

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 Berean Christadelphians since 1923.

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ECCLESIAL NEWS	Milam County, Nakalira	
EXHORTATION.....	Let Us Rise Up And Build (6)	221
EXHORTATION.....	Christ In You	225
SIGNS.....	Recent Signs of the Times	227
THOUGHTS.....	The Constitution and Statement of Faith	228
.....	Encouraging Words No. 33.....	238
.....	Meditations – Deity’s Ways No. 33.....	239
.....	Thoughts Gleaned By The Wayside.....	243
.....	Answers – Ascending Up Where He Was Before ...	246
.....	Answers – Anointing the Sick	247
.....	TV’s Disastrous Impact on Children	248
.....	Confess His Name	250
BIBLE MARKING.....	The Commandments of Christ	253

God Willing, The Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial News will be published monthly as an avenue of providing information of Ecclesial interest to the Brotherhood. Ecclesial news and correspondence, Fraternal Gathering notices, special activities and upbuilding exhortations are encouraged. This is an effort to upbuild and prepare us in heart and mind for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

MILAM COUNTY, Texas

To the Household of Faith, we send loving greetings through Jesus, our Lord. Since last we reported our news we have had the pleasure of visitors from the Austin Ecclesia, bro. Seth and sis. Sarah Brown. This was in April and bro. Seth kindly gave us words of exhortation on “Inner Beauty”. Then, in May, our brother Ben Naglieri visited and he, too, delivered exhortation to us on the Apostle Paul. We wish to express thanks to our visitors and the brethren for supplying necessary words to uplift and exhort as we see the Day approaching.

It is with much thanksgiving and joy we announce the obedience of another three of our Sunday School Scholars to God’s command to believe, obey, and to walk circumspectly in His ways.

On Saturday afternoon, May 26, 2012, both **Keely Anne Prado** and her sister **Shylan Joy Prado** were interviewed concerning The Things of the Kingdom of God and The Things of the Name of Jesus Christ. Each gave a good confession of the First Principles and of their faith as found in Jesus. They were then immersed into the Saving Name. Our bro. John Wolfe, of the Lampasas Ecclesia, helped us with the interviews; and we were privileged to have the company (from the Lampasas Ecclesia) of our sis. Ruby Wolfe, bro. Mike Neely, bro. David & sis. Lois Van Pelt, and also sis. Joanne Osborne, and Sunday School Scholar Ross Rhoades from the Goldthwaite Ecclesia with us for the immersions. It was truly a joyous day.

On Sunday morning we welcomed them into the Household of Faith and the Berean Fellowship by the right hand of fellowship. Letters or cards, words of welcome may be sent to them: 9631 Strasburger Rd., Rogers, TX 76569.

On Wednesday evening, June 6, 2012 yet another Sunday School Scholar, **Jordan Lynn Hurst**, was also examined on The Things of the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ. It is our joy to report she was immersed into the only “name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Visitors on this occasion were brethren Jim Phillips, George Jr. Hurst, and John Wolfe and sisters Ruby Wolfe, Kay Phillips, Juanita Hurst, and Carol Smith all of the Lampasas Ecclesia. As the Lampasas June Gathering is to be this next Sunday, we extended the right hand of fellowship to our new sister shortly after she came out of the waters of baptism. Her address is: 5301 Quail Hollow Dr., Temple, TX 76502.

We pray our Heavenly Father will guide our new sisters in their walk toward His glorious Kingdom soon to be set up upon the earth, and give all praise, thanks, and honor unto Him.

We invite any who are in the area to stop in to break bread, to remember the Lord's sacrifice.

May the Good God of heaven and earth keep us all in His tender care as we strive to do His will and walk Zionward.

With love in that Hope of Israel we share, on behalf of the Milam County Ecclesia – your brother in Christ, Bob Wolfe (254) 593-9293.

NAKALIRA, Kenya

Sunday school: 9:00am. Memorial service: 10:30am Evening First Principles to Bible students. Wednesday Bible class in the homes and Fridays in the hall. Bro. Paul Walukana, P.O. BOX 65-50216. Kamukuywa, Kenya. Phone No:+254735191850. Email: pwafula87@yahoo.com .

Dear brothers and sisters in the Saving Name,

It is for some time since our last report. This year we were thankful for visit of Bro. Bob. The visit was of great value. Thanks also for encouraging e-mail from Bro. Ed. We are pleased to announce from Adam's race a couple **Bro. Obae Wekesa** and **Sis. Carolyn Khayanga** who gave good confession of their faith on April 9th 2012 before us having the company of Bro. John and Sis. Caro of Mayanja Ecclesia. They were baptised on 15th April 2012 in river Kamukuywa, the right hand of fellowship was given before the memorial service. May Yahweh watch over them and bless their efforts for the Truth these last days of Gentile time. I can't forget to thank those who participated, my brothers and sisters of Nakalira Ecclesia and our fellow labourers Bre. Epa and John for their hardworking.

Thanks also goes to the BCAF for their great work to the youth. My encouragement goes to parents to support in this work. If the lord will, to have a Bible school for them. Comments are needed. With help of brothers and sisters near and far, work continues to one seeking the Truth.

On behalf of Nakalira Ecclesia,
Bro. Paul Walukana.

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING..... **July 23–29, 2012**
Bro. Mark Braune, 209 Ranger Dr., Buda, TX, 78610, 512-757-3088, markbraune@gmail.com Study, "Ecclesiastes"

TENNESSEE FRATERNAL GATHERING.....**Oct 6 –7, 2012**
Bro. Jim Rankin, 115 Sherwood Dr., Camden, TN 38320 USA, 731-584-6039, email jrankin@bentoncountycable.net

GOLDTHWAITE FRATERNAL GATHERING.....**Nov 23–25, 2012**
Bro. Curtis Hurst, 250 CR 517, Mullin, TX 76864. 325-985-3868.
Information available at: www.christadelphian.com/gw/gathering/

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 Bro. Craig Kiley (craigkiley@yahoo.com) and we will be happy to transfer the talks to MP3 format and post them.

Let Us Rise Up and Build Part 6

“The Lord shall suddenly come to His Temple. Who may abide the day of His coming? Who shall stand when He appeareth?”—Mal. 3:1

It would have presented a very beautiful and pleasing final picture if the book of Nehemiah had ended with chapter 12. But there is another chapter—a sad one, and yet it too is glorious. Beginning with v. 6, its events are many years later—

“But in all this time was not I at Jerusalem: for in the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes, king of Babylon, came I unto the king, and after certain days obtained I leave of the king.”

We remember at the beginning the King set him a time. How long he stayed at Jerusalem the first time we do not know, nor how long this chapter is after he left the city.

We discern another type, which will be more striking and impressive as we consider the events of this chapter—

“The Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.”

What did Nehemiah find when he returned after a long absence spent in the presence of the king?

The scene is a sad one—

“When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find the faith on the earth?”

Nehemiah tells us (v. 7)—

“And I came to Jerusalem, and understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah, in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the House of God.”

Here was one of the major causes of the evil condition Nehemiah found on his return—the High Priest, the spiritual leader—was unfaithful, and allied to the enemy.

He had brought in the enemy and established him right in the Temple of God.

“And it grieved me sore. Therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber.”

The Temple is cleansed. Judgment begins at the House of God. Malachi, who prophesied sometime during this period, declared (3:1-3)—

“The Lord shall suddenly come to His Temple. Who may abide the day of His coming? Who shall stand when He appeareth?...He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver.”

Nehemiah continues (v. 10)—

“And I perceived that the portion of the Levites had not been given them... for the Levites and singers were fled every one to his field.”

“The singers were fled.” The rejoicing had fallen silent. The praise and worship and thanksgiving had stopped.

V. 11—*“Then contended I with the rulers, and said, Why is the House of God forsaken?”*

“Why is the House of God forsaken?” We remember the solemn covenant they had made before he left them.

V. 13—*“And I made treasurers over the treasuries—Shelemiah (Recompensed of God), Zadok (Righteous), Pedaiah (God has ransomed), Hanon (Merciful)—for they were counted faithful.”*

A complete change of administration. Faithful stewards are given charge over the treasuries—

“Thou hast been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler over many things.”

V. 15—*He found them profaning the sabbath, working for their own advantage, following their fleshly interests.*

V. 16—*And aliens were coming in, and trading on the sabbath. God had said—*

“My House shall be a House of Prayer for all nations.”

Israel was chosen to teach the whole world the blessings of righteousness. But what kind of teachers were these? How could the

alien learn the ways of God when these appointed teachers encouraged them to come and help them break God's laws?

So Nehemiah set his servants as guards at the gates, to allow no merchandise to be brought in on the Sabbath. Then the merchants set up their stands just outside the walls to entice the people to come out and shop.

They sought to circumvent the law by a technicality—to come as close as they could to getting in. But Nehemiah “chased them FAR AWAY.” The principle is clear. Temptation and evil must not be put just outside the wall, where it can continue to tempt. It must be chased far away and out of sight.

* * *

V. 23—*“In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab.*

“And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jew's language.”

What a sorry state of affairs they had gotten themselves into in Nehemiah's absence! How can children learn the language of the Truth when we deliberately choose an instructor for them in the language of the world?

Surely this is the saddest and most evil aspect of alien marriage—the children grow up misguided and confused—speaking half the Jew's language and half the confused, heathen, worldly tongue of Ashdod—a pitiful mixture so often manifested in families born of alien marriage—far sadder even than no knowledge of the Truth at all.

V. 25—*“And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair.”*

“There shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

“Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?”

—the age-old evil that had corrupted all the earth, and brought the flood on the world of the ungodly.

* * *

V. 28—*“And one of the Sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was son-in-law to Sanballat ...therefore I chased him from me...”*

“Depart from me, ye cursed, into outer darkness.”

How could the high priest countenance the marriage of his grandson to the daughter of Sanballat, the arch-enemy who had labored so hard by every evil device to destroy Nehemiah and his work for the Lord? Here is how—

A new movement was in the air. The old narrow separateness was in disrepute. The past was to be forgotten.

“Was not Sanballat a Samaritan?—of a people who accepted God, accepted the Law of Moses? Nehemiah was an extremist—well-meaning indeed, and he did a lot of good work, but he did not have the proper spirit. Fortunately he is gone now, and we can be more charitable. True, Sanballat was an enemy, but are we not commanded to love our enemies?”

Such would be the argument—very persuasive—very appealing to the flesh.

The sad thing is that such reasoning is prevalent today—reasoning that misses the whole spirit of Scripture, and subtly endeavors to undermine the walls that faithful Nehemiah labored to build in troublous times, just as our pioneer brethren have built them up from the rubbish for us.

To illustrate the reality of this danger, I would like to quote a paragraph from a standard Christadelphian publication put out by another group—a paragraph that shocked me very much. The writer is discussing these actions of Nehemiah in ch. 13 which we have just considered. He says—

“One cannot but be thankful Nehemiah did not live a millennium or so earlier, otherwise he might have contacted Obed and there would then have been no “sweet Psalmist of Israel” nor wise king Solomon, nor good kings Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah, for the Bible would have been deprived of one of its most beautiful characters, Ruth the Moabitess, the ancestress of David from whom those kings sprang.”

How could ANYONE claiming to be in the Truth SO misconstrue and misunderstand Scripture—and set Scripture against Scripture—faithful Nehemiah against faithful Ruth!

He is thankful that Nehemiah did not live in the time of Ruth or he might have been able to prevent her marriage to Boaz! See how this line of reasoning undermines the power of the whole book of Nehemiah, and opens the way for the undermining of any other unpalatable portion of Scripture—opens the way for the free course of
224—Berean 2012

the thinking of the flesh. This is today's great danger to the Household.

Nehemiah labored amid enemies of every sort, and his true friends—those who stood for the narrow way without compromise—were few.

Today the struggle, and the choice of allegiance, is ours. Let us labor and watch constantly upon our walls, and say to all who would hinder, or compromise, or distract—“We are doing a great work, we cannot come down to you.”

—*Bro. G.V. Growcott*

Christ in You, the Hope of Glory

“Jesus Christ is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption”

1 Cor. 1:30

THE central theme of all Scripture is Christ and his redemptive work. The Spirit testifies of Christ—

“In the Volume of the Book it is written of me.”

We see Christ in Genesis as the seed promised to Adam and Eve, who would bruise the serpent's head. We see him in the animals slain to cover their nakedness; in Abel's more excellent sacrifice; in Noah's ark prepared to the saving of his house.” We see him in the Seed promised to Abraham in whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed.

We see Christ all through the life of Joseph: rejected by his brethren, sold for twenty pieces of silver, and made ruler of the Gentile world power for the salvation of his brethren.

Christ is abundantly manifested to us in the Exodus. He is the light shining through all its pages. He is brought before our minds in the Passover supper eaten by the Israelites on the night of their deliverance from bondage. The blood sprinkled upon the lintel and door posts speaks to us of the blood of Christ shed for the redemption of sinners. He is our Passover.

Again, with what beauty and intricacy, his nature, character and work are displayed in the Tabernacle and its furnishings! The types and shadows seen in the Tabernacle form a subject which could occupy many pages.

All the Law was a shadow of things to come—things that find their fulfillment in Christ. And so it is, from Genesis to Revelation. Christ is constantly before our eyes, and IF we are diligent in our pursuit of the Truth as it is in Jesus, he WILL be imprinted upon our minds and affections.

He WILL be impressed there permanently. Thus he WILL be IN us, “the hope of glory.” We will have the mind of Christ, for—

“Unto them which are called...Christ (is) the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Jesus Christ... is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”

The many things we glean from the Scriptures in their relation to Christ and his redemptive work are daily impressed upon us in our readings and these things are brought into remembrance when we meet each first day of the week to partake of the bread and the wine—

“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?”

We examine ourselves in the light of this Word which has impressed Christ upon us all during the week, and thus we can “discern the Lord's body” in the emblems before us.

Brothers and sisters, are we able to discern the favor and love that has been bestowed upon us who have been allowed the privilege of assembling as sons and daughters of the Almighty God, to worship Him and to fellowship Him and His Son?

How can we become careless and unenthusiastic about such a privilege? How can we allow ANYTHING to interfere with our being here in the right state of mind? Paul says Rom. 8: 38-39):

“I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.”

Nothing external can separate us from the love of God. But it is possible to let other things interfere — “*the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering IN*” can choke the Word so that it becomes unfruitful, and no longer impresses Christ upon us.

Thus we are separated from the love of God. Our minds must be continually directed into spiritual channels. If we fail in this, then we revert to the mind of the flesh—the natural mind; and we know from

the Scriptures that this mind is not subject to God, nor to His laws. It is enmity against God. It cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God. Christ is not impressed upon it. Surely we cannot desire such a mind as this!

How necessary it is then, that we painstakingly cultivate the mind of the Spirit, so that we may combat the influences of the world about us.

Christ said that in the last days the love of many would wax cold. The ecclesias have arrived at that period of time when they are in their last and deadly struggle with the powers of evil. The struggle is not confined to ecclesias as a whole, but to each brother and sister as individuals.

Just how much of a battle are we waging? How much of a struggle are we putting up against the forces of evil that threaten to overwhelm us? Are we able to hear the Spirit's warning—

“Repent, and do the first works. Be watchful and strengthen the things that remain. Anoint thine eyes with eyesalve that thou mayest see.”

May we take heed before it is too late! — Bro. J. F. Packer

Recent Sign of the Times

Submitted by Bro. Stephen Male

This incident out of the blue could be the fuse which ignites the Middle East tinder box. A major international incident between Syria and Turkey, with its neo Ottoman ambitions, could result in the conditions for Dan.11.40, namely the King of the North push against Turkey, and the advent of Christ at this momentous time.

If Turkey retaliates which seems likely, owing to the downing of one of its fighter planes by Syria, then Russia could step in on the side of Syria, and threaten Turkey and occupy Constantinople, its age old dream, dating back to the Crimean War. This would be a fulfillment of Bro Thomas's exposition at that time 1856 (Anatolia), and the establishment of the Constantinopolitan autocracy. As Bro Thomas points out in Elpis Israel, Russia catches the West off guard, and suddenly attacks “like a whirlwind”, with many ships and all sorts of armour.

These are exciting times, like the situation that triggered the First World War, as Bro Matthew pointed out in his recent talk on the Middle East crisis, whereby a seemingly minor incident (the assassination of the Arch Duke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo, August 1914), triggered a global war, due to a kind of domino effect, as powers

aligned themselves with the disputants, Austria and Serbia. In this case Syria and Turkey. We know the Great River Euphrates was dried up to “make way for the Kings if the East or “Sun's Risings”) in 1917 (Rev.16.12), and the Khalifa was disbanded by the British, and a secular Turkish state set up at the Lausanne and San Remo conference, 1922. But now under Erdogan, Turkey has returned to her Moslem Ottoman roots. She has a massive army of half a million men, equipped with hundreds of tanks and modern artillery and missiles. She is already a key player in the Syrian “earthquake”, giving succor and arms to the rebels, backed by the US. This rapidly becomes a World War 3 or Armageddon situation in the making. A time of “indignation”, when the nations are “angry”, and the “time of the dead has come” (Rev.11.18).

Whilst this crisis is unfolding, Israel could take the opportunity of a preemptive strike on Iran's nuclear installations, which would have the effect of rapidly widening the conflict, and putting Israel as well as Turkey in the spotlight, and the situation if not Ezk.38, then Psalm 83 presaging the GOG/MAGOG WAR.

Let us prepare ourselves as the Bride adorned with garments of linen white as snow, our lamps full of the golden oil of the Word, for being summoned to Sinai, there to give account before the great Judge of all the earth for what we have done and not done.

The Constitution and Statement of Faith

“Hold fast the form of sound words” —2 Timothy 1:13

THIS is a very important document and should be much more fully known and appreciated among us. It has been an essential aid in maintaining Biblical unity and ecclesial harmony.

It deals with both ecclesial organization and the basic doctrinal truths of our common Hope and foundation. It has been a great factor of ecclesial stability. It has been accepted as an agreed basis of belief and operation for 80 years. It has thus been well tested by time and experience.

It is principally the work of one man. Bro. Roberts compiled it in conjunction with the Birmingham ecclesia on the basis of 30 years of study and experience. If wise and experienced brethren had not compiled something of this nature during the beginning of the Christadelphian movement, this latter-day reestablishment of the Truth in its entirety, it would have been far more difficult—yea, well nigh impossible—to maintain a continuous sound, lightstand of Truth.

Where this has been faithfully adhered to, as a brief and sound synopsis of Truth and basis of fellowship, there the Truth has been maintained in its purity.

It is not a substitute for the Bible, but it fills a great need, and it is a great help to ecclesial harmony and soundness. All true brethren

and sisters will value anything that is profitable to the Brotherhood and the Truth. The value and profitableness of this compilation has been proven and recognized and thankfully accepted among us for 80 years.

Its value as a stabilizing influence and harmonizing instrument of constructive ecclesial life increases as the length from the time of its establishment among us increases. The fact that for 80 years of testing and experience, faithful brethren have preserved this basis, makes it a great help to us to hold to the Truth against all the influences that would weaken and corrupt it today.

The “Constitution and Statement of Faith” has an inseparable companion work, the “Ecclesial Guide,” which was jointly developed with it. The Guide is fuller and more detailed. It gives reasons and explanations. It is very good and profitable reading. Its whole spirit is wisdom and goodness.

The more we are aware of the contents of these works, and the more we enter into the spirit that produced them and is manifested in them, the healthier and happier our ecclesia will be.

Besides long and deep scriptural study, these pamphlets arose out of actual experience and practice. They were the result of testing and refinement over a period of 30 years, from 1853 when bro. Roberts accepted the Truth to 1883 when they were published in this completed form, and have been changed very little since.

It is remarkable, almost unbelievable, apart from the loving providence of God, how sound and adequate and complete they have proven to be in the light of the many problems that have arisen in the brotherhood in the 80 years since they appeared.

There is a strong movement in other groups to belittle, and disparage them, and relegate them to a “less enlightened” past. It is not for us to judge motives nor to question sincerity, but any effort to weaken the power and influence and respect among us for these labours of love and wisdom can only come from an incorrect and harmful misconception concerning the basic principles of the Truth of God.

THE Constitution booklet consists of 4 parts. They are:—

1. The Constitution itself—the agreed rules of ecclesial operation based on the commands of Christ, that all may be done “decently and in order.”

2. The Statement of Faith—a dear basic outline of the first principles of the Gospel of Salvation.

3. Doctrines to Be Rejected—sometimes a truth can be stated more clearly and simply if stated negatively. The doctrines to be rejected are repudiations of the commonest errors in the religious world.

4. The Commandments of Christ—the basic principles of character and conduct which constitute godliness and holiness.

This last is the deepest and most vital section of all.

THE CONSTITUTION

THE first section, the Constitution, is of a different nature from the other three. The other three express basic and unchangeable truths. Concerning them, there is no room for difference of opinion in judgment, within the sound framework of true belief.

But the Constitution is to some extent a flexible document—a set of arrangements based upon scriptural principles with a view to conducting an ecclesia spiritually, profitably and according to scriptural command that all be done “decently and in order.”

There are 38 clauses in the original Constitution as compiled by bro. Roberts. The first seven are general and fundamental. The next 21 (Nos. 8-28) are operational, and will vary in detail according to an ecclesia's size and circumstances. The next eight (Nos. 29-36) deal with problems that arise in ecclesial life. No. 37 concerns Sunday School operations. And the last, No. 38, prescribes the method of constitutional amendment.

All could be very profitably studied in detail. Each has a good reason, based on experience and prayerful judgment.

The greater our experience in the Truth, and the greater our familiarity with the Constitution and Ecclesial Guide, the stronger will be our deep impression of their value and wisdom, and the goodness of God in causing their preparation.

We should thank God, and rededicate ourselves to preserving the sound foundation which faithful and hard working pioneer brethren have laid.

Nos. 1-3 deal with our identity and membership.

No. 4 defines the three basic forms of ecclesial activity: worship, preaching and study, to which are respectively allotted Sunday morning, Sunday evening and a midweek evening. All three are essential to sound ecclesial life and growth, and those who wilfully neglect any are not on the way to life.

No. 5 is our free acceptance of the will of the majority in all matters of order and arrangement—all matters not violating conscience or principle. This is important for any group, but especially for brethren of Christ.

Let a matter be discussed. Let all views be expressed in a calm and brotherly spirit—each brother endeavouring not to exclusively stress all the advantages of one view, like a lawyer, but to give a balanced appraisal of all alternatives, like an impartial judge.

Then let the ecclesia decide and let all whole-heartedly support the decision, not just all accept but actively and cheerfully support and work for it.

No. 6 stresses the family and fraternal aspect of our association in Christ. The word brother should mean far more to us than it does. The term tends to become a technicality—bro. Jones and bro. Smith. It must be preserved as a loving reality of close affection and relationship.

Nos. 8-28 concern the operation of the ecclesia.

Among them, No. 21 outlines the form of meeting that has generally prevailed among Christadelphians ever since. We are indebted to brother Roberts' tireless labours far more than we realize. A practical and beneficial form of order is a tremendous asset in preserving ecclesial health and vitality.

No. 22 excludes all business from the Sunday morning meeting. Every effort should be made to assure that this meeting above all others should be calm, harmonious, spiritual, and deeply united in fraternal affection. Differences should be left outside. Unity, mutual sympathy and fellowship should be stressed.

A great responsibility lies on each individual brother and sister to see that the fullest benefit of strength and comfort and joy and peace is derived from this service. At this time above all we must care for and forbear one another in love.

Nos. 29-36 deal with problems. There will always be problems. Problems are divinely sent to test us—to test our comprehension and acceptance of the principles of love and sacrifice that Jesus taught and manifested—to reveal to what degree we manifest the spirit of Christ and have learned to control the animal motions of the flesh.

No. 31 deals with what is perhaps the most widely ignored and dishonoured command of Christ, and yet one that is vital to any personal spiritual soundness or acceptance with him: —

That there should be no discussion of a brother's or sister's fault, except within the specific framework of action that Jesus lays down for such cases in Matt. 18:15-18.

A faithful obedience to this command—so obviously wise, and kind, and Christlike and right—would eliminate a large part of the material that makes up ecclesial conversation throughout the world.

We are all guilty of this, for it is a deeply-engrained characteristic of the flesh to talk disparagingly of others.

There are endless ways we can rationalize it and relieve our consciences, and the more sophisticated among us have learned how to do it inferentially and obliquely and with the highest appearance of professed affection and sanctity. The Proverbs say —

“Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth.”

And among the seven things that God hates most, the last and crowning one is—

“He that soweth discord among brethren” (Prov. 6:19).

I fear that more of us will be rejected at the judgment seat for this fault of talking unfavourably about others than for any other cause—it is such a cheap and universally-indulged luxury of the flesh.

No. 32 emphasizes the seriousness of failure to attend the weekly worship of the brethren and sisters, if at all possible. We are not free agents in this matter. Both specific command and the general spirit of Christ require that we make urgent effort to assemble each week.

In planning our activities, especially in the summer, it is important that we give deep consideration to the implications of this vital command.

FIRST THINGS MUST BE PUT FIRST, and then the rest of the life be fitted in. The flesh will object. The flesh will want “vacations” and trips to the beach and lazy living in homes on the lake and other empty, flesh-pleasing things. But can the flesh promise us eternal life for following its dictates? Pleasing the flesh can only reward us with corruption in the grave.

No. 33 is vitally important. It lays down an agreed method, in harmony with scriptural principles, of procedure in case of impending withdrawal.

As members of a Christadelphian ecclesia, we have all covenanted before God to follow this procedure—procedure designed to give love and patience every opportunity to solve the problem and avoid the pending break.

Whenever this agreed procedure is flouted and ignored, it reveals the grievance to be motivated by the flesh and not by the Spirit—it shows that the flesh has taken the reins of action and the mind of the Spirit no longer rules.

* * *

It will be perceived that the Constitution is far more than a mere set of mechanical and “man-made” rules for the orderly procedure of the ecclesia. It goes deeply into basic scriptural principles of action.

There must be order and agreed arrangements. The only other alternatives are either dictatorship or anarchy. As bro. Roberts points out in connection with this compilation, we are given the ends to be accomplished—the united worship of God, the upbuilding and edification of the Body, the preservation and proclamation of the Truth.

And we are given the principles upon which we must work—the principles of love and humility and gentleness and care and respect and service for others.

Within this framework a workable system had to be formed. We take far too much for granted the labours of the past that have given us our wise and beneficial ecclesial and inter-ecclesial structure.

* * *

THE STATEMENT OF FAITH

THE remarkable thing about the Statement of Faith is how well it has stood the test of time. An introductory paragraph had to be added in 1886 on the inspiration of Scripture. This had been previously implied and accepted, but not specifically stated. So when error arose from contamination with the then “modern” worldly thinking, it had to be defined and defended more clearly.

A few years later, because of the introduction of another new error, the paragraph on resurrection and judgment had to be amplified to specifically exclude the error.

Otherwise, it is as first produced, and it is a clear, logically-arranged synopsis of the First Principles of Truth.

It has proved to be enough, but not too much. It has been assailed and is still being assailed today, but time and events have only served to bring out the wisdom of its wording and the adequacy of its simplicity and brevity.

I: speaks of God—His supremacy, His unity, His infinite, self-sustaining power, His gracious self-manifestation to man.

II: introduces Jesus Christ. We may wonder why Christ is first introduced, before speaking of the events necessitating Christ's appearance and work, but it emphasizes a deeper truth—that in the infinite foreknowledge and wisdom of God Christ is first of all and head of all.

Christ is the heart of the whole divine purpose of self-manifestation in a glorified multitude.

III: speaks of the need for Christ because of the position of the race through the first man.

IV: introduces Adam, and describes his creation and original condition. Two of the truths in this statement—that Adam was the first man, and that he was made from the dust of the ground, are under fire from a growing group of intellectual “free thinkers” in other groups today.

We can be thankful that this Statement of Faith has an 80-year history of sound Christadelphian allegiance behind it. We do well to hold fast to it.

V: Adam's sin, and its consequence. Much controversy has raged around the final clause—“a sentence which defiled and became a physical law of his being and was transmitted to all his posterity”—but it still stands as a clear, brief, simple expression of a fundamental truth.

Bro. Roberts seems to have almost foreseen the errors that would arise, and to have written to fence them out.

VI: God's plan of restoration in harmony with His holiness and righteousness.

VII: The promise to Adam and to David.

VIII: Christ—a son of Adam, of the condemned nature, to earn resurrection by perfect obedience, to escape from the domination of sin and death by dying. The fruit of his victory is offered to all who make themselves a part of him.

IX: The purpose required a human mother and divine begettal that salvation may be through man but not by man.

X: This constituted Jesus Emmanuel—God with us—God manifested in the flesh, but still a mortal man and a sufferer of all the ills of mortality, including the death that passed upon all men. His body, like his brethren's, was a “body of death,” as Paul describes it

XI: The message he delivered was:

1. Repentance from every evil work.
2. His divine sonship.
3. His Jewish kingship.
4. The glad tidings of the Kingdom.

XII: For this message he was put to death by the Jews and Romans. This sacrificial death was in God's purpose to—

1. Condemn sin in the flesh.
2. Declare the righteousness of God as a basis for the extension of His mercy to sinners.

Christ represents all who become part of him. All have died in him. All are forgiven in him.

XIII: God raised him from the dead and exalted him to His right hand as a priestly mediator for his people.

XIV: He is a priest only for his obedient brethren.

XV: He sent forth apostles to proclaim salvation through him.

XVI: To obtain this salvation we must:

1. Believe the Gospel.
2. Put on Christ by immersion in water.
3. Walk in obedience to his commands.

XVII: The Gospel is the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ.

XVIII: The “Things of the Kingdom” are the facts revealed concerning that Kingdom through the prophets.

XIX: It will be the Kingdom of Israel restored, in the same land as before.

XX: God will send Jesus back to earth at the end of Gentile times.

XXI: He will set up the kingdom in the land promised to Abraham.

XXII: This will involve the regathering of the Jewish people and the restoration of the desolated land and city.

XXIII: The rulers of the Kingdom will be Christ's faithful brethren from all ages, raised from the dead and made immortal.

XXIV: When Christ comes, he will raise and judge the responsible dead and gather the responsible living. The responsible are those who know the will of God.

This is the clause that gives the “Amended” Statement of Faith its name. This clause was amended in 1898 to clarify who the responsible are, because of errors promulgated at that time, and still being taught.

XXV: The rejected will go to the second death. The accepted will be changed to immortality of body, and will rule the mortal nations.

XXVI: The Kingdom thus constituted will last 1000 years. Sin and death will continue but will be greatly restrained.

XXVII: Worldwide law shall proceed from Jerusalem. All people will be taught righteousness. War will be abolished. The earth will be filled with the knowledge of God.

XXVIII: The ultimate purpose of the Kingdom is to subdue all enemies, including death, by teaching all mankind the way of life.

XXIX: At the end of the 1000 years, all who have died during the 1000 years will be raised and, together with the living, judged. The rejected will be destroyed. The accepted will be made immortal. Mortality, sin, and death will then have been forever abolished from the earth.

XXX: Jesus will then yield the Kingdom to God, Who will manifest Himself as the All in All, and will dwell in intimate oneness with the whole glorified divine family of the redeemed.

Such is the glorious consummation of the purpose begun in Eden.

* * *

THE DOCTRINES TO BE REJECTED

THIS aspect is distasteful to many modern-minded “Christadelphians,” who desire to emphasize our agreements with the apostate churches of the world and play down the differences. Some ecclesias in other groups omit this from their Statement of Faith, but bro. Roberts, in an article written in 1866, reprinted in the January, 1964, Berean has some very forthright words on—not only the desirability of a statement of non-belief but its necessity—

“At first sight it might appear superfluous, and even unwarrantable, to set forth points of non-belief as a Basis of Faith. But a moment's reflection will dissipate this impression, and reveal the negative side of this Faith to be of equal value with the positive.

“Every affirmative proposition has a converse. Every “yes” has a “no,” and IF A MAN IS NOT PREPARED TO BOLDLY ACCEPT THAT “NO,” IT SHOWS HIS “YES” IS NOT WORTH MUCH.”

Time does not permit going into them now, but they are all worthy of study. We should know the reason for them, and, to some extent, we should be familiar with the arguments used to justify the errors that these statements repudiate.

The Truth stands out much more sharply and clearly when we repudiate the related errors. Many in the world today would be willing to tolerate, and to a large extent agree with, our Statement of Faith, but the “Doctrines to be Rejected” would bring them sharply to attention. People today tend to passively accept any belief, but do not have the conviction to reject error decisively.

* * *

THE COMMANDMENTS OF CHRIST

THIS is in many ways the most important section of all. Jesus said—

“Ye are my friends IF ye do whatsoever I command you.”

This is the Way of Life; and the only possible Way of Life. Let us not make the universal but fatal mistake of comparing ourselves with ourselves and measuring ourselves by ourselves. We may be keeping the commands as well as bro. Smith does, and much better than bro. Jones does, but let us remember this—

This is the way of life by which we shall stand or fall at the judgment seat, and it does not matter if there is not a soul on earth who lives this life, this still will be the only standard at Christ's judgment seat.

“Many are called, but few are chosen.”

It is sad, but it is true. Let us not avoid facing it just because it is deep and heart-searching. The world being what it is; and, sad as it is to say, the brotherhood being what it is, we shall be bound to appear very unusual and extreme if we set ourselves in single-hearted dedication to keep the commands of Christ, not as they are inevitably watered-down and interpreted and nullified by the mind of the flesh, but as they actually stand, and as they will stand at the judgment seat.

Let us just read a few—

1. Love your enemies: do good to them that hate you.

3. Avenge not yourselves: give place to wrath: suffer yourselves to be defrauded.
4. If a man take thy goods, ask them not again.
5. Submit to wrong for the sake of peace.
6. Be ready to every good work: give to those who ask.
13. Put away anger, wrath, bitterness, all evil speaking.
16. Deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts.
20. In case of sin, speak not of it to others, but tell the offending brother between thee and him alone, with a view to recovery.
23. In EVERYTHING give thanks to God.
30. Love thy neighbor as thyself.
33. Let your light shine before men. Hold forth the Word of life. Do good to all men as ye have opportunity.
34. Be blameless and harmless.
35. Be gentle, meek, kind-hearted, compassionate, merciful, forgiving.
38. Whatever you do, do it heartily, to the Lord.
47. Be always abounding in the work of the Lord.
50. Let your speech be ALWAYS with grace.

These commands are our guiding light of life and joy, in the dark, selfish, worldly jungle of the flesh. The flesh is so evil, and the way of the flesh so universally and unquestioningly accepted, that these good and holy commands seem unrealistic and far-fetched.

We must guard against automatically accepting the reasoning of the fleshly mind. We must guard against the general tendency to adjust these commands to our own limited horizon, instead of opening our cramped hearts and minds to their vast and awful scope.

We must personally and individually study them one by one—give them their full weight and power—allow them to transform our hearts and lives.

* * *

In the Statement of Faith and the Ecclesial Guide, we have the treasured legacy of an outstanding pioneer and labourer in the Vineyard whom we honor for his work's sake. These pamphlets can be, not only a personal education, but a valuable source of ecclesial and inter-ecclesial stability.

All true brethren of Christ have a high regard for the abilities and characteristics of bro. Roberts. Therefore, though they may not be strongly influenced by the views of a local or contemporary brother

who may disagree with them, they will give deep consideration to the views and explanations of a brother of proven discernment and stability whose works have stood the test of time.

I believe all who grow in the Truth find themselves gradually coming into closer focus with bro. Roberts on most points wherein they may have at first thought differently, gradually realizing more fully the value of the helps which, in the providence of God, he has left us.

Let us become thoroughly familiar with the Statement of Faith and the Ecclesial Guide. The more we do, the more we shall discern the wisdom and experience they represent, and the more we shall be built up and strengthened in our most holy faith.

—Bro. G. V. Growcott

Encouraging Words No. 33

THE scriptures exhort us not to throw up our daily callings, but to abide in them, and be faithful to the duties which they entail.

The everyday things of life give more scope for developing character and bringing up the quality of obedience to Christ's commands than we are sometimes disposed to think. When we ponder the training of the worthiest of God's children, we perceive that few, if any, were relieved of the common daily routine.

Jacob, for instance, is revealed diligently serving his master and relative, Laban. To quote Jacob's own words, "*In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes.*" Such were the habits and experiences of Jacob, the holder of the promises! What a pattern of duty faithfully performed under affliction! What an exemplification of obedience to the precept: "*Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle but also to the froward.*"

What a training, too, had Joseph, one chosen to typify the Lord Jesus. He is shown to us as a dutiful son, obediently and unselfishly running on his father's errand to brothers who "*hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.*" When sold into slavery he is seen, at his daily work, exhibiting industry, fidelity, and chastity, in the face of temptations and loneliness. Afterwards; when unjustly imprisoned, he is shown to us setting about his commonplace drudgery with cheerfulness and willingness, ever ready with a helping hand and sympathetic heart. When exalted to honour and riches we find him hard at work on behalf of his royal master, his master's people, and his own

kith and kin. Of many precepts, two in particular are exemplified in the work-a-day life of Joseph: “*Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord*”; “*Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart as unto Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.*”

The case of Moses is similar to that of Joseph. His immediate preparation for his great work of delivering Israel, and organising them as a nation, was a forty-years’ care of his father-in-law’s sheep. And it is interesting and instructive to note that it was whilst he was engaged in the common task of leading the flock to fresh pasturage that the incident of the burning bush occurred. Later, as we know, Jethro’s faithful shepherd gained the divine testimony that he was faithful in all God’s house. What an illustration does Moses’ daily toil afford of the principle enunciated by Christ: “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.”

In view of such examples, let us not place the daily task on a lower level than God has assigned it. If performed in the right spirit, with God in view, it occupies no mean place in our training for higher things. It is possible for you, wives and mothers, to minister to your husbands’ welfare, to clothe and feed your children, and to order your households unto the Lord, and so to perform that part that it qualifies for eternal life. Similarly, it is open to you, children, to serve God by willingly fulfilling your parents’ behests. You, also, who are under masters or mistresses can perform God’s pleasure by showing industry and fidelity behind the counter or in domestic spheres.

Let us remember that our divinely imposed obligations, in our respective relationships, cannot be cancelled by distributing thousands of tracts, by holding hundreds of arguments with the stranger, or by reading whole books of the Bible at a sitting.

Sis. C.H. Jannaway—1914

Meditations – Deity’s Ways No. 33

THE children of God are for the time being the possessors of two minds—the mind of the flesh and the mind of the Spirit. Their duty in relation to these minds is plain— “*He that soweth to his flesh shall of*

the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting” (Gal. 6:8). The scriptures are equally explicit in setting forth the continual conflict which the possession of these two minds entails. *“The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would”* (Gal. 5:17). God is not unrighteous to exact impossibilities. He is content and well-pleased if we have a willing mind—a mind, which, like that exhibited by Paul, delights in the law of God, though greatly impeded in its struggle to do right by the weakness and sinfulness of the flesh. The difference between a fleshly-minded and a spiritually minded man is this: the one does just what pleases himself; the other regulates his likes and dislikes by the Word of God.

Christ’s judgment of the world (an event of 1,000 years duration) will be prefaced by the judgment of his household. With the former judgment in prospect, the Psalmist exclaimed— *“O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth”* (Psalm 67:4). Christ’s judgment of his household is equally (for the righteous) a matter for joyous contemplation. Good men should not fear it. They should long and pray for it. It will possess, truly, an element of dreadfulness, but only for the evil. So far as the upright are concerned, it will be a glorious arrangement, embracing all their salvation and desire. Until then they must be the subjects of misunderstanding, of hatred, and of persecution. That day will be the grand turning-point of their experience. Let us not fear this coming, long-delayed day of judgment. Let us look to Christ as a coming friend and benefactor, and not as an enemy. Like David, let our prayer be *“Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me”* (Psalm 7:8).

“Be perfect” (2 Cor. 13:11). This has been from the beginning God’s will respecting His people (Gen. 17:1; Deut. 18:13). What are we to understand by perfection? To construe it to mean absolute sinlessness would be unskilful. The Psalmist’s words are sufficient to show this— *“If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared”* (Ps. 130:3, 4). Then, again, Christ has taught us to daily pray— *“Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors”* (Matt. 6:11, 12). “Perfect” is a term that cannot be viewed apart from the object which it is used to describe. When applied to poor, weak, erring, mortal man, it indicates, not absolute sinlessness

on his part, but a compliance with the obligations placed upon him. When we ascertain what these obligations are, we get at once a rational and Scriptural view of the matter. God has not only given us commands to observe, but has directed us to avail ourselves of His provision for forgiveness in the event of our failing in our striving to obey. A man who makes a practical application of both these elements of the situation is a perfect man. David was perfect (1 Kings 11:4) though a sinner. So were Job, Noah, Asa, and others (Job 1:1; Gen. 6:9; 2 Chron. 15:17) notwithstanding their failings.

“He will judge the world” (Acts 17:31). When Paul used these words what did he mean? Did he simply refer, as some affirm, to the punishment to be poured out upon the nations at Christ’s coming, or did he refer to Christ’s millennial rule? The context will help us to rightly decide. In this (verses 30 and 31) we are told that because God is going to judge the world He now calls upon all men to repent. This leads to the question, what has repentance to do with the said judgment? Let us ascertain God’s object in calling men to repentance, and the explanation of Paul’s words will be immediately found. God’s object is to bless men who repent—not merely to exempt them from national trouble that is ahead. He calls men that they may be the subjects of a repentance unto life (Acts 11:18)—that in the coming age they may be unto him a name (Acts 15:14), to the end that the Kingdom and its associations may by them be realised. It is God’s will that all men (who were once allowed to wander in their own ways of death) should repent—should prepare to receive Christ. All men have not repented. A few have, and, in consequence, they will receive not simply escape from punishment but a participation in the glories of the Kingdom.

Some doubt whether the word “Judge” in Acts 17:31 will bear the idea of rule. That it will is evident from the following considerations. The word in the original is *Krino*, one of the definitions of which is (according to Parkhurst) to regulate or rule. *Krino* is also the word used in the Septuagint version to represent Christ’s millennial rule. To wit—*“The Lord reigneth...he shall judge (Krinei) the people righteously”* (Ps. 96:10). Again—*“He shall judge (Krinein) thy people righteously and thy people with judgment”* (Psalm 62:2). Christ also employs *Krino* in the sense of ruling—*“I appoint unto you a Kingdom that ye may...sit on thrones judging (Krino) the tribes of Israel”* (Luke 22:30;

Matt. 19:28). Paul's statement— "*He shall judge the world*"—is evidently a quotation from Psalm 9:8, and it is but reasonable to infer that Paul's idea respecting the word "judge" would be the same as the Psalmist's, which was that of ruling or reigning. The assurance (Christ's resurrection) referred to by Paul had previously been referred to by Peter (Acts 2:30–36), and in regard to the same matter, viz., Christ's reign. But even if *Krino* simply expressed the idea of judicial discrimination, that would still harmonise with the idea of Christ's rule— "*He hath prepared his throne for judgment*" (Psalm 9:8).

There is a theory abroad that it is possible for mortal man to attain to absolute sinlessness, and that the attainment of this perfection is one of the conditions of salvation. We will refer to the subject seriously, because certain ones have been led astray by it. Some of these say that they are perfect, that they do lead sinless lives. How different the estimate which these place upon themselves from that which the apostle John placed upon himself— "*If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us*" (1 John 1:8). The advocates of the perfection theory do their best to explain this passage away. But John's words are too plain and too much borne out by other testimony to be misunderstood by any unbiased truth-seeker. It is written "*There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not*" (Ecc. 7:20). Again— "*There is no man that sinneth not*" (1 Kings 8:46). Again— "*who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?*" (Prov. 20:9). Again— "*In many things we offend all*" (James 2:2). There never has been (apart from Christ), and never will be, a man who could say in the absolute sense "*I am perfect.*" The Scriptures ascribe moral perfection to Christ, and none other. To ascribe it to others is to rob Christ of Glory. What havoc this theory makes with the statement— "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*" (1 John 1:9). That this provision should have been made is in itself a conclusive argument in regard to man's inability to perfectly keep the commandments. The perfection theory leads to disastrous ends. It means the lowering of the divine standard; or a hopeless, miserable struggling after the unattainable; or an utter abandoning of the Truth because of its imaginary, unbearable obligations.

Bro. A. T. Jannaway— 1891

Thoughts Gleaned By The Way

“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth”

The hope of the reward to be received at Christ's return became the outstanding desire and expectation of the true Christians of every age. This hope is stated by Paul in Col. 3:5—

“When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, THEN shall ye also appear with him in glory.”xz

To the earnest, enlightened watcher for Christ's return, this hope is more than a mere expectation of a marvelous event; it is a burning, impelling desire, not only that he come, but that such a one be fully prepared, waiting and longing for that coming.

The purifying effect of this hope is shown by one of Christ's beloved apostles in 1 John 3:2, 3—

“We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him...And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

The apostle Paul tells us that—

“Christ, was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation”— Heb. 9:28.

* * *

It should be evident to all, that if we are to look for him in the true scriptural sense, we must know the PURPOSE of his coming. That purpose is explained by Peter—

“And He (God) shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive-until the TIMES OF RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3:19-21).

From this scripture testimony we note the following facts—

1. Christ is to remain in heaven until a DEFINITE TIME, then to return to earth.

2. This return is to occur at a time fixed in the purpose of God for the restitution or restoration of certain things, a restoration promised through ALL God's prophets.

3. This restoration of things spoken of by the prophets is to be accomplished by Jesus Christ when he returns to earth.

To determine what Christ is to do when he returns, we need only to discover what it was the prophets said would be restored. To say a thing is to be RESTORED, is evident that it once existed and is now in a state of decay or dissolution. What did the prophets predict would be restored?

In the beginning God created everything “very good.” Peace, purity and contentment reigned supreme. Man, in a state of innocence, was in perfect harmony with his Creator. The earth and all that it contained, was just as God intended.

But sin entered. The earth and man upon it were cursed. The scheme of things God had provided for man was wrecked. Man was estranged from his Maker and became a sinful, dying creature, without hope, except God should provide a way for his redemption.

God provided a way of redemption in the Seed promised to the woman, which should “bruise the serpent's head,” or destroy sin and its consequences. But this restoration was not to be accomplished by sending individuals to heaven at death; not by sending the bulk of humanity to roast in hell fire for eternity, transporting the good to heaven and then burning up the earth! God by his prophet Isaiah (15:18) shows He has a different purpose—

“God himself that formed the earth...He created it not in vain. HE FORMED IT TO BE INHABITED;”

and, as we shall see, His final purpose is that it be inhabited by immortals.

* * *

To restore the earth to Edenic blessedness by removing the curse which was placed upon it because of sin, is, in general, the purpose for which Christ is coming, for we are told in Rev. 22:3—

“For there shall be no more curse.”

But the removal of the curse will involve the establishment on earth of a divine government with Christ as King. Through his rule over the nations of the earth for a thousand years, this purpose will be accomplished (1 Cor. 15:25, 26)—

“For he must reign till he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”

At the end of this reign, Christ's work having been fully accomplished, when all enemies, even sin and death, have been abolished, Christ will deliver up the Kingdom to the Father that “God may be all in all,” as at the beginning—

“Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power (1 Cor. 15:24).

The setting up of this kingdom requires the restoration of a number of things, the fulfilling of certain promises which God made by the mouth of His prophets:

1. It involves the restoration of His ancient kingdom of Israel which is to be the “first dominion” of that kingdom. Christ had taught his apostles to expect this for they asked:

“Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”

In fact, he had told them (Matt.19:28) that they would “Sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

Moreover the angels told Christ's mother that God would “Give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever.”—Luke 1:3,32.

2. This purpose involves the restoration of David's throne and kingdom as promised to David—2nd Sam. 7; Acts 2:29,30; Ezek. 21:27; Amos 9:8-15.

3. David's people, chastened, purged of the rebels, purified and sanctified, will be “planted in a place of their own to move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them ANY MORE (2 Sam. 7:10; Ezek. 37:21,22).

Ezekiel, chap. 48, describes this “place” where the restored tribes of Israel will be settled, where a magnificent Temple, a “House of Prayer for all people,” will be located, with Christ's twelve apostles reigning over them.

4. Jerusalem will be restored as the capital city of Christ's kingdom, which means that it will be the capital city of the world—Isa. 65:17, 13; Jer. 3:17.

5. The land of Canaan, promised to Abraham, Christ and all that are Christ's will be restored forming the territory for the "first dominion" of the kingdom, which will eventually fill the whole earth— Gen. 12:1,3; 13:14-17; Gal. 3:27-29; Rom. 4:12-25.

* * *

Let us note this work of restoration in the order in which it will occur at Christ's return:

1. Christ returns to the earth "as a thief"—Rev.16:15.
2. The dead are raised— 1 Thess. 4:13-17.
3. Christ sits in judgment upon all the responsible of mankind, when the righteous will be separated from the unrighteous— Matt. 25:31-46.
4. Immortality conferred upon the righteous; the rejected driven away in shame and contempt to suffer punishment, ending in eternal death—Matt.25:46; Dan.12:2.
5. Christ will organize the accepted and immortalized. Poverty and misery will disappear, for there will be an abundance for all, equally distributed— Psa. 72:1-4, 12-14. Life will be not only delightful but greatly prolonged: one will be considered a child at 100 years old—Isa. 65:20-23.

What a glorious hope! May we now make our calling and election sure that we may have a share in the work of fulfilling God's glorious purpose on earth!

—Bro. Oscar Beauchamp

Ascending Up Where He Was Before

QUESTION: "Does John 6:62 refer to the resurrection or ascension of Christ? If to the ascension, what does the '*where he was before*' mean?"

ANSWER: The context shows conclusively that the reference is to the ascension. Jesus said: "*I came down from heaven*" (vs. 38, 41).

Upon which the Jews remarked: "*Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that he saith. I came down from heaven. . . and that a man, to live for ever must eat of him?*" (vs. 42, 52, etc.).

Upon this we are told (v. 60) that many of his disciples murmured, saying—*“This is an hard saying, who can hear it?”*

On this Jesus makes use of the words referred to in the question above, which amount to this—*“You may doubt what I say, but you will see evidence of it in my re-ascension to heaven from which I have come.”*

The sense in which he had *“come from heaven”* is indicated in the explanation which he immediately condescends to make to his offended disciples—*“It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing”*; As much as to say—*“My reference is to the Spirit whose incarnation I am by the descent thereof upon Mary (Luke 1:32; John 1:14), and not to myself as a man born of the seed of David according to the flesh.”*

After his resurrection, Jesus was changed to a spirit, or *“justified in spirit,”* to use Paul's expression (1 Tim. 3:16), becoming *“the Lord the spirit,”* (2 Cor. 3:17), *a quickening spirit* (1 Cor. 15:45).

Hence, in his ascension, the Spirit ascended where he was before the descent at the two stages of conception and baptism, but taking with it, in the ascent, the character and experience of *“the Man Christ Jesus”* as an high priest touched with the feeling of our infirmities, who *“learned obedience by the things which he suffered”*— (Heb. 4:15: 5:8).

Bro. Robert Roberts— 1873

Anointing the Sick

When James (5:14) recommended the brethren to anoint a sick brother with oil, and pray over him, with a view to his recovery, you must notice that he told them to *“call the elders of the church.”*

This it is impossible to do in the nineteenth century, for the simple reason that there are no elders to call. There may be official brethren, bearing the title of “elder;” but **they are not the order of men James had in his eye when he wrote the words in question.**

“The elders of the church” in James' days were not only elders in name and office, but elders, or superiors, in **power**, having the gifts of the Spirit at their disposal. They were the **divinely-appointed** and **divinely-endowed** overseers of the ecclesia (Acts 20:17, 28).

This made their attendance at a sick man's bed a circumstance of some importance and efficacy. True, it was the “prayer of faith” that was to save the sick, but it was a “prayer of faith” proceeding from the

elders, upon whom the Spirit abode for the purpose of imparting power. In those days, the Spirit was the common gift of the saints.

Its absence now makes a difference in the relations of the ecclesia. Acts and forms and phrases appropriate in the days of the Spirit's dispensation are now entirely out of place.

Bro. Robert Roberts— 1862

TV'S 'Disastrous' Impact on Children

U.S. News & World Report ran an article under this heading on Jan. 19, 1981. It is no new revelation. It says simply what all sensible people have perceived from the beginning. TV is one of the vilest and most corrupt aspects of a vile and corrupt generation.

It is instant immorality, and instant violence, right in the home. Beyond that, it is a destroyer of the power to think. Here are extracts from the article: —

Watching TV over a long span seriously damages children's ability to think clearly, says a media expert. He says—

“TV is turning out to be a disastrous influence on the way children learn. TV appears to be shortening the attention span of the young, as well as eroding to a considerable extent their linguistic powers and their ability to handle mathematical symbolism. It also causes them to be increasingly impatient with deferred gratification. Even more serious, in my view, is that TV is opening up all of society's secrets and taboos, thus erasing the dividing line between children & adults.”

How does TV hurt a child's linguistic ability?

“Evidence is accumulating that TV watching hurts academic performance. A recent California Dept. of Education survey indicated that the more that children sit in front of TV, the worse they do on achievement-test scores.”

TV doesn't allow a person to accumulate knowledge based on past experiences?

“That's right. Language allows complex ideas to be built up in writing through a logical progression. Most of all, language tends to be more abstract. It encourages the use of imagination.”

How does TV affect inter-action in the classroom?

“Because the attention span of children is contracting, teachers are under terrific pressure to make everything immediately accessible to the student, because if it is not, teachers report over and over again that the student turns off. Now, no one wants to teach students who are turned off. So the temptation is very great for teachers to substitute for real learning something that’s fairly jazzy and that will immediately capture the attention of kids.”

Do TV dramas and situation comedies present a simplistic version of life?

“Most shows have committed themselves to a format that does not portray anything other than caricature. For instance, on most programs you find a kind of anti-intellectualism: that is, characters who have any sort of education or discernment are almost always depicted as unfeeling snobs. On the other hand, [ignorant people] would inevitably be depicted as warm and responsive.”

Do some programs glorify the less admirable side of human nature?

“Yes. Someone should take a look at this J. R. Ewing on 'Dallas' to find out what makes him so appealing. There was a time in America when there was a connection in people's minds between some moral code & the law. Now we seem to be in a time when the moral dimension to law has been stripped away. Most people think of the law simply as a matter of control of society. And J. R. represents that, because he is constantly doing rotten things & illegal things. Yet people just say, 'It's just a question of whether he'll be caught, or how clever he'll be in managing the situation.' He knows how to manipulate people. So in a way J. R. embodies an American spirit of 'If you know how to do something well, that is admirable'.”

Does TV rob youngsters of their childhood?

“TV eliminates many of the important ways we distinguish between children & adults. In its quest for new and sensational ventures to hold its audience, TV must tap every existing taboo in the culture: homosexuality, incest, divorce, promiscuity, corruption, adultery, and terrible displays of violence & sadism. Consequently, these become as familiar to the young as they are to adults.”— *USNews*, Jan. 19, 1981

THE particular TV show referred to above is one of the most universally popular ever—not only in this country, but worldwide—because it is one of the most immoral and evil. It glorifies immorality and infidelity and evil dealing and every facet of fascinating vice—enticingly portraying its 'success' and excitement.

The writer actually understates the case, in an impersonal, clinical way. He is not concerned with the evilness of the filth and immorality as such, but merely in a neutral way as a matter of abstract mental damage and loss to the child. He presents the TV industry's obsession with filth and corruption as simply a seeking of something new and striking to present. He is too kind to it here. It is obviously a deliberate pandering, for profit, to the lowest instincts and characteristics of corrupt mankind, and a deliberate endeavor to excite and exploit those instincts, to glorify and popularize them. Note that to the writer's rather detached view, matters that are utter abomination to God are simply 'taboos in the culture'—though he does seem to realize they are bad things, in themselves, and for the children.

—Bro. G. V. Growcott 1981

5. “Confess His Name”

It is promised to him who shares in “*the victory*,” that he shall, not only “be clothed” with incorruption, and “his name” remain perpetually inscribed among the deathless; but that his name shall be honorably mentioned in the august presence of the Eternal Majesty of the Universe, and before his angelic hosts. This promise to the undefiled, whether in Sardis or elsewhere, at that time or in previous and after ages and generations, reads in the English Version, “I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.” The word in the original is emphatic. It is not simply *omologesomai*, but the same word with the preposition *ex* prefixed “*I will confess his name from out of*” something. The import of this is, “I will connect myself with his name as one selected *from among* others, whom I reject, because their works have not been found perfected in the sight of the Deity.” This is the renewal of the promise given by the Spirit through Jesus, and found in Matt. 10:32, and Luke 12:8. In these places, he says, “whosoever shall confess *in me* before men, *in HIM* will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven;” and “whosoever shall confess *in me* before men, the Son of Man also will confess *in him* before the angels of the Deity.” These, it will be seen, differ from the English Version, which makes no account of the proposition *en*, twice repeated in both of the original texts. In these it is *en emoi* and *en auto*, which I have rendered IN *me* and IN *him*, according to the primary signification of the word. The Spirit *in* Jesus promises here to be also IN ALL who are *in him*, on condition of their confessing him before men. This excludes the notion, that the promise applies to men *not in Christ* who with their lips say, that they believe that Jesus is the Christ. Such a confession as this was

made by the demonized; or men who, in the nomenclature of Luke, had each “*a spirit of an unclean demonion.*” Under the influence of this affection, they confessed, that Jesus was the Christ, the Holy One, the Son of the Deity—Luke 4:34, 41. But this confession availed them nothing; for, he rebuked them, and put them to silence. This, nevertheless, was confession before men; but it was a confession that did not proceed from men of the right class, the class defined in the text. The demonized were not *in the Spirit*, nor was the Holy Spirit *in them*. The spirit in them was the spirit of their flesh insanely excited. They were madmen “in the flesh,” whose confession the Eternal Spirit would not accept.

And to descend from the first to the nineteenth century, we find society almost entirely constituted of the demonized. The Spirit testifies this in the saying, that “all the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of the Great Harlot's prostitution”—Apoc. 17:2. The people and their spiritual guides are thoroughly imbued with “*an unclean spirit,*” by which they are bewitched in all their parts and faculties. They are all, as Paul predicted they would be, in apostasy “from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits, even to the teachings of Daemonia, falsely speaking in hypocrisy: their own conscience having been cauterized; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats”—1 Tim. 4:3. Such are the DEMONIA defined by Paul. Society is full of them; for every occupant of a pulpit that does not preach the gospel of the kingdom which he proclaimed, is a deceiver teaching falsely, and therefore, as Paul styles him, “a deceiving spirit,” or “Daimonion.” When these, and the multitudes they call “*their people,*” confess that “Jesus is Christ, the Son of God,” it is the unsanctified confession of the demonized. They are not “*in Christ,*” for they have neither “*received*” his doctrine, nor “*heard,*” or obeyed it in the obedience it prescribes.

The promise of the Spirit, then, that He will confess in them in the Father's presence, and in that of his angels, is not to individuals clerically demonized. The promise is to those “IN” the Promiser. The testimony in Matthew and Luke was spoken primarily to the disciples in the presence of Jesus; and, secondarily, to all disciples in Christ in after times. In the discourse, he alluded to the persecution they would have to endure on his account. That it would be persecution unto death; which, however, they might escape, if they would deny him and the truth. But, *being in him*, he exhorted them to steadfastness; so that, if they should lose their soul or life (*tin psuchen*) for his sake, they should find it, in the Spirit's confessing in them before the Father and his

angels. Many *in Christ* apostatized, or “departed from the faith,” when they were brought to the test of “*confessing before men*” in authority and power, at the risk of property, liberty, and life. Like Demas, they forsook Christ, “having loved this present world;” and will, consequently, be denied hereafter.

It may not be amiss to remind the reader here, that to be *in the Spirit* who speaks to the undefiled in Sardis, is to have the faith, which is “the substance of things hoped for, and the conviction of the things unseen;” and to have it so as to love it, that the faith may work in him by love, and purify his affections; and that being thus prepared, to be immersed into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. When he has been the subject of this transforming operation, by which his moral nature and state have been changed, the words of the apostle, in Gal. 3:26-29, are applicable to him: “Thou art a son of the Deity in Jesus Anointed through the faith; for as many as have been baptized *into Christ*, have *put on Christ*: and if Christ's, then Abraham's Seed, and *heirs* according to promise.” Such an one is “in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Anointed,” and therefore in the Spirit—1 Thess. 2:1; and competent to *confess in him* before men.

Having shown this, it remains to define how the Spirit will himself confess such a confessor before the Father and the angels. “I will confess *his name* before my Father.” This is the apocalyptic equivalent for “I will confess *in him*.” In John 17:22, Jesus prays to the Father that all his brethren “may be one, even as we are one; I IN THEM, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect IN ONE.” TO be made perfect is to be raised from among the dead, and made incorruptible and deathless. Thus Jesus was “perfected the third day”—Luke 12:32; Heb. 5:9; and became the Author of *aion*-salvation to all who obey him. A saint made perfect in this sense is as much “spirit” as Jesus now is; for John, speaking of what the saints shall be when made perfect, says, “*we shall be like him, and see him as he is*”—1 John 3:2. Then the prayer of the LOGOS, ascending from the mouth of Jesus to the THEOS from whom it emanated, will be answered—that “*I*,” the Logos, may be “in them,” the saints. When he is thus in them, their names will STAND OUT CONFESSED—*exomologized*—before the Father of the glorified Jesus—”the Spirit”—and the angels. Hence, when this unity is established, whatever the Spirit confesses is confessed in them and in their midst; and he whom they have praised and honored in word and deed, in the present state, will celebrate their excellency in the future.

Bro. John Thomas—Eureka Vol. 1 Page 368 Logos edition

Hints For Bible Markers

Brother Roberts, while traveling, gives us a personal example and a lesson on this month's commandments. "During the day, we are furnished with a printed form, setting forth the particulars of our luggage so that none of the articles on which the United States levies duty may be smuggled in under the guise of personal luggage. I have a stock of books with me, worth about £8. An officer of the ship says I can get them passed by returning them as personal luggage, telling me of a fellow passenger who is to pass six guns in this way.

We must not, however, take our cue from the world in such matters, whose policy is to cheat wherever they have a chance of doing so without detection. The apostolic command (and, therefore, the command of the Lord) is to "Render to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute; custom to whom custom" (Rom. 13:7); and again "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake."—(1 Pet. 2:13.) I, therefore, return the books as taxable articles. Glad to think this is the last day on board. Fourteen days' imprisonment have been a weariness."

Brother Robert shows by example how we are to be subject to those who rule over us. But should we be subject to rulers that are opposed to God? Although it may appear that we should not submit to them, the reality is there is no power on earth that does not come from God. The rulers of nations, states, and cities may have their own agenda but it is God who controls them. An example was given in last month's readings (Isaiah 10) of the king of Assyria being used as an instrument by God against Israel. So it is with all the rulers of the earth. God will make use of them for His purpose. Therefore, it is none of our business what the government does with the money that they extort from us in taxes. All we have to do is pay when ordered and see that we do not countenance the atrocities that they maintain. bro. Beryl V. Snyder

The Commandments of Christ

As collected and organized by bro. Roberts

VI. CONCERNING YOUR ACTIONS

Pay your debts: owe no man anything, but to love one another.

Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. (7) Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. (Romans 13:7 – 8)

Be subject to rulers: obey magistrates: submit to every law and ordinance of man, except where they come into conflict with the law of Christ.

Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, (Titus 3:1)

Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; (13) Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. (14) For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: (15) As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. (16) Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. (1 Peter 2:13 – 17)

For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. (Romans 13:6)

But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. (Acts 4:19) but... I will