

# 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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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.

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CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

# Ecclesial News

**DETROIT, Michigan**, Memorial – 11:00 am; Sunday School – 12:00 noon

Loving greetings in Christ,

We have been encouraged here by having our weekly memorial meetings by Skype with Bro. Bob and Sis. Mary Widding. We thank Bro. Bob for his encouraging exhortations, being part of our meetings and for Sis. Mary for playing the hymns every other weekend.

Further encouragement has come our way by the visits from Bro. Jim Rankin, Bro. Lynn Osborne. We thank our Bro. Jim and Bro. Lynn for the exhortations they gave. We thank our Bro. Beryl Snyder also for exhorting us and our Bro. and Sis. Don Miller being with us via Skype.

We pray that our dear Heavenly Father will bless you all and help us hold fast to our faith until the end.

Love in the bonds of the Truth,  
Bro. Fred Higham

## GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

**BOSTON FRATERNAL GATHERING.....Oct 26-27 2013**

Bro. Jim Sommerville, jsommer393@msn.com

**KENYA FRATERNAL GATHERING.....Dec 5-7 2013**

Bro. Bob Bent, eyeglassman39@yahoo.com. Epa Wekati, epawekati@yahoo.com

**UGANDA FRATERNAL GATHERING.....Apr 3-6 2014**

Bro. Bob Bent, eyeglassman39@yahoo.com. Epa Wekati, epawekati@yahoo.com

## 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](mailto:craigkiley@yahoo.com)) and we will be happy to transfer the talks to MP3 format and post them.

## Made a Curse for Us

*“THIS is life eternal, that they may KNOW Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent”—John 17:3*

WHAT does it mean—to KNOW them? Is it just to know of their existence, or is it to know them personally and the great facts of revealed divine truth concerning them? On another occasion, Jesus said—

*“Ye shall know the TRUTH, and the truth shall MAKE YOU FREE”* (John 8:32).

What freedom was he talking about, and what relation did it have to the life eternal that comes from knowing God? It WAS life eternal, for he was speaking of freedom from sin and death. He says in v. 34,

*“Whosoever committeth sin is the slave of sin.”*

And Paul adds—

*“The wages of sin is death.”*

So men are slaves of sin unto death, and they need to know the Truth that Jesus tells them in order to become free from death. What truth must they know? Paul declares (Rom 1:27)—

*“I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.”*

The Truth, then, that must be known for salvation is the Gospel. In 1 Cor 15:1-3, Paul says:

*“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, ...by which ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you.*

*“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures.”*

So for salvation we must know, and believe, and keep in memory, among other things, the truth concerning the death of Christ. The explanation the Scriptures give of the sacrifice of Christ is simple and harmonious and reasonable, but it cannot be understood apart from the truth concerning Christ's nature—that he WAS A MAN, a descendant of Adam, under the condemnation that Adam brought upon all.

As an illustration of the confusion that has been caused on this subject by the false idea that Jesus was a co-equal part of a trinity of three Gods, consider the following from Webster's Dictionary, under the word “Atonement”—

*“Until the 11th century, theological thought centered in the theory of a ransom paid by Christ to the Devil.*

*“Saint Anselm (who died in 1109) introduced the conception of substitution as atonement, that Christ took himself the punishment due sin, and by his sacrifice offered satisfaction to the offended majesty of God.*

“This view was followed by the theologians of the later Middle Ages, and prevails in Catholic theology today.

“Early Protestant leaders accepted this view . . . but division over the question of application . . . led to wide and fundamental divergences.

“Since 1645, theories have been numerous.”

It is quite evident from this that there is something very wrong. The trouble lies with the false ideas that Christendom has concerning who Christ was.

It is impossible for them to accept what the Scriptures say about his death as long as they tie themselves to the theory of the “Trinity.”

The key will be found to lie in the distinction between representation and substitution. This idea of substitution—punishing the innocent as a substitute for the guilty—as invented by Anselm in the 11th century, lies at the bottom of most of the theories of Christendom.

What was the purpose of the sacrifice of Christ? Broadly speaking, it was to DESTROY SIN, and with it, DEATH which is inseparably connected with sin. Heb. 9:26—

*“He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”*

As Christ said in a passage already quoted (John 8:34), all mankind is in the bondage of sin and death. How this condition under which we all suffer came about is related in Rom. 5:12—

*“By one man (Adam, the first man—see v.14) sin entered the world, and death by sin: and so death passed upon all men.”*

What then is sin, which Jesus' sacrifice was to “put away”? Simply and primarily, it is disobedience to God's law,

*“Sin is the transgression of the law”* (1 John 3:4).

The earth is God's. He is the Creator and Owner of everything. He has made man, given him life, and set him upon God's earth. It is both right and necessary that He should instruct man how to behave, so that he may conduct himself in harmony with the rest of God's plans and arrangements for the general good.

It is both right and necessary that an ignoring or rejecting of God's instructions requires the taking away of the abused and destructively perverted gift of life.

But sin, which has to be destroyed from the earth, goes deeper than just specific acts of disobedience. We all know this to our sorrow. Paul says, and he speaks for us all—

*“Sin dwelleth in me...I find a law in my members that evil is present with me...the law of sin in my members”* (Rom. 7:17-23)

So sin is an ingrained thing in human flesh, a natural and universal urge to rebel against God's laws, a willfulness of contrary desire. This entered into the constitution of the race through the first man's transgression—

*“By man sin entered into the world.”*

Now the Scriptures never tell us that some innocent person has to pay the sinner's debt so the sinner can escape punishment for his sins. There are only two scriptural ways of dealing with sin, either blotting out the sinner by punishment or blotting out sin by forgiveness.

But the Scriptures do say that **SOMEONE MUST LAY AN ACCEPTABLE BASIS BEFORE GOD** whereby sin may be forgiven through him and for his sake without obscuring or nullifying the principles of truth and righteousness and justice by which God's universe is maintained. We are told this very clearly in Romans 3:25-26:

*“Jesus Christ, whom God set forth to be a propitiation...*

—this word “propitiation” is translated “mercy-seat” in Heb. 9:5. It refers to the Mercy-seat or Kapporeth of the Mosaic Tabernacle and means “a place of covering or forgiveness”—

*“...to be a place of forgiveness through faith in his blood, to declare His (God's) righteousness for the remission (or “passing over”) of sins that are past through the forbearance of God.*

*“To declare, I say, at this time **His righteousness**, that He might be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”*

God's righteousness had to be declared and set forth—recognized, manifested, vindicated and upheld for all ages so that He would be established as just even though, in His love and mercy, He forgave sins and remitted the punishment due.

Now how did the death of Christ declare God's righteousness? Here is where the substitution theory fails completely. To punish the innocent instead of the guilty is the farthest thing possible from declaring God's righteousness and demonstrating God's justice.

But the **scriptural** picture of **representation** beautifully fulfills the requirements. If **one of the condemned race**—a true representative man—is perfectly obedient to God in all things, thereby publicly testifying that in all things he recognizes and submits to the righteousness of God's laws and then at the command of God, voluntarily lays down his life in recognition of the fact that God was righteous in condemning the race to death because all are part of Adam and are defiled—in consequence of their oneness with Adam—by the law of sin and death within them—in this case we can immediately see how beautifully and completely God's righteousness is declared, and how a sound basis is laid whereby He can extend forgiveness to others in and through and for the sake of this perfectly righteous man, without compromising or obscuring His own holiness.

The essential key—in order to declare God's righteousness in his death—is that **HE MUST BE ONE OF THE CONDEMNED RACE**.

Jesus Christ is repeatedly spoken of as a man, as being of our flesh, born of a woman, born of the seed of David, born a descendant of Adam.

This in itself would be sufficient to prove that he was subject to the same constitution and condemnation that is common to all men—that he found the same “law in his members” that Paul and all others have found as their heritage from the first man.

It is an essential first principle, says John (1 John 4:2; 2 John 1:7) that Christ “came in the flesh,” and the Scriptures always speak of human flesh as unclean in that—from Adam down—it has been contaminated by the results of sin, and its natural tendencies are opposed to God.

As an example, consider how Paul speaks of the flesh in Gal. 5—using it as a synonym for sin—

*“Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.*

*“For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit...these are contrary the one to the other...”*

*“The works of the flesh are these (listing all forms of evil)...*

*“They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”*

Note the expression “crucified the flesh.” It loses its meaning if we do not realize that Christ himself **crucified this same flesh**.

But we are not left with just this. Christ's oneness with the condemned race is definitely stated. Moreover, it is **insisted upon as essential** for the accomplishment of his mission. Consider Heb 2:14—

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same...”

—the same flesh, the flesh that Paul calls “sinful flesh”—

*“...that through death he might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil.”*

V. 17: *“Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren.”*

He was **necessarily** made of flesh, we are told here, so that through death he might destroy the devil—that which had the power of death.

How did he destroy the devil through death, and why was it necessary that he be of the same flesh to do it? The answer lies in this: **What DID** he destroy by death? Paul says (Rom. 6:6)—

*“Our old man is crucified with him, that the BODY OF SIN might be destroyed.”*

That's what Christ destroyed in his death—the old man, the devil, the body of sin. As we saw in Gal. 5:24:

*“They that are Christ's have crucified **the flesh**.”*

He had to **possess** the “body of sin”—sinful flesh—so that he could **overcome** it, and—by a sacrificial death, crucify and destroy it.

And being an obedient and voluntary death, it was a public condemning and repudiating of sinful flesh. So (Rom. 8:3)—

“God—sending His own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin—condemned sin in the flesh.”

Some have said that this word “likeness” leaves room for the idea that he was not actually a partaker of sinful flesh, but just something that looked like it. But this would take all meaning out of the passage and all the glory out of the victory. Jesus condemned sin by resisting every temptation of the sin-body, and then nailing it to the cross to declare God’s righteous condemnation of that body and all its natural rebellious tendencies.

There it is for all ages to see—the natural man with all its affections and lusts exposed and nailed to the cross in shame. It required the death of a perfectly righteous man to—at the same time—both condemn the race and open a way for its forgiveness.

It was for no sin of his own that he died. And yet his death declared God’s justice. So the very heart of the matter is laid bare; the very body of sin—the motions of willfulness that lie at the root of all outward sin—is exposed and condemned.

*“Not MY will but THINE, be done” (Luke 22:42).*

“MY will,” the will of the flesh, was repudiated—nailed to the cross. This was the sacrifice God desired—the sacrifice that must be made before any of Adam’s condemned race could approach God. They must be purified from the body of sin, and Christ—the representative man—was so purified by his own shed blood, and so entered God’s presence and received the divine nature, as it is testified in Heb. 9:12—

*“By his own blood he entered into the Holy place, having obtained eternal redemption.”*

It will be noted that the “for us” in this passage is in italics. It is omitted in the Rev. Version, and is admittedly spurious in the Auth. Ver.—the result of translator’s prejudice. Thayer’s Greek Lexicon, which is a recognized standard, says this word “obtained” here is in the middle or reflexive voice, and means “to find for one’s self.”

This is an important point. This verse conclusively states that Jesus found or obtained **for himself** eternal redemption by his own blood. We find this also very plainly stated in Heb. 13:30—

*“God brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus through the blood of the everlasting covenant.”*

Jesus himself was brought from the dead through his own blood—on the basis of and by means of his own sacrifice. He was the first to reap its benefits. In fact, it is only by being **in** him and **part of** him that anyone else can benefit by this sacrifice at all.

He, in person, has opened the way, gained the victory, obtained the redemption, destroyed the body of sin and been purified from it. Thus having personally accomplished redemption, he is now mighty to save those that come to God by him. So we read in Heb. 5:9—

*“Being **made perfect**, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”*

Similarly in Heb. 7:27—

*“He needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first **for his own sins**, and then for the people's: **for this he did once**, when he offered up himself.”*

The simple and obvious meaning of this is that Jesus offered for his own sins and for the people's. The force of this is sometimes evaded by objecting to the expression “his own sins,” inasmuch as Christ was free from any personal transgressions, but if we look back to the Mosaic sacrifices referred to, as in Lev 16:16, we find that the high priest offered—

*“Because of the **uncleannesses** of the children of Israel **and** because of their **transgressions**.”*

This is what Paul is referring to when he speaks of offering for the “sins of the people,” so it is clear that by “sins” is included both uncleanness and transgression, as we have seen sin to mean throughout the Scripture. It is only by realizing that the two aspects—the motions of sin in the flesh and actual transgression arising from it—are both inseparable parts of that general condition called “sin,” that we can understand Christ's sacrifice. Jesus had the law of sin in his flesh, but he never for a moment allowed it to act. This is clear from Heb. 4:15—

*“He was **in all points** tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”*

How are **we** tempted? Paul says:

*“I see a law in my members, warring against the law of my mind”*  
(Rom. 7:23)

And James says (1:14)—

*“Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.”*

Jesus, then, being tempted “in all points like as we are,” was tempted in this way, by his own lusts—the law in his members. **THIS** was what he overcame, and—by perfect faithfulness unto death—destroyed.

The necessity of Jesus' own purification from the uncleanness of the flesh by sacrifice, is further illustrated in Heb. 9:22—

*“Almost all things are by the Law purged with blood, and without the shedding of blood is no remission.*

*“It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these...”*

—that is, the things of the Mosaic ritual, which were only **typical**, were **typically** purified by animal sacrifices—

*“...but the heavenly things themselves with **better sacrifices** than these.”*

What were the real “heavenly things” that were symbolized by the Mosaic ritual? We know that all the Mosaic pattern pointed forward to Christ. Consider, for instance, Lev. 16:15-19—

*“The high priest shall sprinkle the blood upon the **mercy-seat** and he shall make atonement for the **altar**, and he shall sprinkle blood upon it, and **cleanse it.**”*

**Who** is represented by the mercy-seat and the altar? **What** is typified by the cleansing of these things by the shedding of blood? Paul says (Rom. 3:25)—

*“God hath set **HIM** forth to be a **mercy-seat.**”*

And in Heb. 13:10—

*“We have an **altar** whereof they have no right to eat who serve the tabernacle.”*

Christ is the reality of that which was foreshadowed by the high priest, the mercy-seat and the altar, all of which were cleansed by the sacrificial blood. The fulfillment and meaning is plain.

There is another similar type that is strikingly clear and to the point. Jesus said—

*“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*

If we look into this event he referred to, it well illustrates the scriptural principle of his death. Because of the wickedness of the children of Israel, as they journeyed through the wilderness, God on this occasion sent serpents among them to sting them. As a cure, Moses was commanded to make a serpent of brass and set it up on a pole, and all the Israelites who looked at it in faith were healed.

Jesus says this serpent on the pole represented him in his crucifixion. It was the serpent that brought death—the serpent in the Scripture represents sin. When they looked in faith to sin crucified, they were healed. **How was sin crucified in Jesus?**

As we have seen, he was **for this very purpose “made sin”** (2 Cor. 5:21), he was made “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (Rom. 8:3), he partook of the same flesh as all mankind (Heb. 2:14). And so Peter says, explaining this type of the serpent on the pole (1 Pet. 2:24)—

*“Who his own self bare our sins **in his own body** on the tree.”*

“In his own body” — that was where sin was, and that was where it was conquered and destroyed—nailed up in voluntary condemnation for all to look upon and be healed.

IN JESUS was actually fulfilled that which was **typified** in all other sacrifices. The typical sacrifices of animals, says Paul (Heb. 10:4), could not really take away sin, because of the fact that they were just typical. That which they symbolized and pointed to had to be **actually**

**accomplished** — somewhere, sometime, and in some one. That was the “putting away of sin by the sacrifice of himself” (Heb. 9:26).

Sin had to be **actually** put away — not just in type, but **really**. We have seen how this was done in Christ, and how the Scriptures show that it was necessary for him to **actually** partake of sinful **flesh**, and actually gain a **real** victory over it.

The common idea that Christ was an all-powerful god that merely took a similar appearance to sinful flesh and pretended to overcome sin—pretended to be tempted (for we are told that God cannot be tempted (James 1:13)—this takes all the beauty and value and reality out of his victory and is a mockery of man's own real and bitter struggle with sin.

THERE is another aspect that strikingly and independently confirms the scriptural principle that Christ must necessarily come under the Adamic curse in order to open a way out of it. Paul says (Gal. 3:13)—

*“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.”*

Jesus had to himself personally come under the curse of the Mosaic Law, says Paul, in order to open a way of redemption for those under that curse. He must be **one of the cursed**, a true representative standing for all in like position, but himself personally sinless. This was accomplished in the cursed manner of his death.

Is not this inescapably parallel with Paul's declaration that he had to be of the cursed Adamic flesh in order to suffer and destroy the Adamic curse? He had to come under it to destroy it in himself and open up a way out of it for himself and for all who make themselves **part of him** in the appointed way.

The **Adamic** curse he came under by **birth**, as we all do; the **Mosaic** he came under by the manner of his **death**—both without loss of his personal righteousness. Being under them, in his death he fulfilled them and justified them, and he emerged from the grave freed from their power.

THERE is one great point that must be kept clear. While Christ was a real man, who really overcame and destroyed sinful flesh, still that which was accomplished in and through and by him was God's work. Jesus himself said:

*“I can of mine own self do nothing”* (John 5:30).

He recognized that as an unaided man he was helpless. But he submitted himself wholly to the operation of God, and God dwelt in him and strengthened him, and directed him in all things. All the glory and power was God's, as it must be in all things. God now works through Christ, and Paul said therefore:

*“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me”* (Phil. 4:13).

And again, Phil. 2:13—

*“It is God which worketh in you both to will and do of His good pleasure.”*

*“We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.”*

*“Strengthened with might ... filled with all the fullness of God...according to the power that worketh in us.”* (Eph. 3:16-20).

This was true of Christ in an altogether unique and transcendent degree. While truly and essentially a man, he was a special vessel for a special purpose—specially begotten by the Holy Spirit of God.

IN AND through this man God has laid a basis in which sin is repudiated and condemned, righteousness is exalted, justice is vindicated, and forgiveness may be extended without obscuring or condoning evil.

A way of escape out of the bondage of sin has been broken open by the **God-strengthened perfect righteousness** of this **specially-provided, representative man** in whom the destiny of the race is centered. He entered into the death-stricken condition that passed upon all men through Adam, but death could not hold him, and he now lives forevermore.

By his shed blood, freely offered to God as a recognition of the righteousness of the condemnation that man is under, he purified himself from that condemnation and opened a way to eternal life—

*“Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him “* (Heb. 5:8-9).

And John testifies (1 Jn. 2:2)—

*“He is the mercy-seat—the place of forgiveness—for our sins.”*

God accepts his atoning death on behalf of all who identify themselves with it. We read (2 Cor. 5:14)—

*“If one died for all, then were all dead.”*

The believer is considered as having died with him, he being the representative of all. This is perhaps clearer in Rom. 6:3-4—

*“Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into death?*

*“Therefore we are **buried with him by baptism into death.**”*

We have emphasized Christ's sacrifice, in life and death, as a real accomplishment, an actual overcoming, a genuine victory over the power of sin. In closing, we would like to draw attention to the equally necessary reality of what must be accomplished in ourselves by the transforming power of that sacrifice.

It is not just an interesting and entertaining symbolism, whereby we merely accept Christ and then thank God that He has so kindly arranged everything that we can just enjoy life and glide comfortably into salvation. **No sadder delusion ever existed.** The way of the cross is hard and steep and few there be, the Scriptures tell us, that find it and **follow it through.**

Let us let a continual contemplation of the life and death of Christ determine our view of the meaning and purpose of our present existence. Consider a few passages that reveal the real significance of his sacrifice as it bears upon all who desire to unite themselves with him:

**Tit. 2:14**—*“He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”*

**1 Jn. 3:16**—*“Hereby perceive we love, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”*

**Col. 1:21**—*“You hath he now reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight.”*

**2 Cor. 5:15**—*“And he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them . . . wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh.”*

**Gal. 5:24**—*“They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit.”*

**Gal. 6:14**—*“The cross of Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”*

Unless these things are fulfilled in us, he has—for us—died in vain. Paul knew the meaning of these things. He said, Phil 3:8-17—

*“I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things...*

*“That I might know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death...*

*“If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead...*

*“Brethren, be ye followers of me.”* —Bro. G.V.Growcott

## “The Little Foxes, That Spoil The Vines”

Song of Solomon 2:8-3:5

### Song 3: ‘Signs of His Coming’

Verse 8 – *“The voice of my beloved!”* These are the words of the bride – Literally, “Hark! My beloved! Look! He comes!” Not exactly the voice of the bridegroom himself, but the signs that his approach is near. He is so close, that the bride can almost hear his voice.

The signs of the times tell the bride that her beloved is shortly to manifest himself. Spring is nearing. The chilling atmosphere that depicts the world is still around her, affecting even her own body, the frosty elements of worldliness, eating and biting into the body of Christ’s bride. She can feel these affects acutely and she looks even more earnestly for the springtime when her beloved is to appear. And it is only as she looks, she observes some signs—some indications that the dead and barren, wintry

landscape is slowly succumbing to the irresistible force of springtime and life.

Verses 11-12 – *“For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.”* Perhaps, those of us who live in northern climes can appreciate these words more. As we begin to feel after the long winter, the sun begins to shed its warm rays on the frozen earth. We begin to see flowers start to shoot forth; trees spring back into life; the appearance of green around us. The sound of birdsong is one of the most welcome sounds to man. We feel the wonderful relief that winter is well nigh over.

And that is how we should feel in the Truth. We are so close to the groom’s appearance, and we should be able to feel within us the wonderful prospect of Christ’s return. Of course, the fact that he has not returned yet should also draw sorrow amongst us.

Verses 8-9 – “. . . Behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the window, shewing himself through the lattice.” Leaping and skipping imply speed, but not exactly the speed of an Olympic runner. More the sure-footedness of the deer, which so gracefully and sure-footedly springs from rock to rock. This reminds us of the New Testament scripture, which says, *“We have a sure word of prophecy whereunto we do well to take heed.”* The sure-footedness of Christ, we can rely on; he WILL return as he has said.

*“Leaping and skipping upon the mountains”* – We know that mountains in the scriptures represent nations and governments, and therefore perhaps this verse is indicative of the signs of the times. Or perhaps, that Yahweh is orchestrating affairs of human government to bring about His purpose in the establishing of His kingdom. However we take it, these verses set before us the speed and imminence of Christ’s return.

The roe and hart are admired for grace and beauty, swiftness and surefootedness. Under the Law they were clean animals. Let us look at Psa 42:1 – *“As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O Elohim. My soul thirsteth for Elohim, the living El . . .”* Who more than Christ could say these words? Christ more than anyone else, not only uttered these words and thought them, he lived these words.

The Hebrew word for ‘roe’ is *tsebiy*, from *tsabah*, which is a primitive root meaning *to amass*, especially *to array an army against*. The Hebrew word for ‘hart’ is *ayal*, derived from a variation of *El*, and therefore suggestive of *power* and *might*. These are very interesting, because the roe and the hart are fitting representations of the Lord Jesus, who indeed is meek and gentle. He was, in Zechariah 11, named as Beauty. Hence, the roe and hart are fitting symbols of the bridegroom.

But, there is another element to the Lord Jesus. God is love (as the world often likes to quote), but an element of that love is the fact that He is also a *“consuming fire.”* He is a lover of truth, and He is a consuming fire to all who are not lovers of truth. So with Jesus, who is Deity made flesh. The speed of the roe will be applicable to Christ as he pursues his enemies, and he will amass a large body of spirit-troops to bring the nations to their end.

1 Chron 12:8 – *“And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David into the hold to the wilderness men of might, and men of war fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains.”* This scripture depicts David as a wonderful type of Christ, and those Gadites who separated themselves unto David as a type of the bride of Christ—those saints who will manifest themselves belligerently with Christ, bringing the nations of the world to their end.

Thus, the bride does not only see and appreciate the loving, tender characteristics of her beloved, which truly he is, but she understands and appreciates the belligerent aspect of him—the war-like character of Jesus Christ. To execute the judgments is the honour of all his saints.

In verse 9 we read, *“He standeth behind our wall.”* Heb. 3:6 tells us that *“Christ is as a son over his own house, whose house are we.”* Therefore it is OUR house, and therefore, it is OUR wall. Though we are only safe keeping company with those within the house, within the brotherhood, we still look outside at worldly events beyond the wall for signs of his return.

However, we are unable to accurately assess world events in their bearing to final developments. We read, *“He looketh forth at the windows, showing himself through the lattice.”* The fact that he shows himself through the lattice suggests that the bride does not have a 100% clear picture. In other words, she can see the signs of the times, but may not be able to assess them for their worth in God’s final picture. For example, we can see Russia’s rise to her current wealth and greatness. Is this to prepare her for a bid for her world domination? We cannot say. Bro. Thomas said that poverty never stopped the barbarians from invading Rome, and therefore, we cannot say that Russia’s current rise to greatness is a sign that she is preparing to invade the Middle East. Nevertheless, we look with eagerness at such trends and events, without the wall of *“our house,”* in anticipation for the nearness of Christ’s return.

Verse 10 – *“My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.”* The word ‘fair’ is the Hebrew word *yaphah*, from the primitive root suggesting *to be bright*, and by implication to be beautiful. This is highly significant, as it is not just outward beauty, but a bright, intelligent, depth of beauty. As we know Samuel was told that Yahweh looketh not on the outward appearance.

This verse cannot literally mean ‘come away’ immediately, because if this song refers to signs of his coming, then we know that we will not be taken away until Christ comes back. Nevertheless, the message is preparing us for that eventuality. When the call does come, are we ready to leave? And therefore, as we observe the signs of the times, we look and are prepared to come away.

Verse 11 – *“For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.”* Looking at the symbols given here, the springtime is the time of the celebration of the Passover. We have already partaken of the Passover lamb in our baptism into Christ. The song refers to the time when the real Passover—our real deliverance will be fulfilled, when at the return of Christ, we will be rewarded according as our works have been, and in God’s mercy, permitted an entrance into His rest.

This also commences the time of harvest. Passover was a matter of 50 days before the next feast. If we look at Lev 23:10, *“Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest.”* Reading on, we find that this is seven sabbaths after the Passover and is the feast of Pentecost. In verse 39, we read of the next feast, *“Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto Yahweh seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath.”*

So, Passover would be in early spring, Pentecost in late spring or early summer, and the Feast of Tabernacles at the end of the summer, when all the harvest was gathered in. Does this remind us of Joel 3:13 – *“Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down: for the press is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great.”*

“The ‘dispensations of the fullness of times,’ popularly styled the Millennium, will be the antitype, or substance, of the Mosaic feast of tabernacles, which was ‘a shadow of good things to come’ “ (Elpis Israel p21).

Thus, after the Passover feast, rejoicing in their deliverance, the saints, under the command of Christ, put in their sickle, reaping the great harvest of the earth, executing the judgments written, all of which culminate in this glorious feast, commencing the Millennial Aion. Rev 19:17-18 – *“Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.”*

Isa 61:11 – *“For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so Adonai Yahweh will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations.”* What a wonderful era will commence at the return of the bridegroom,

when the harvest will have been carried out and all the wickedness of the earth will have been brought to an end!

Verses 11-13 of our song – *“For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.”* As the sun’s warmth begins to be felt in the early spring; the harsh, barren ground begins to make way for signs of life. Flowers begin to appear. Birdsong is heard; these wonderful harbingers of spring, and the peaceful sound of the turtledove.

Perhaps, Brethren and Sisters, the birdsong is that wonderful sign of the times that we have before us—the rebirth of the state of Israel. Or, is it a reference once again looking forwards to the time when joyful singing that will be heard in the earth when the curse of human rule is removed? *Psa 96:1 – “O sing unto Yahweh a new song: sing unto Yahweh, all the earth.” Isa. 44:23 – “Sing O ye heavens; for Yahweh hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for Yahweh hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.”*

Who cannot appreciate the comforting words of the bridegroom, as he lends this comforting message? Who cannot anticipate the feeling of warmth from that *“sun of righteousness,”* who will yet *“arise with healing in his beams,”* healing the deadly, grievous sore of mankind? How sweet will be the singing of that day!

Note at the end of verse 12, *“our land,”* not just MY land. We know that Yahweh through Ezekiel told Israel that the rulership would be overturned, overturned, overturned until he come, whose right it is, and He would give it him. But it is not just the bridegroom—this is the bridegroom AND his beloved bride—the multitudinous Christ, Christ and his brethren, united in one omnipotent body. It is our land, IF we are faithful.

*“Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.”* This is the second invitation from the bridegroom (first in verse 10). Why is it doubled? We know that things are often doubled in scripture for emphasis, putting a special note to it. Perhaps this reiterates the fact that *“we are in the world but not of it,”* and that *“our kingdom is not of this world.”* Perhaps we could look at it in the period of our probation as verse 10 suggesting the call to come out of Egypt and the world, while it is called today, and the second one in verse 13 as the actual calling away of the saints.

Remember, according to this song the bridegroom has not yet appeared; it is looking forward to his appearing. This song is about the *“Signs of His Coming,”* but we need always to exercise our minds and remind ourselves of the imminence of his appearing and be prepared, that we may be found watching and waiting. To the bride, she is ready, and the calling is therefore very much a reality to her.

Verse 14 – *“O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.”* The dove is a very gentle, innocent bird. It apparently has a lifelong companion and mourns any loss of its mate. Again, what an apt symbol for the “mourning bride!” Also look where she dwells, *“in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs.”* The RSV renders this the *“covert of the cliff;”* Moffat, the *“nook of the cliff;”* the RV, the *“covert of the steep place.”*

The dove is not a predator; it is a harmless bird. It has no natural defence. The only option for the dove is to find shelter in *“clefts of the rock.”* Psa 18:1-2 says, *“I will love thee, O Yahweh, my strength. Yahweh is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my El, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.”* This is the position of the bride. Self-defence not an option to us—the bride.

Jer. 17:5 – *“Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh his flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from Yahweh.”* Do we trust in ourselves? Or do we humbly assume the qualities of the dove and take refuge in the rock that nought can move? We can either follow our own inclinations—our sentiment of “I think...,” and consequently *“depart from Yahweh,”* or we can dwell in the clefts of the rock, high above the valley of flesh, out of the way of the devices of the world, and be able to say with the Psalmist, *“In God will I put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.”*

What wonderful words of the bridegroom follow! *“Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.”* Let us never forget, Brethren and Sisters, that the desire is not a one-sided thing. It is not just us desiring to see Christ; it is Christ desiring to see us. We are told in Hebrews, *“For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross.”* Do we for one moment think that the joy he beheld, enabling him to overcome the cross, was a future and solitary existence, albeit in immortality? The *“captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering,”* that he might *“bring many sons unto glory”* (Heb 2:10). He suffered FOR US. How then must he desire and long for the time, when he shall take his redeemed bride unto himself, when together, they (and may we say “we”) shall inherit the kingdom!

*“Let me see thy countenance.”* He is looking for a reflection of himself in us. *“Let me hear thy voice.”* Mal 3:16 – *“They that feared Yahweh spake often one to another.”* What delight do we think that Christ would have in any bride other than one who like him, can say *“the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up?”* The bride’s whole life’s desire should be to emulate the example of the bridegroom.

*“For sweet is thy voice and thy countenance is comely.”* The groom doesn’t have a desire to see or hear the ways of the world. He will return to

destroy the works of the flesh. We need to be absolutely certain that he sees or hears none of the world in us.

Moffat translates this verse nicely, *“O my dove, from the clefts of your rock, from your nook in the cliff; oh, show me your form; let me hear your voice; your voice so sweet, your form so fair!”*

Verse 15 – *“Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.”* Who are the foxes? Several thoughts prevail on the interpretation of this. One writer says, “Everything that is hurtful and destructive, must be cast out.” But what precisely are the little foxes? That same writer states, “Every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us that must be laid aside that the branch may bear fruit.” In other words, ANYTHING whether it be the works of the flesh within us or from without that must be laid aside.

Another view assumes that the foxes are errorists among us. Paul says, *“O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?”* (Gal 3:1). *“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments (constitution) of the world, and not after Christ”* (Col 2:8). In a sense, if it is error that is being referred to, it is but an extension of the first suggestion. Error is a sin that will certainly beset us, and prevent us from bringing forth pleasing fruit.

The last suggestion is that the little foxes are the enemies of Israel—those that would destroy the whole Israelitish vine, and there are plenty of them. Russia and Europe are hotbeds of Anti-Semitism. This is my favoured interpretation, as it seems to refer to something outside of the relationship of the bridegroom and his bride. *“Take us the foxes ... that spoil the vines.”* This seems to refer to something separate from the relationship of the bridegroom and the bride, and therefore referring to natural Israel, which is often referred to as the vine.

But why cannot there be more than one meaning? Let’s take the first suggestion for our exhortation and bring the subject as close to home as possible. Let’s ensure our own house is in order.

Jesus was Deity made flesh, the Logos that dwelt among us. Thus, the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ became two Elohim. *“This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased; hear him.”* We know that Christ is the rock. In 1 Cor 10:4, Paul tells us, referring to that water-giving rock in the wilderness, *“that Rock was Christ.”* We, as we have seen in verse 15, as his faithful bride, dwell in the rock which is Christ.

*“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above . . . set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is HID with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth . . .”* Can we see this, Brethren and Sisters? *“Take us the foxes.”* If we are to say that this is the Berean 2013—234

works of the flesh, Paul puts this in other, somewhat stronger, language, “*mortify (in other words, kill) your members which are upon the earth.*” Get rid of ANYTHING that sets us apart from Christ and from the Word of God.

Not only is Christ our rock and our refuge, the cleft of the rock, but he is only so to those who forsake everything—EVERYTHING in this life, to those who have mortified the deeds of the flesh. He can only be our refuge if we seek refuge in him, if we separate ourselves from the world and seek refuge in the Christ-rock. How can anyone save us from the enemy, if we insist on trying to fraternise with him?

Christ is the immovable rock. We are safe in the Christ-rock. “*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword?... For 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 our Lord.*”

Nothing can separate us, but there is a sting. If the power of attraction between us and Christ is great, nothing *can* separate us, but if we allow that power of the Word to leave us through lack of reading or study, these little foxes can destroy our fruitful vine. If we let sin into our lives, our vines will no longer bring forth good fruit, and we will be destroyed.

**What is love?** This book—the Song of Solomon is the epitome of love between Christ and his bride. “*Love is the first and greatest commandment.*”

Bro. Growcott says, “It is the power and spirit of them all. It must radiate like light from us toward everyone and everything. In defining what love is, and how it acts, John lays the very clearly-defined foundation which we must constantly keep in mind—

‘*THIS is the love of God, that we keep His commandments*’ (1 John 5:3).

“If we get away from the commandments, we are not loving in the scriptural and acceptable sense, however affectionate our feelings or good our intentions. There must be a careful adherence to divine commandments to keep love in a sound and healthy path.

“Love is far more than any technical definition can encompass. Love is a transformation of the mind from the cramped self-centredness of the natural man to the universal beneficent goodwill of the man of God. Love is complete and glorious newness of life.” (Be Ye Transformed, Vol II, page 296)

“*Love,*” we read in Romans 13, “*is the fulfilling of the law.*” Bro. Thomas, in the Herald, says “Hence love and obedience in scriptural language are two words for the same idea or thing. Where obedience is not, there love does not exist.”

Note well in verse 13, “*come away.*” “*Wherefore, come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you*” (2 Cor 6:17). Our first calling is to leave Egypt and ally ourselves to the Hope of Israel. “*Come out from among them*”—not stay in and fight. Likewise, at the return of the bridegroom, we will be told to come away. If we have not completely detached ourselves from the world and the things and behaviours of the world, we will never fully appreciate and love these words, and we will never be willing, when the call comes, to leave it all behind. “*Remember Lot’s wife.*” The little foxes, if they are allowed to enter our lives, whether it be the people of the world or the things of the world, will destroy us. “*Take us the little foxes.*” Get rid of them!

Verse 16 – “*My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies.*” This is the bride speaking here. Again, our kingdom is not of this world. We have no affinity with the people of this world. Christ has reserved this faithful few to make up the number of his elect that they may dwell with him in the endless ages of eternity. Therefore, the bride can confidently say, IF she is faithful, that Christ is her own. The world has rejected Christ, and continues to reject him, but she sees in Christ her only hope, and she sets out to make him the object of ALL her desires.

“*He feedeth among the lilies.*” Matt 18:20 – “*Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*”

Verse 17 – “*Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or young hart upon the mountains of Bether.*” What a beautiful conclusion to this 3<sup>rd</sup> Song. The Hebrew word *puwach* in “*the day break,*” *break* is *puwach*, and means *to breathe*. It is the fresh air of a new day, when the darkness that currently envelopes the world will be removed, when the shadows cast by the Papal Belshazzar and all his unclean and hateful birds will be consumed in the victory of the groom and his bride, who will “*shine as the brightness of the firmament.*” At the same time, the veil which darkens the heart of Israel will be removed. Isa 60:1-2 – “*Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of Yahweh is risen upon thee.*”

“*Turn* (or more appropriately, return) *my beloved, and be thou like a roe or young hart.*” The bride beseeches her beloved to come back, come quickly to redeem thy mourning bride.

“*Bether*”—there are no mountains named Bether in Israel. So we have to look for a symbolical meaning. The term indicates a dividing action. Genesis 15 tells us of the confirmation of covenant to Abraham, where he had to pass between the parts of the animals. The covenant was symbolically confirmed by dividing the animals and Abraham passing through them. We know that the covenant was actually confirmed with the crucifixion of Christ. The confirmation is now historical, though still the cornerstone of our hope. This might well be what is intended here—the confirmation of the covenant, the hope of the bride. Perhaps it has

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reference to the separating—the dividing of the sheep from the goats, the faithful from the unfaithful.

#### **Song 4: ‘The Sudden Appearance of the Groom’**

Verse 1 – *“By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth. I sought him, but I found him not.”* The Hebrew for ‘night’ is plural, and therefore, should be read *“many nights.”* Moffat translates this as, *“Night after night in bed I dreamed, I sought my beloved, and sought him in vain.”*

We need to note that a long and tiring vigil is the characteristic of the bride’s pilgrimage. How far away seems the dawn of the new day. Psa 30:5 – *“Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.”* Mal 4:2 – *“But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his beams . . .”*

But note the desires of the bride. Even with all her trials, all she can think about is her beloved and his appearance. She is lonely. This loneliness and desire to see the groom is not an inherent desire; we have to work at it. We have to constantly read and study—FILL our minds with the Word. Only then will we see the hopelessness and vanity of this life, and really and earnestly and ardently desire the presence of the groom. We conclude then that the bride is not spiritually asleep in these verses.

Verse 2 – *“I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.”* We have to go about our routine work, carrying out our mundane duties. The bride, we can note, was active. Some feel that this verse indicates that she was becoming worldly, but I believe it has reference to the fact that whilst in the world, she was not of it. She had to go to work and mix with the world in work; and therefore, she went about the city in the streets and the broad ways; nevertheless, seeking him whom her soul loveth. She was not interested in anything regarding the city; she was only interested in finding her beloved. What she found “in the city” was men and women who were too engaged with business and pleasure to be concerned with the subject of her adoration. So she stood out.

Verse 3 – *“The watchman that go about the city found me: to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?”* 1 Pet 2:12 tells us, *“Having your conversation (living) honest among the Gentiles: that whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.”* The world SHOULD be able to see us as different. IF we are Christ’s bride, they WILL see us as different. The bride’s response reflects her only interest. *“Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?”* She can only think of the coming of her beloved, and her marriage to him.

Verse 4 – *“It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth.”* As one translator puts it, *“Scarce had I left them, when I found my beloved.”* The long night of ceaseless vigil is over for the

bride. The long absence makes the joy even more intense. The trials of the night, combined with her unswerving faithfulness, searching for him, are rewarded with unspeakable joy.

The sudden appearance of the Groom; the bride the moment before feels in the depth of despair, but suddenly, the song breaks forth, *“I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother’s house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.”*

Gal 4:26 – *“Jerusalem (i.e. spiritual Jerusalem) which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.”* The mother’s house is the ecclesia. It has relation to her new birth. Her mother’s house is the ecclesia in which the bride was raised. It was during this period that she was raised—educated in divine ways, disciplined by trial, upbuilt and edified in the confines of the walls of the truth. It is the ecclesia that Christ has returned to inspect.

Verse 5 – *“I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.”* What a beautiful contrast to the present. Jer 31:22 – *“How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter?”* How long? Until the time to favour Zion comes. Isa 62:11 – *“Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.”* How beautiful to see the marriage of the bride to the bridegroom and the time when natural Israel will accept their Messiah.

This charge to them is repeated from chapter 2:7. *“O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.”* It is repeated here. We believe that this has reference to the fact that the love of the bridegroom cannot—CANNOT—be artificially stimulated. Some churches of the world use music intended to arouse the soul. Worldly philosophy in order to appeal to the young, or those in the world, cannot stimulate that ardent love and desire for the bridegroom. The beauty and power of the Word can only be realised by constant reading and studying without the hindrances provided by worldly or modern authors. These are the little foxes that spoil the vines.

What is our position, Brethren and Sisters? The Song before us paints such a wonderful, positive picture. It paints the picture of the faithful, adoring bride, looking for the appearance of her redeemer. But let us never forget that at the same time as the bride is received by her beloved, the wood, hay and stubble is removed from the community. And what will be left—the morally perfected and now physically perfected, immortalised bride, will inhabit, with the bridegroom, her redeemer, the kingdom. And in the words of the song, will *“not let him go.”*

Are we like the bride, lying awake in this Gentile night, longing for the appearing of our beloved, our redeemer? Or are we asleep—comfortable in our lives? And like the Laodiceans, *“in need of nothing?”* To us, if this is our position, the bridegroom will come as a thief in the night. Rather, let us

be in expectation of our Lord's return that we may go forth to meet him with joy.

Psa 62:5-6 – *“My soul, wait thou ONLY upon Elohim; for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved.”*

Apoc. 19:5-9 – *“And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come; and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.”*  
—Bro. David Hughes

## **Meditations – Deity's Ways No. 47**

“BRETHREN have only to send the genuine spiritual thing to find an enthusiastic welcome in the *Christadelphian*.” These were the words of brother Roberts some years since in a letter to the writer. Our brother also added: “The secret of acceptable writing is, 1, to have something to say, and 2, to say it in the fewest and best chosen words. Brief sentences; simple words; ideas clear and strong. This is the style that pleases and benefits. The reader gets the meaning without labour, and is drawn on by the mere pleasure of the exercise. I am much afflicted by contributions the reverse of this. I am correspondingly gratified by the right article when it comes: but this is a rare experience.” If writers will contribute, and the Editor make selections upon these lines, then will our Magazine be able to maintain its character among the brethren. What is wanted is quality, not quantity—truth, not speculation—Christ, not man. The *Christadelphian* should be a haven of edification, comfort and rest for weary pilgrims, not a field for conflict, wrestling, and slaughter.

A man has no heart to “fight,” or “run,” or “labour,” if his attainment of a reward for so doing become doubtful or uncertain. On reading this, someone will exclaim “shocking,” “base,” “mercenary.” But not so. Common sense, backed up by Scripture, leads us to look for a reward. If we are not to strive for reward—much reward—why is the encouraging term “reward” employed? “My reward is with me,” “Your reward shall be great,” “The labourer is worthy of his reward,” “He shall reward every man according to his works.” Further, does not Christ set forth the same truth in his parable of the talents? Also Paul in his allusion to the effulgence of the stars in the millennial heavens? All this teaching is too simple to be misconstrued. It must mean, and only mean, that great

faithfulness means great reward; little faithfulness, little reward. The margin is large, and where we individually stand, Heaven alone can tell. Let us then aim high, and appreciate the goodness and equity of God in the arrangement He has made.

Meekness is an indispensable trait in the children of God. This is the reason for the many references to it in the Bible. It is described as of great price in God's sight (1 Pet. 3:4). Not only are we enjoined in a general way to cultivate this virtue (Col. 3:12; 1 Tim. 6:11), but we have the occasions enumerated when it is to be present and to preside: in the reading of the Word (Jas. 1:21); in the setting forth of the truth (1 Pet. 3:15); in the restoring of transgressors, and the recovery of the misinformed and misguided (Gal. 6:1; 2 Tim. 2:25); and in the exhibition of any and every good work (Jas. 3:13). As an incentive to faithfulness in this matter, we are told that Christ was specially sent to enlighten the meek (Is. 61:1). That it is the meek who are to receive providential guidance and favour (Ps. 25:9), and that it is for the meek that the Kingdom is prepared (Ps. 149:4; 37:11; Matt. 5:5). But let us pause and enquire—What is meekness? Let us not confound meekness with weak-mindedness or timidity. Moses was a very meek man—an exemplary one—yet he could lead Israel in battle, and deliver to a disobedient nation the unpleasant messages of God. Meekness, from the Bible standpoint, is a quiet, humble, submissive attitude towards God and His word. How scarce is the virtue in the world in which we live!

Contrition occupies an important place in the approach of man to God. Apart from contrition on our part, God will hold no intercourse with us. He has laid it down that He will look only to the one who is of a contrite spirit (Is. 66:2), and that He is nigh unto and dwells only with such (Ps. 34:18; Is. 57:15). What is contrition? Let us not confound it with weeping such as follows the excitement of a Salvation Army meeting, nor with that tearful frame of mind which is the painful accompaniment of a low condition of health. Contrition means sorrow, but not necessarily tears. It means a genuine, intelligent, and repentant recognition of our sinfulness and unworthiness in the presence of God. It should not need much reflection to bring us to our senses. A straightforward look at Bible facts should speedily develop contrition. Let a man, for instance, fairly face the precepts in Paul's writings, and measure himself by them. Let him take Christ's example, in his love for God and man, and contrast himself with him. Man is sinful, and he knows it, and knowing it he should be contrite. But most men love to fool themselves in this matter. Oh! irrational man.

“As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Cor. 15:22). This passage is still quoted in certain quarters as evidence that only the baptised will rise. When will some men learn wisdom? Doubtless in certain cases this inability to comprehend Paul's simple, and obvious meaning is the reluctance to abandon any seeming proof for the unreasonable theory of the non-resurrectional responsibility of enlightened rebels. But to repeat once more the apostle's meaning. Paul is not referring

to a mere rising from the ground, but to a rising to eternal life. Proof: The apostle says the order of the making alive is, Christ the first-fruits, next, those who are his at his coming, then the end (verses 22, 23). Christ could not be called the first-fruits, if the making alive merely meant the resuscitation to flesh and blood existence, for in this many had preceded him. To wit, Lazarus, Jairus' daughter, and others. But Christ was the first raised to deathlessness and immortal life. Further confirmation is to be found in Paul's statement that the resurrection, or making alive, so far as his argument is concerned, implies the attainment of a spiritual body (verses 42–44). If brethren are determined to hold on to the false theory already alluded to, let them not distort this passage to support it. God will not hold that man guiltless, who is wilfully ignorant, or who knowingly and persistently perverts the simple teaching of any part of His word.

The condemnation in Rom. 8:1 refers to literal death to which all men are hastening on account of sin. This condemnation is alluded to in other places in the epistle: "End of those things is death," "Wages of sin is death," "Fruit unto death," "Sin hath reigned unto death." The condemnation is removed in the *relative* sense when the sinner's destiny is changed, which is at baptism, when his sins are forgiven and he becomes related in Christ to eternal life. In the *actual* sense the condemnation is not removed till his mortality is vanquished by the transformation of his body. This Paul tells us in 1 Cor. 15:54–56: "THEN shall be brought to pass the saying, death is swallowed up in victory... The sting of death is sin." To keep these two senses (prospective and actual) in mind is very necessary, otherwise discrepancies are created. For example, a believer is said to possess eternal life (Jno. 5:24) whilst only a seeker of it (Rom. 2:7); to be in the kingdom (Rev. 1:9), whilst only an heir of it (Jas. 2:5). He is similarly said to be "quickenened," "saved," "redeemed," whilst actually his realisation of these blessings is future. —*Bro. A.T. Jannaway— 1899*

## **A Christadelphian on the Land of Israel**

### **Sixth Visit to the Holy Land**

#### **JERUSALEM DELIVERED**

Upon our return from the visit first made after the Balfour Declaration made during the Great War, and the carrying out of the British Mandate at the conclusion of Peace terms, we frequently, in our lantern lectures, gave the story of the deliverance of Jerusalem by the British and their Allies under General Allenby. We are, however, informed that we have not, in any of our letters to the Christadelphian or to the Berean Christadelphian, given the interesting details. We find that is so, and therefore hasten to make amends by, here and now, briefly reciting the facts referred to. These are, indeed, more than interesting to the Watchers of Zion, whose forerunners, in all ages, since the Lord uttered the words found in Luke 21: 24, have prayed for those Times of the Gentiles to be fulfilled, knowing

what such a consummation will mean for the world at large; and also that when Jerusalem began to shake off the Gentile dust of ages, then they—the true and faithful occupants of Zion's Watch Tower, could afford to look up, and lift up their heads, knowing their redemption was drawing nigh.

Doubtless, many of Zion's Watchmen lifted up their heads in June, 1099, when the first army of Crusaders reached the walls of Jerusalem! And, again, in 1187, at the great battle of Hattin. And, yet again, in 1192, when Richard, King of England, at the head of the advance guard, got within a few miles of the city. Oh, the ups and downs since then! But never did hopes rise so high as when Mr. Balfour, in the name of the British Government, penned that epoch-making letter known as the Balfour Declaration, by which the Jewish race were promised the protection of the Powers-that-be in making Palestine their national home. Never since the days of Ezra and Nehemiah was there such a shaking of the dry bones of Israel. Even that bombshell of Dr. Theodor Herzl, of Judea a State, did not create such a stir in Jewish circles; the vibration was felt the world over.

During the last two months of 1917 the daily newspapers afforded exciting reading for those interested in the Holy Land, and to none more than to a faithful Christadelphian. The British battalions were in the south of Palestine, having come from Egypt; they had broken through the lines of defence which had been set up by the Turks and Germans, from Gaza to Beersheba; but beyond that nothing was known—all was guesswork; the wish being father of the thought. Later on when we visited the Land, and got in intimate touch with friends in Jerusalem, lifelong inhabitants, and who were in the vicinity thereof throughout the War, we learnt that they also were in entire ignorance of what was transpiring during the two months referred to: they had no idea what General Allenby and his forces were doing. But at the end of November or beginning of December, in that year (1917), they found notices being posted in and around the city, the translation of which is as follows:—

#### PROCLAMATION.

Jerusalem, the Holy, which during thirteen centuries has been the religious site to Moslem, and the first religious site to Christians, has, until now, been protected by Turkish soldiers striving for general unity, under the shadow of the Ottoman Sultanate. The Turkish soldiers shall resist to the last soul against the enemy who is trespassing against these blessed sites. We shall not desist from the use of everything necessary for the protection of the kingdom.

Therefore, let everyone rest assured as to the order and discipline of the Ottoman Soldiery. The Victory is from God! I enjoin the inhabitants of Jerusalem, without distinction of race and creed, to act according to the following rules:—

Firstly: Those, who are in difficulties as to necessities of livelihood, and from the fighting, shall present themselves immediately to the places where the local Government shall appoint.

Secondly: For the protection of the life of the Fortress, if it is necessary, I shall make levies on the inhabitants, and provisions besides.

Thirdly: I ask of the inhabitants that they be calm and orderly more than customary.

Fourthly: Whoever does not carry a pass from the Military Commander is prohibited from leaving his house at night.

Fifthly: Those who disobey my orders shall be taken speedily to the Martial Court, which will administer the laws in regard to them.

My Respected Compatriots! Remain true to your country, and subject to the given orders. It is necessary that you respect me as the Chief Commander regarding your rights; but those who act contrariwise, be it known to you, that their punishment shall follow immediately with absolute and speedy orders from a Commander jealous for his Military honour and self-respect in many battles.

COLONEL ALI FUAD, Commander of all Jerusalem and its surroundings, and of the 20th Division.

Notwithstanding this Proclamation which was doubtless intended to allay the fears of the inhabitants of the city, and as a preventative of revolution, the people were on the tiptoe of expectancy; for they knew the Turkish Forces in and around Jerusalem were getting thinner and thinner, and that Turkish and German officers were flying northwards to Nablous, and that big sums were being paid by well-to-do Turks and others who were "in the know" for conveyances to take them the other side of the Jordan!

The secret of it all was not long a secret. On the 9th December, early in the morning, the Arab Mayor of Jerusalem was seen hurrying from the city displaying a white flag, and bearing an official letter from the Turkish Governor, 'Izzat Bey (who, by the way, had taken to his heels about four hours previously). Here is a translation of the letter: —

#### TO THE ENGLISH COMMANDER

Since two days shells have fallen on some of the places in Jerusalem the Noble (Kuds Sherif) which is a holy sanctuary to all The Ottoman Government, to safeguard the religious places from destruction have withdrawn the soldiers from the city And functionaries have been appointed to guard the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Mosque El Aksa, and other religious places.

It is hoped that a similar treatment will be accorded them by you. I am sending this paper by Hussein Ben Hussein, the acting President of the Municipality, Please Sir, (Signed) 'IZZAT, Muteserrif-Independent of Jerusalem

(8-9/12/33=8-9/12/17)

Yes: the secret was out. German bluster and Ottoman craft had met their match: their enemy was at the gate: and that too, to the surprise of all except General Allenby and his staff. These entered the city to find that not

a responsible Turk or German was anywhere to be found; they had all skedaddled!

On the morning of the 11th December, the English Commander-in-Chief made his official entry into Jerusalem—not in a State carriage, not yet on a Charger, but, on foot; and that, too, by means of the old-time Jaffa Gate. And just inside that Gate, on a stone platform in close proximity to the old Towers of Hippicus and David, in front of the Citadel, and in the presence of an unprecedented and most remarkable crowd, General Allenby read out to the happy throng—the inhabitants of Jerusalem—his Proclamation of which this is a translation: —

#### PROCLAMATION OF MARTIAL LAW IN JERUSALEM.

To the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Blessed, and the people dwelling in its vicinity; The defeat inflicted upon the Turks by the Troops under my command has resulted in the occupation of your city by my forces I, therefore, here and now, proclaim it to be under MARTIAL LAW, under which form of administration it will remain as long as Military considerations make it necessary.

However, lest any of you should be alarmed by reason of your experiences at the hand of the enemy who has retired, I hereby inform you that it is my desire that every person should pursue his lawful business without fear of interruption. Furthermore, since your city is regarded with affection by the adherents of three of the great religions of mankind, and its soil has been consecrated by the prayers and pilgrimages of devout people of those three religions for many centuries, therefore I do make known to you that every sacred building, monument, pious bequest, or customary place of prayer, of whatsoever form of the three religions will be maintained and protected according to the existing customs and beliefs of those to whose faiths they are sacred.

EDMUND HENRY HYNMAN ALLENBY,

General, Commander-in-Chief, Egyptian Expeditionary Force.

December, 1917.

At the close of the reading of the proclamation, General Allenby received, and shook hands with, all the notabilities and chief people of the city, and then left, as he came on foot. Two or three weeks later, the miserable “Desolator” of the Holy Land for centuries past—the Turk—made an attempt to regain possession of the city, the result of which was but to confirm all lovers of Zion, that, so far as any further overflowing of the land by the Great River Euphrates was concerned, God’s promises were sure. (To be continued).  
—*Bro. F. G. Jannaway*

### “Thank God!”

That should be the most frequent expression on our lips (mostly silently) and in our hearts. It should come spontaneously, frequently, yea, continuously. Every flower, every star, every cloud, every sunset, should  
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evoke our awe and wonder and thrilling joy of divinely-contrived beauty. Every word of Holy Writ. Every incident in our lives, 'good' or 'bad'—for faith and love can see the marvel and the wisdom and the purpose of it all. “Thank God!” should be the constant heart-beat of our lives, from which all love and peace and grateful, never-enough service springs. Sad indeed are those who crawl and stumble through an empty life in the cold and in the shadows, never knowing the warmth and light and sunshine and perpetual happiness of living in and unto God our Father! —GVG

## **America and the Pope**

IT IS natural that the American people should begin to be alarmed at the progress of Roman Catholicism in their country, considering the claims of the head of that system, and the power of a popular vote there to give effect to those claims in case of a sufficient number of people consenting to recognize them.

But the nature of the times forbids the idea that that country will ever come under the power of Rome. While it is true that, on the verge of her destruction, Rome boasts of her queen-like prosperity and sovereignty (Rv.18:7) and actually receives power and consideration at the hands of the European Governments in their war against the Lamb (Rv. 17:17; 19:20), it is also true that British Tarshish remains her antagonist to the last, and the Lord's ally as the anti-typical Tyre in the work of setting up the Kingdom of God.

America, while largely recruited from continental populations, is too closely related to Britain—both in blood and political genius—to admit of the supposition that she will be in the camp of the Beast and the False Prophet in the last great struggle, which is not far off. It is much more probable she will side with the mother country in its allegiance to the throne of David during the tempestuous interval that follows the Lord's manifestation on the earth, before all governments are finally overthrown.

Nothing has been revealed on the subject, and therefore it is impossible to be certain; but the general drift of things seems to be against any fear of America becoming a tool of the Pope.

—*The Christadelphian*, 1890

## **Backbiting a Sin**

A BROTHER who 'talks reproachfully of his brethren' is a backbiter, and those who countenance him partake of his sin. But do not be distressed by it (Ec. 3:16-17; 5:8). Backbiters and their fellow-sinners have been current ever since the Spirit of God expressed its displeasure at such things. There is a 'needs be.' How else are good men to be tried in the virtue of patience under evil speaking? (1 Pt. 2:20).

God has a work for the Shimeis sometimes (2 Sm.16:5-12). Doubtless it is a work of wickedness so far as they are concerned, and God brings His punishment on their heads in due time (1 Kgs. 2:43-46). But it is a something for men of God to submit to meekly in the hour of darkness, like David.

—June, 1892

## Breaking Bread Twice

There is no law against 'breaking bread a second time' on paying a visit to those who may be unable to be present at the regular meeting. A visited brother would feel the absence of communion if the visitors did not partake.

—*The Christadelphian*, 1893

## Bro. Thomas' Work

IF God had not raised up in this century such a man as Dr. Thomas, our generation would have been stumbling on in the inherited fogs which have entirely hidden the teaching of the Bible from view, while glorifying the Bible itself in a certain sentimental way.

It does not appear that the understanding of the Bible has been attained in any other channel. There is a deal of writing about the Bible, and a deal of smattering in connection with separate and scattered points involved in Bible things.

But where, outside of his work in our day, is to be found that complete mastery of the whole Scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation, which renders the work of God through Israel from the beginning a consistent, connected and progressive thing: which not only does not require the help of human philosophy, but which cannot endure the admixture of it, without being spoiled?

We know not it's like in any current system or movement, or in the hands of any teacher or institution of modern life anywhere. If others know of it, we'd be delighted to be introduced—with the liberty, however, of thorough independent inspection. We know enough of shams and echoes and abortions to make us very chary.

—*November*, 1891

**THESE inescapable truths are very galling to modern Athenians who call themselves brethren, and who wish to denigrate the sound labors and laborers of the past so they can theorize and speculate. The modern suggestion that bro. Thomas did not expound Gen. 1 and the book of Revelation correctly reveals an ignorance of the saving Truth he brought to light. —GVG**

## ON THE NAMES OF OUR PERIODICALS

Since 1834 the Editor of this paper has published eleven or twelve volumes of periodical numbers. Six were styled the "Apostolic Advocate," one "The Investigator," and five the "Herald of the Future Age." The first of these was to advocate what he then supposed to be the doctrine of the Apostles, under the impression that the New Testament, as expounded by certain writers, was a sufficient rule or measure of faith and practice. He therefore called it the "Apostolic Advocate." But in process of time he perceived that this impression was not made upon his mind by the scriptures of truth. From the study of these he discovered that the measure of a man's faith was exceedingly defective which did not embrace an intelligent belief of the Old Testament as well. The words of the Apostle to the Gentiles sounded in his ears, that he testified to the people and their rulers, "saying, none other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come," ACTS 26:22. It was evident, therefore, from this and numerous other passages which might be quoted, that a christian should know and believe the things that God had spoken to the Fathers of Israel by the Prophets. Under this conviction he applied himself to the study of them, and proceeded to call the attention of his readers to them also. Thus the interpretation of the sure word of prophecy was superadded to the advocacy of what was supposed to be the Apostles' doctrine. This was an advance which seemed to indicate the propriety of amplifying the title of the paper; and it was accordingly named "The Apostolic Advocate and Prophetic Interpreter."

In 1839 the last volume of the Advocate was concluded. Having removed to the North-West, to a country which was being filled up with raw materials from all parts of the Union, and the British Isles, the Editor thought that the state of things there at that time rather demanded investigation of what existed than the especial advocacy of what he then believed. Whether this were a correct view of the nature of things or not, he acted upon it, and in recommencing his literary labors he styled his paper "The Investigator." The country, however, was too new, its population was too much engaged in "subduing and replenishing the earth," for examination of the high and important matters pertaining to things unseen and eternal. The Editor was, therefore, removed from this place to another, where spiritual ideas command more attention and respect. The mission of the Investigator came to an end, but the Editor still survived.

A few months after the Apostolic Advocate was commenced, the Editor was entangled in divers controversies. The principle he had set out upon was to "prove *all things* and to hold fast that which was good." He supposed that the spirit as well as the letter of this apostolic precept was

the honest and ingenuous policy of the ecclesiastical community with which he found himself associated by the force of circumstances. Perhaps these circumstances expressed the will of God, who had thus placed him there for his trial and preparation for some future work. He learned patience and obedience by the things which he suffered; and acquired an experience which could be purchased only by endurance. He found that he was at liberty to “prove all things” provided that he held fast only what the rulers allowed to be good. This was setting up a mere human standard of faith and practice, a substituting *their views of truth* for the truth itself, which was certainly not the meaning of the precept, and therefore could not be submitted to by those who aspired to the liberty of the Sons of God. The manifestation of this disposition to arbitrate with despotic authority in the community—to say, “thus far shalt thou go and no farther”—originated within its pale a diversity of opinion in the premises which predisposed to the examination of principles which might lead to a difference of faith and practice.

The principle which first turned up as the result of proving all things, was that *the immersion of an individual whose “faith” was not the faith of the gospel was a valueless immersion*—it was not christian baptism. This principle has been a leading one, implied if not expressed, in all the Editor’s teaching from 1834 to 1850. From this he has never swerved, and cannot possibly depart so long as reason holds her own. Out of this principle grew another, namely, that *a knowledge of the truth acquired subsequently to such an immersion did not convert it into obedience of the gospel or christian baptism*. These principles were warmly opposed by the rulers. At first some of them reasoned, but their reasonings proving weak and their position untenable, they changed their tactics, and resorted to denunciation and to attacks upon character. This only widened the breach and rendered highly improbable a restoration of unity among the old materials of the sect.

But to return to the principles. While they were maintained by the Editor and others, they were advocated under the supposition that the faith of the gospel consisted in believing in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, in his death for sin, his burial, and resurrection, and that “baptism was for remission of sins.” They did not then perceive that these things did not constitute the faith of the gospel, although some of them are unquestionably items of the mystery of the gospel. “Baptism for remission of sins” was then proclaimed throughout the land as the “Ancient Gospel” to all who should repent and believe that Jesus was the Christ. Many of the leaders in this proclamation had been preachers in the Baptist denomination, who, when this “Ancient Gospel” was first propounded to them, violently and acrimoniously opposed it. It was obvious then that when they were immersed they were, if not ignorant at least entirely

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faithless of it. But afterwards they ceased their opposition, and declared that they believed that faith in Jesus as the Christ and remission of sins by baptism were the gospel, and so they continued to preach. Now the two principles stated above became to these people so many thorns in their flesh; for they resolved their immersion into a mere introduction into the Baptist body instead of a putting on of Christ by union to his name. They therefore turned upon the Editor, saying in effect, “Forbear, for in teaching these things thou condemnest us also!” This, however, was a trifling consideration; for he had assumed the position that the truth must be spoken, maintained and defended, though all might be condemned including himself. This position he has consistently and perseveringly maintained for years, and is prepared to uphold it to the end of the chapter.

Shortly after the controversy about the scriptural foundation of immersion commenced, the Editor propounded certain questions for examination without affirming his belief in any of them. Among these were some bearing upon the subject of immortality. No sooner were these announced than the rulers seized upon them as a kind of godsend. They declared that they were not simply inquiries, but *bona fide* articles of his faith—a creed to which he proposed to convert their community. They raised a great dust, hoping, doubtless, thereby to obscure the real question at issue about the two principles. But good very often is educed from present evil. It was so in the case before us. The clamor and attacks made by the rulers compelled the Editor to study the subject of immortality so that he might be able to state the truth concerning it, and to defend it from assaults on every side. The result was that he discovered for himself that *immortality is a good thing, which like all other good things to come is promised to the righteous, and to them alone.*

This hope of immortality raised the question *when will this hope be realized?* He saw clearly that it was not at death, but at the resurrection of the righteous from among the dead. This resurrection then was a great epoch in the future history of the world, and the commencement of an era of wonders upon the earth. It was introductory in truth to an Age and Dispensation in which the “exceeding great and precious promises of God” would be realized by all the saints. The scripture testimony of these things created in his mind a hope which looked beyond the resurrection epoch, and contemplated a kingdom, glory, and dominion under which all nations should be blessed. This economy is styled by the Apostle “the Age to come,” EPH. 1:21., or the Future Age. Of this age the Lord Jesus is the Founder, and therefore he is styled by the prophet “the Father of the Everlasting Age,” which being an age of undisturbed repose confers upon Him the honorable and glorious title of “the Prince of Peace.”

To advocate the claims of this age upon the faith and hope of his contemporaries, the Editor recommenced his literary labors, and bestowed upon the periodical devoted to it the name of the “Herald of the Future Age.” He was the more induced to designate it by this title because he believed that the Age was at hand or fast approaching. If he had thought that it was far off he would not have styled it the “Herald” of that age. He believed then as he believes now, that it was near, even at the doors; he therefore heralded forth that announcement though upon different principles from “the cry” that was then sounding throughout the land. That cry as a question of time has been shown by events to have been discordant with the word; the truth of the advent, however, has not been at all affected by the mistake. The word of the Lord lives and abides forever, and though men may err in their interpretations, the declaration of his will standeth firm that all things here shall be subjected to his dominion, so that “his will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

From 1834 to '46 or '47 the Editor had been bringing out and advocating great and important truths. During this period every effort had been made by the rulers to prevent their discussion and to turn away the ears of the people. But the Editor was bound to persevere although discouragements obtained pre-eminence on every side. He advocated the truths because he believed them to be true; and because all truth that God has condescended to reveal in his word is worthy of being known, and when known is calculated to soften the heart, and improve the dispositions of men. At that time he would not have said that the knowledge and belief of them was indispensable to a participation of the everlasting blessings of the age to come. He had not the testimony before his mind to justify such a conclusion; consequently could not venture to affirm it. But in process of time he came to see that they were *the gospel in ruins*—its integral parts lying as the fragments of a wreck all around. Having made this discovery he proceeded to rebuild the fabric—to bring the dismembered elements together, and to set them forth as one harmonious whole.

His faith had now attained an amplitude it had not possessed before. It embraced the hope of God’s calling to his kingdom and glory in the name of Jesus as the future Lord and sovereign of the world. He now perceived what the faith of the gospel was that was necessary to constitute an immersion christian baptism. It was nothing less than the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and name of Jesus as the Christ; and he discovered accordingly that if a man would inherit that kingdom he must believe with an honest and good heart the things concerning it. It was not simply a Future Age of glory, but it was “a kingdom, glory, and dominion” in that age with “honor and immortality” that were the glad tidings of “the truth as it is in Jesus.” To become a joint-heir with him of this kingdom the Editor was immersed in 1847. Having thus obeyed the gospel himself, he

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forthwith commenced its announcement to others in the United States, and afterwards in Britain. Thousands upon thousands have heard the joyful sound during the two years that are past; and if it be God's will that it should be still further proclaimed in these States the Editor holds himself in readiness to do it to the full extent of the means afforded him.

Having returned from Europe for this purpose, he begins this work by the issue of the "Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come." As the things of the Kingdom of God and of his Anointed will be the great theme of this periodical, he has amplified the title of the former work. The "Future Age" and the "Age to Come" signify the same thing; he has therefore for the sake of euphony adopted the latter phrase as a substitute for the former, and inserted "the Kingdom" before it. This is the great fact of the Age to Come, and the promise made to the fathers, the hope of Israel, and the faith of all believing Gentiles, who are not highminded and too wise in their own conceit to learn. The kingdom has become the topic of the present age which cannot be set aside. The acceptance or rejection of the doctrine concerning it will determine the destiny of every man that hears it; for it is the subject of the gospel by which we all must be saved.

Thus from the beginning to the present time progress has marked the Editor's career. There has been no vacillation with him. He has not professed and recanted, and professed again, not knowing his own mind for two successive moons together. Though hampered for want of means to carry on efficiently the work in which he has been engaged these seventeen years, he has never sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Such "grains of sense" as these he has inherited from none. He has proved by his works his faith, and when his traducers can do the same, he will cheerfully yield to them the palm of equal disinterestedness with himself.

THE HERALD OF THE KINGDOM AND AGE TO COME may be considered as the organ of all those, be they many or few, whose hope the kingdom is. The Editor is their humble servant for the truth's sake. When they can find another who will serve them in that truth more patiently, perseveringly, and self-denyingly, he will readily give place to such an one, and retire into that obscurity which is far more congenial to his feelings and habits than a notoriety which exposes him to the rancor and ill will of the rulers of the present darkness, and of those who do their will. Till then, however, it is to be hoped that they will bestir themselves, and not allow his efficiency to be cramped by a parsimony of which the world itself would be ashamed. Much can be done with a little as he has proved; but the armies of the aliens cannot be effectually encountered if the locker be entirely destitute of shot. A word to the wise is enough.

*Bro. John Thomas—Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come—1851*

## Hints For Bible Markers

We start out with a very interesting and thought-provoking command. "The brethren at liberty on all questions of eating and drinking, and the observance of feasts, sabbaths, and holy days." To understand this command, we must appreciate why Paul had to give it. This idea was given to a mixed community of Jews and Gentiles, the former of whom were zealous for the observance of the Mosaic law. They were for setting apart certain days as holy days, days devoted to the Lord. However, the Gentiles were not used to such a practice, they had never kept the Sabbath or any other holy day. The Jews were raised from childhood to keep holy days and found it difficult to abandon the custom. For the Gentiles it was something that was different from the norm. So the provision was made, in which the conscience of both Jew and Gentile could be satisfied. However, the conscience is not allowed to judge whether or not to do commands given by Christ. They must be obeyed. Simply put, if we decided to dedicate a day to God there is no command against it. It is up to each individual to decide. It must however be done in strict accordance with scriptural precepts. Therefore, as the command says, they are not at liberty to do anything inconsistent with holiness, or the glory of God. For example we do not keep the Sabbath but we do follow apostolic example in holding the Memorial on a Sunday.

bro. Beryl Snyder

*"For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy:" (Leviticus 11:44).*

### The Commandments of Christ

As collected and organized by bro. Roberts

#### XII. CONCERNING THE ASSEMBLIES OF THE BRETHREN

##### **The brethren at liberty on all questions of eating and drinking, and the observance of feasts, sabbaths, and holy days,**

*Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: (Colossians 2:16)*

*Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake: (1 Corinthians 10:25)*

*One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. (Romans 14:5)*

*He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. (Romans 14:6)*

*For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. (Romans 14:7)*

**except that they are not at liberty to do anything inconsistent with holiness, or the glory of God.**

*Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. (1 Corinthians 10:31)*

*But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; (1 Peter 1:15)*

*Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. (1 Peter 1:16)*

*Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: (Hebrews 12:14)*

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