s command, *“Give to every man that asketh of thee.”* Give not to the worthless, said Paul, in effect (2 Thess. 3:10). Shall we say that Paul was out of harmony with Christ? If not, shall we say that Paul would forbid us to help the lazy but would bid us to help to keep the spendthrift or the drunkard? Christ’s precept is beautiful—*“Give,”* that is, if no legitimate impediment is in the way. This applies also to our duty to be like God, who is kind to the unthankful and the evil (Luke 6:35). It is no kindness to confirm a man in his wickedness. Let us not by mistaken kindness injure such an one by our love. But what a plea, it may be said, does such a qualification give for a man to be selfish and niggardly. None but dishonest reasoners will find in this a plea for sordidness, and dishonest men God will surely judge.

The present condition of the saints was prefigured by Israel’s wilderness experience. This experience must not be confounded with the blessings promised upon their settlement in Canaan. The former comprised elements of great trial and hardship. Still, in connection with both experiences, God showed Himself the God of marvellous goodness. Commenting upon the wilderness experience, Paul said, *“About the space of forty years he bore or fed them as a nurse beareth or feedeth her children”* (Acts 13:18 Mar.). This feature in Israel’s typical experience should be studied and taken to heart by those who are disposed to murmur at the darkness and difficulty of the present

probationary way. The constant recognition of God's goodness in the day of evil is of the utmost moment. Without it there can be no patience, no endurance, and no right interpretation of the sorrowful side of life. God *is* good—very good, even in the affliction to which He subjects His children. His goodness is, as revelation describes, “*excellent,*” “*abundant,*” “*marvellous,*” (Ps. 36:7; 17:7; Exod. 34:6). It is written, that, “*like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.*” Though we may now, through infirmity, fail to grasp this beautiful Scripture, we shall (if found faithful) do so by-and-by. From the standpoint of the antitypical promised land, we shall doubtless be able to trace the paternal hand of God in the ups and downs of the journey to it—the vixen wife, the cruel husband, the unkind parent, the persecuting neighbour, the unjust employer, the repulsive disease, the loss of husband, wife or child, will be seen then to have had a divine and beneficent purpose, and to have had a potent effect in the development of that character without which there would have been no entrance into the Kingdom of God. Although these afflictions are the natural lot of all men, they are, in a sense, more than natural to the children of God. Paul's “*thorn in the flesh*”—his base and weak bodily presence—his contemptible speech, were all very natural, but at the same time were divinely used instruments of great importance.

Let us not allow our shortcomings to lessen our affection for God. They have this tendency—they are apt to lead us to dread rather than love Him. This result is wrong and illogical. God has plainly said that He will overlook our deficiencies and abundantly forgive our sins, provided we confess and forsake them. Is not God “*tender*” and “*rich*” and “*great*” in mercy? Is He not “*the Father of Mercies*?” It is not God's will that we should run away from Him from fear. He would have us keep very near to Him, and approach Him always with boldness. Men who take an opposite attitude to this dishonour God. “*But I fear,*” says a brother, “*that my failings are too numerous and too great for God to overlook.*” This self-impeachment sounds very serious, but is our brother's feeling reliable? Is our brother in love with the truth? Yes. Is he prepared to make sacrifices for it? Yes, many. Does he strive to overcome his failings by supplicating God's help in prayer, and the reading of His Word, and by keeping out of temptation? Yes. Does he know that as the months roll on he is ascending, though very, very slowly, the scale of perfection? Yes. Then let our brother cheer-up—let him raise the hands which hang down and strengthen the feeble knees. Let him have faith in God's mercy. There is ground for assurance and not misgiving. That a greater acquaintance with the Scriptures should lead

our brother to more fully realise now than on first obeying the truth, the wideness of the gap between his degree of perfection and Christ's, is a good rather than a bad sign. "But," continues our brother, "*is there not such a thing as presuming on the mercy of God?*" Unquestionably there is, but our brother is not the type of man who would be guilty of this. Men who thus presume are men who hold the truth in unrighteousness, who seize any and every excuse for neglecting its requirements, who wilfully sin. Such men study how frequently they can absent themselves from the meetings, how little they can give for the truth, how close to the world they can steer. It was in reference to these that Paul said—"*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*"

Christ and the saints in their glorified condition are apocalyptically described as the "*Paradise of God*" (Rev. 2:7). Other parts of the word are in harmony with this beautiful symbol. Isaiah tells us that the redeemed shall be called "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord (61:3). Solomon, David and Jeremiah alike compare them to unwithering, evergreen, and fruitful trees, planted by rivers of water (Prov. 11:25, 28, 30; Ps. 1, 3; 92:12; Jer. 17:8). They are also likened to a "*watered garden*" (Is. 58:11; Jer. 31:12; Cant. 4:12–15). It is said that "*Israel* (and it is applicable in the highest sense to the 'Israel of God') *shall blossom and bud and fill the face of the world with fruit*" (Is. 27:6). The significance of these expressions is to be gathered from their respective contexts. And how much comfort do they embody! They shadow forth the glorious truths that God will turn the sorrow of His children into joy by endowing them with the strength and life of angels; that, by His abiding spirit, He will guide them continually, so that whatsoever they do will prosper and will redound to His glory. Of their instrumentality truly may it be said: "*As the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations*" (Is. 61:11). What a glorious prospect to have before us! Let us delight ourselves in it. As we take our walks abroad at this gladsome season of the year—as we gaze upon the lovely fresh verdure around—let us ponder and rejoice in the promise of God: "*To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*"

God commands men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30). Repentance does not consist merely in sorrow for sin. Truly, godly sorrow worketh repentance, nevertheless sorrow is not repentance (2 Cor. 7:10.) Repentance is a change of mind—a discarding of one's own thoughts,

and the adoption of the thoughts of God. God once “*suffered all nations to walk in their own ways,*” but now He requires them (by His word scattered broadcast throughout the world) to turn from vanities and to serve Him (Acts 14:15, 16.) There is no harmony between the mind of God and the mind of the natural man. “*As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts*” (Is. 55:9; Prov. 14:12.) The reason for this difference is to be found mainly in the inherent sinfulness of man; “*the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be: and they that are in the flesh cannot please God*” (Rom. 8:8; 7:18; Jer. 17:9). This utter unreliableness of the thinking of the flesh is a hard lesson, but learn it we must if we would please God and secure life everlasting. “*If he live after the flesh, ye shall die,*” “*Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap*” (Rom. 8:8–13; Gal. 6:7, 8.) It is on the basis of this truth that Paul exhorts us to “*walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind*” (Ephes. 4:17). We shall most certainly fail to do this unless we from day to day read the book which contains God’s mind. No education or culture that the world can give will work repentance. There is only one means by which it can be brought about, and that is by Bible mediation. The man who has truly repented has not only imbibed God’s mind, but strives earnestly to retain it. —*Bro. A. T. Jannaway— 1889*

## **The Patient Waiting**

The ground of escape from “*the hour of trial,*” which was to be so terrible, was stated to be “*the keeping of the word of the patient waiting for the Spirit.*” The importance of this word may be estimated by the severity of the chastisement for its neglect. The coming of the Spirit-Man is the thing waited for; and the teaching which creates this expectation is “*the word of the patient waiting for.*” Wherever the truth was received as the result of divine teaching, the earnest and joyous expectation of the return of the glorified Jesus became a prime article of faith. This appears from many places in the New Testament.

When Paul went to Thessalonica he proclaimed the royalty of Jesus, and his return to rule the whole habitable—that there is another King than Caesar, even Jesus. Many of Caesar's subjects believed him; and, in consequence, threw away their idols, and waited for his coming.

In writing to these in after years, Paul said, “Ye turned to the Deity from the idols to serve a living and true Deity; and *to wait for his Son*

*from the heavens*, whom He raised from among the dead, even Jesus, who delivers us from the coming wrath.” This became to them a matter of hope. They waited for it, and were taught to do so with patience and endurance. It is, therefore, termed “*the patient waiting of the hope of our Lord Jesus Anointed*,” in 1 Thess. 1:3. In both these epistles the apocalypse of Jesus occupies a prominent place. It is expressly mentioned at the end of all the chapters of the first with many important accompaniments; and, in 2 Epist. 3:5, he says, “the Lord direct your hearts into the love of the Deity, and into *the patient waiting for the Anointed*.” They had become impatient, supposing that the day of his appearing was at hand. But Paul corrected this error by telling them that it would not come to pass until the consummation of an Apostasy, which would be perfected under the Man of Sin: and that, when this power should be fully matured, then the Lord Jesus would be apocalysped to destroy it, and be glorified in his saints.

All who are “taught of God” understand this, and earnestly desire the event; because they know that there is no salvation till He appears. The promises are to those who love his appearing. Paul teaches this distinctly. “There is laid up,” says he, “a coronal wreath of righteousness for all them who love his appearing;” and in another place he says, “*to them who look for him* he shall appear a second time without sin for salvation”—Heb. 9:28. Only those who are watching and prepared will share in this salvation.

—Bro. John Thomas, *Eureka Vol. 1 pg. 384*

## **What Will A Stranger Hear Within Our Gates?**

*God is calling out of the Gentiles a people for His name.  
At some point during this time it may be our privilege  
to assist an one on their journey to a knowledge of the truth  
and the waters of baptism.*

*As this person hears the Gospel, and believes the truth of it,  
he or she shall become a stranger within our gates.  
With joy we will want to introduce our new Bible student  
to the brethren and sisters.*

*What will a stranger hear within our gates?  
More of that which the honest and good heart  
desires to hear? The gospel of the coming  
Kingdom of Yahweh?*

*What will a stranger hear within our gates?*

*More of the things concerning the name of  
Yahshua Anointed, and of his Father,  
Yahweh of Hosts?*

*What will a stranger hear within our gates?  
The love and concern we have one for another?  
The desire we have to promulgate the truth  
of the Scriptures?*

*What will a stranger hear within our gates?  
More of that which the honest and good heart  
longs to hear, or things that should not  
be heard at all?*

*What will a stranger hear within our gates?  
The fruit of the Spirit, or the tongue of the flesh?  
The hope of Israel, or ecclesial troubles  
and personality conflicts?*

*Yahweh calls men and women to His glorious Truth.  
Those who are so blessed will make a covenant,  
our behavioral shortcomings notwithstanding.  
Of this we can be certain.*

*Along the road to this great calling and election,  
we can make the journey either easy or difficult:  
easy, through speech seasoned with salt;  
difficult, by inappropriate speaking.*

*When a stranger steps inside of our gates,  
may we be ever mindful that a hunger and thirst for truth  
and for righteousness is what brought this person  
to our gates to begin with.*

*With all humility let us not cast a stumbling block  
in the path of those whom the Lord sends  
our way that they might hear words  
whereby they must be saved.*

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## Hints For Bible Markers

Are the rich condemned? No, their case is not hopeless but it is difficult. It is Jesus who says so (Matt. 19:23). Paul says that riches call for exceptional caution. If they are rich in faith and good works, their worldly riches will not hinder them anymore than riches did Abraham or Job. But to be “rich in this world and poor in faith” is a problem. A rich man can make use of his riches in such a way as to commend himself to Christ or not. It is their choice on how they would use them. There is a time coming when all must make a report of their use of God’s gifts. The rich will need to show how they have used their wealth in relation to the truth. If they have been used well they will be rewarded. If their riches are not used for work in the truth they will not. Eternal life will only be given to those who have used God’s gifts, monetary, time, intelligence, etc., in a manner befitting a saint of the Most High. It is only in relation to the truth, in its belief and obedience, that gifts are sanctified. *Bro. Beryl V. Snyder*

### The Commandments of Christ

As collected and organized by bro. Roberts

#### VI. CONCERNING YOUR ACTIONS

**Riches are dangerous; if they come to your hand, turn them into safeguards and friends by using them liberally in the Lord's service, whose stewards we are.**

*For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. (1 Timothy 6:10)*

*Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; (1 Timothy 6:17)*

*That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; (1 Timothy 6:18)*

*Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. (1 Timothy 6:19)*

*And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. (Luke 12:18)*

*And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. (Luke 12:19)*

*But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? (Luke 12:20)*

*So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God. (Luke 12:21)*

*And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. (Luke 16:9)*

*He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. (Luke 16:10)*

*If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? (Luke 16:11)*

*And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? (Luke 16:12)*

*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: (Matthew 6:19)*