

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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Please send Ecclesial communications to:

Bro. Fred J. Higham, 20116 McKishnie, Clinton Twp, Mich. 48035 U.S.A.

Phone: (586) 790-2156 e-mail: fhigham@gmail.com

Web Site: www.BereanEcclesialNews.com

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

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

Papua New Guinea

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

It is with great joy that we inform the brotherhood of the baptisms of **Ayuta Ayako, Jenny Ayuta, Nelson Dosi, Julie Konopa, Jane Nosi and Linda Jubuo** of Aiyura in Papua New Guinea. Our joy however is unmatched by their happiness in becoming fellow heirs of the Abrahamic Covenant through believing the gospel with all their heart, and being baptized into the all sin-covering name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Over the past three years Sis. Sharon and I have had the privilege of traveling to Aiyura in the Eastern Highlands of PNG during our annual visits, where we spend a number of days in Bible study. This year we studied Daniel chapters 1-7. Bro. Macx Kota has had a long association with our new brethren and sisters and it is as a result of his tireless work in preaching the gospel, and with God's grace, that many in PNG are both hearing and responding to the power of God's salvation.

Our new brethren and sisters were previously members of the Seventh Day Adventists, and have shown tremendous faith, determination and courage in standing aside from the community in which they live to publicly declare their conviction in "the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude v. 3). Bro. Ayuta and Sis. Jenny are elders of their community and Bro. Ayuta has expressed his determination and belief that by God's grace the Truth will grow in his area, and has begun plans to expand their tabernacle where our brethren and sisters with their families come together to study God's Word and worship.

On Sunday 5th January 2014, after the baptisms in the Ramu river in Aiyura, before many onlookers and family members, our brethren and sisters joined brethren Hensley, Kumo, Copeland and Timon, who travelled from Lae to Aiyura to take part in the Daniel studies and witness the confession of their faith and baptisms, joined together as one for the memorial meeting. On this occasion we extended the right hand of fellowship to each of our new brethren and sisters on behalf of all in our fellowship around the world.

It is the hope of all the brethren and sisters of PNG, that Aiyura will become the center of God's work in PNG and that "the Lord of harvest" (Matthew 9:38) will call out from among the people of PNG, darkened by the superstition of the churches, a people who fear Yahweh and esteem His name, and who shall be His in that day when He will make up his treasured possession (Malachi 3:17). Please note our new brethren and sisters' postal address is P.O. Box 220, Kainantu, Eastern Highlands Province, Papua New Guinea.

Your brother in Christ
Peter Small

HOLLADAY, Tennessee

Loving greetings in the One Hope that we share,

Since our last communication, Yahweh has continued to show us that He is still calling out to those who earnestly desire to live according to His

ways. Our ecclesia has been blessed and encouraged to see Yahweh's hand at work as we are growing in number. **Chuck and Ruth Carlisle**, who previously lived in New York were always searching for the Truth. After a long search, they found the Christadelphians to believe the same as they did, and moved to TN. In October of 2012, the weekend before the Northeast Gathering, they gave good confession of their faith, were baptized and given the right hand of fellowship.

The Northeast gathering of 2012 was held here in TN and was well attended by many from all around. We really appreciated the effort everyone made to attend and to the brethren who put in much time and thought in their talks to share with us.

Yahweh willing, our ecclesia plans to host the 2014 Northeast gathering this October 4 & 5. It will be held at the Montgomery Bell State Park in Burns, TN. We extend a warm invitation to all to join us for spiritually uplifting weekend of study.

We recently have had the pleasure of the addition of Bro. James and Sis. June Dishman from Nashville, TN, formerly with the Central Fellowship.

We've enjoyed our visits with Bro. Paul Garvey, Bro. Nathan Phillips, Sis. Joanne Osborne (now Phillips), Sis. Brenda McChesney, Bro. Harry Phillips, Bro. Pat Brown, Bro. Gordon and Sis. Linda Jones, Bro. Don Miller, and Bro. Ben Naglieri. We thank the brethren for sharing with us uplifting words of exhortation. It is wonderful and a privilege to be able to spend time with those of like faith who are striving to walk the same path to a great and wonderful kingdom on earth.

May we each continue to strengthen and encourage one another Zionward. May our Master's return be near.

Your servant in Christ,
Jim Rankin, Recording Brother

GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

- HOUSTON FRATERNAL GATHERING**..... **April 18–20, 2014**
Bro. Bob Lorquet, boblorquet@hotmail.com
- UGANDA FRATERNAL GATHERING**.....**April 3-6 2014**
Bro. Bob Bent, eyeglassman39@yahoo.com. Epa Wekati, epawekati@yahoo.com
- HENGOED FRATERNAL GATHERING**.....**May 30- June 2 2014**
Bro. Steve Male, malesinwales@btinternet.com
- LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING**.....**June 7–8, 2014**
Bro. Ricky Hurst, PO Box 1381, Goldthwaite TX, 325-451-4075
- HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING**.....**July–21-27 2014**
Bro. Mark Braune, 209 Ranger Dr., Buda, TX, 78610, 512-577-1119,
markbraune@gmail.com Study, "Minor Prophets"
- ODIADO KENYA FRATERNAL GATHERING**.....**Aug 20-24 2014**
Bro. Shadrack, jackshadrack@gmail.com or Bro. Epa, epawekati@yahoo.com
- TENNESSEE FRATERNAL GATHERING**.....**Oct 4 –5, 2014**
Bro. Jim Rankin, 115 Sherwood Dr., Camden, TN 38320 USA, 731-584-6039,
email jrankin@bentoncountycable.net

The BCAA

The Berean Christadelphian Audio Archives, or BCAA for short, has made available a large selection of talks on MP3 online. The address is www.bcaudioarchives.blogspot.com. Please check this link often as we will be updating with new material as much as possible.

The purpose of this site is to restore and make available lectures, exhortations, and study classes. Some of these talks are decades old and have seldom been heard.

We are always looking for tapes, and if you have some talks that you would like to share, please email Bro. Craig Kiley (craigkiley@yahoo.com) and we will be happy to transfer the talks to MP3 format and post them.

Consider the Heavens (2)

“Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of Him Which is perfect in knowledge?”—Job 37:16

WE HAVE seen how “the heavens declare the glory of God.” Let us consider how “the firmament showeth His handiwork.”

“And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament.”

The firmament is the expanse—the atmospheric shell that envelops the earth and makes life thereon possible.

About this, ancient man knew very little. It remained for the last days for man to discover the importance and significance of this basic divine revelation.

God divided the waters so that there were clouds above and seas beneath, and thus was established, with the aid of the sun, the water cycle that turns the earth from a desert to a paradise.

Life for the earth depends on the water cycle: up from the seas into the atmosphere by the power of the sun, across the heaven in clouds moved and guided by the winds, down again to the earth in rain or snow, to cause the earth to bear fruit, back to the seas in rivers. So the endless, life-giving cycle flows.

Sometimes there are mountains in the way. The water problems in West Texas from time to time are because there is a hilly range between there and the Gulf of Mexico. As soon as that range is crossed on the way East, there ceases to be a water-shortage problem. The mountains cause updrafts which cool the moisture coming from the Gulf and cause it to fall and it goes no further inland.

Let us remember that often mountains stand in the way, but faith can remove mountains. The political mountains of the earth today, the great, proud uplifted fleshly mountains of brass, break up the peaceful harmonious cycle of life's waters, God's basic natural provisions for

fruitful abundance; therefore there is sorrow and suffering and hate and injustice and inequality and envy and criminal waste and heartbreaking want.

But we are mainly interested in the deep and beautiful and spiritual aspects of these symbols. Today's mountains are cold, bare barriers of pride and antagonism. We hear a lot these days about “summits,” and the expression is very significant.

Zechariah's 2 latter day proud, fleshly mountains of brass—the King of the North and the King of the South—are shaping up wonderfully for the time when the cherubim chariots of God will smite them asunder and go forth from between them into the whole earth, to establish the true mountain of stone that will fill the earth and manifest God's glory.

“In the last days the mountain of the Lord's House shall be established in the top of the mountains, and all nations shall flow unto it” (Isa. 2:2).

* * *

THE WATER cycle begins with the sea. We remember on the third day God gathered the waters under the firmament together. The dry land He called Earth, and the waters He called Seas. On the third day—the symbol of resurrection—the Earth was born out of water.

The waters of the Seas represent the people of the nations. Isa. 57:20 says,— *“The wicked are a troubled sea, casting up mire & dirt.”*

Daniel saw the four winds of heaven striving upon the Great Sea, and as its waters churned and roared with the agitation of the wind, they brought forth in succession the wild beast empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome.

The wind, of course, was the Spirit of God, by which He,— *“Rules in the kingdom of men and sets up over it whomsoever He will”* (Dan. 4).

John, in the Revelation (13:1) had a similar vision of powers rising up and out of the Sea. And Psa. 89:9 declares,— *“Lord God of Hosts, Thou rulest the raging of the Sea . . . Thou hast scattered Thine enemies.”*

This has a latter-day application—its fullest application. And so do the following—

“Was the Lord displeased with the rivers? Was Thy wrath against the sea that Thou didst ride upon Thy horses (Israel) and Thy chariots of salvation (the cherubim—the saints)?” —Hab. 3:8.

“He shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves in the sea . . . the pride of Assyria (King of the North) shall be

brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt (King of the South) shall depart”—Zech. 10:11 (This chapter is about the latter-day gathering of Israel).

“The mountains quake, the hills melt, the earth is burned at His presence . . . He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry.” (Nah. 1:4-5).

That is the final consummation— *“He maketh **the sea dry.**”* In the vision of the New Jerusalem at the end of the Scriptures (Rev. 21:1), we are told *“there was no more sea.”*

During Christ's millennial reign on earth, we are shown the redeemed of God standing upon a sea of glass, singing songs of victory. They have subdued the troubled, miry sea of nations to a crystal, glassy calm.

Then the warm rays of the Sun of righteousness begin to work upon it, to bring about the time when *“there shall be no more sea”*—no more subdued mortal nations—all absorbed up into the heavenlies.

* * *

THIS BRINGS us back to the water cycle. When the Sun sheds his beams upon the Sea, something begins to take place, although what happens is completely invisible—vapour is drawn up from the Sea into the air—and as it is drawn out of the Sea, it is distilled—all impurity is left behind, up and up it goes, a vast host of minute particles of water. Jesus said (John 12:32)— *“If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me”*

And Paul rejoices (Eph. 2:6),— *“God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”*

* * *

ELIHU asked Job (37:16),— *“Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds? The wondrous works of Him Who is perfect in knowledge?”*

What keeps the CLOUDS —containing countless millions of tons of water—floating in their snowy beauty in the sky?

For here is the heavenly rendezvous of the vast host of tiny water droplets drawn up into the heavens by the sun. Here they become manifest in their shining splendour, ready to pour scourging judgment or gentle blessings upon the earth, according to their great Creator's will.

There are many references to the clouds—in their spiritual sense—as the medium of God's manifestations and operations:

2 Sam. 22:11,— *“He rode upon a cherub, and did fly. He was seen upon the wings of the wind...and thick clouds of the skies.”*

Psa. 104:3— *“He maketh the clouds His chariot. He walketh upon the wings of the wind.”*

Isa. 19:1,— *“The Lord rideth upon a swift cloud.”*

Psa. 18:11,— *“His pavilions round about Him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.”*

There are 3 Hebrew words for clouds, meaning thick, covering, and vapour. All 3 are used in this last passage,— *“thick clouds of the skies”*—it is literally: *“clouds of clouds of clouds”*—a three-fold repetition, like *“Holy, holy, holy.”*

When we let our minds dwell upon the spiritual significance of clouds—how they are composed, what their purposes are, who they represent, we can see far more point and promise and harmony and beauty in God's presence being so often manifested in clouds. This was how Israel knew Him—

Ex. 19:9,— *“I will come unto thee in a thick cloud.”*

Ex. 13:21,— *“The Lord went before them in a pillar of cloud.”*

Ex. 16:10,— *“They looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud.”*

Of the Tabernacle, God promised (Lev. 16:2),— *“I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat.”*

And when Solomon's Temple was dedicated (1 Kings 8:10):— *“The cloud filled the House of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister for the glory of the Lord had filled the House.”*

At the transfiguration of Jesus—the manifestation of the glory of his kingdom—a *“bright cloud”* overshadowed them, and they *“entered into the cloud”* (Matt. 17:5). And again, when he was taken unto heaven—

“A cloud received him out of their sight” (Acts 1:9).

When he returns (Matt. 24:30):

“They shall see the Son of Man coming in the CLOUDS of heaven, with power and great glory.”

Likewise in Rev. 1:7— *“Behold, he cometh WITH CLOUDS, and every eye shall see him.”*

When the multitudinous Son of Man is manifested, the Rainbow Angel (Rev. 10:1), he is— *“Clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow is upon his head.”*

* * *

THE RAINBOW is the token of the Everlasting Covenant, the sign of the Memorial Name, “Yahweh Elohim.” The rainbow occurs in only 3 places in Scripture, but very significant places—the covenant with Noah, the Cherubim visions of Ezekiel and the Multitudinous Son-of-Man similitude in the Revelation.

The Rainbow is always associated with the cloud,— *“I do set My bow in the cloud”* (Gen. 9:13).

“The bow shall be seen in the cloud” (Gen. 9:14).

“The appearance of the bow in the cloud in the day of rain” (Eze. 1:28).

The cloud—the multitudinous droplets of water—are essential to the manifestation of the rainbow. Only they can thus reflect in brilliant beauty the manifold wonders of the glorious divine light—from the red of the flesh, through the yellow gold of tried faith and the green of life and resurrection to the heavenly blue and the royal purple.

The raindrops absorb the pure white light and reflect it back separated into its basic seven colours. They manifest the glory of God in detail—they manifest the various characteristics that together make up the perfection of His goodness.

The rainbow around the throne in Rev. 4:3 is said to be in sight like unto an emerald, that is, green. Green is the center of the 7 colours of the rainbow, and is the colour of life and blessing,—

“Like a green olive tree in the House of God” (Psa. 52:8).

“A green olive tree, fair; of goodly fruit” (Jer. 11:16).

“As a tree planted by the water, her leaf shall be green” (Jer. 17:8).

And the opposite is shown by—

“The grass faileth, there is no green thing” (Isa. 15:6).

“I have dried up the green tree” (Eze. 17:24).

“If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?” (Luke 23:31).

The true form of the rainbow is a circle, symbol of perfection and endlessness, like the spirit-wheels of Ezekiel's cherubim. It is significant that **the higher we go, the more of the circle we can see**. It is only our low, earthly outlook that prevents us seeing the fulness and perfection of the divine purpose—the endless, everlasting covenant.

In our weak mortal state we see through a glass darkly, and we know in part. But even in our weakness, the higher we raise the plane of our spiritual vision, the more of the full circle of the purpose we can perceive. From an airplane (up in the heaven, entirely, away from the earth's obscuring), the full circle of the rainbow is visible.

So in the spiritual—the higher the view, the fuller the perception, the more complete and entire is the vision of the eternal purpose.

To be Continued, Lord Willing

—Bro. G.V. Growcott

Christ-like behavior in the workplace

Good morning Brothers and Sisters, this morning we are going to take a look at Christ-like behavior in the workplace. Now I've been thinking about where I should start. There are many things to consider, like the way we treat others, how well we perform our task at work, how we dress for work, our conversation at work and so on. But for me everything kept going back to the same place. Before I tell you where that place is, I want to share a story with you.

A few months ago I started working with a man, and I started talking to him about GOD and the Scriptures. He seemed very interested so we continued talking. I found out he went to the Catholic Church. I let him know what I thought about the Catholic religion and told him things from the Scriptures about it. He actually agreed with most everything I was saying, but didn't really think it mattered where you went to church but how you lived your life; he admitted he had never really studied the Bible. Then he asked me a very interesting question, He asked, why do you think I feel like I am friends with GOD, like buddy-buddy with him? He expressed to me he felt if he disobeyed a commandment such as when Abraham was told to sacrifice his only son he could simply reason with GOD and not do it.

Well I thought about it for a while. He said he asked several priests but never got a satisfactory answer. I came up with an answer but wasn't sure he would like it, but I had to tell him anyway. I told him he didn't know GOD, the only way to know him was to read His Word and follow it to the best of his ability. We are to search the Scriptures as if we were looking for fine gold. This is where we have to start if we want to have Christ-like behavior in the work place, we have to study and make Yahweh an everyday part of our lives. If he is not in our lives at home he will certainly not be in our lives at work. What we put in at home is what will come out at work.

Act 17:11, *"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."*

We see that searching the Scriptures on a daily basis is very important. And is an absolute must if we are to follow Christ when we are in a worldly setting such as work.

Rom 15:4, *"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."*

We are to be patient in our studies we can't learn it all at once. We should be comforted by the Word and through it all we get our hope, a true hope that no man taketh away.

Do you think we should keep that hope to ourselves?

Col. 3:16, *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”*

This is the way we should be with one another and while at work the world should see the light of Christ pouring out of us.

2Tim. 4:1, *“I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.”*

2Tim. 4:2, *“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”*

It’s pretty clear we are to preach God’s Word to all who have ears to hear. So the question is how do we know who at work has ears to hear? I have heard some say well you have to get to know them first, become friends, and then preach the Word to them.

Jas. 4:4, *“Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”*

Strong words brothers and sisters.

So do we want to become friends with them and then if they reject the word not be friends anymore? We know that’s not going to happen, most likely we will slowly over time become more and more like them, until we fall away from the Truth.

2Cor. 6:14, *“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?”*

2Cor. 6:15, *“And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?”*

2Cor. 6:16, *“And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”*

2Cor. 6:17, *“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.”*

2Cor. 6:18, *“And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”*

It is a very dangerous road to travel when we hang out with co-workers and not have the attitude of Christ. He said I must be about my Father’s business, and what was he found doing when he said this? Preaching his Father’s Word, so to have Christ-like behavior at work we must, like Christ, be about our Father’s business. Our Father’s business is GOD manifestation, when our co-workers see us they are to

see GOD through us, they are to hear GOD through us, and if they hate us for it, it's because they hate GOD.

So what are we told to do about that?

Matt. 5:44, *“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.”*

Luke 6:27, *“But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you.”*

Luke 6:35, *“But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.”*

We are to do good to those that hate us and use us. And no way in the world could this be possible without knowing GOD through a diligent study of His Word. His Word He has esteemed above His name. The more time we spend with Yahweh through His Word the easier we will react to those who hate us in a Christ-like manner, with love instead of hate and revenge. Let the word of YAHWEH dwell in you richly.

Whenever I'm asked to give a talk like this, I tell you, I truly feel closer to Yahweh, and am probably way easier to get along with, and why, because I read and read and read His word searching for verses, and His words truly make a difference on everything I say, do and think. It's truly amazing, and I think why don't I do this all the time instead of wasting my time on other things. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.

It is truly a fight we have to fight, a war in our members.

Now I want to talk to you about our conversation at work.

1Pet. 1:15, *“But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.”*

The word there could be translated behavior which would include our conversations. We must be very careful which conversations we involve ourselves in while at work some are inappropriate for the family of Christ. The Scriptures tell us we will have conversations about things that really are meaningless in the big picture of things, what does it say?

Matt. 12:36, *“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”*

People today have conversations about some of the most evil acts imaginable, and I will not go into detail here but I have definitely heard them, we must not get mixed up in their idle words, we must also be careful when we talk about someone to our co-workers. We should not

speaking ill about someone else. These are solemn words Matthew writes, and James has some more,—

Jas. 1:26, *“If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.”*

Those two verses alone should make us think before we speak. Sometimes we should think of Christ and how he answered,

Mark 14:61, *“But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?”*

Mark 15:3, *“And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing.”*

Mark 15:5, *“But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.”*

Sometimes it's better for us to just say nothing and go on about our business which is our Father's business. We must not forget, manifesting YAWHEH in our life is our goal.

Next on our list is how we perform our task at work. We should always do our best.

1Cor. 10:31, *“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”*

Col. 3:17, *“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”*

Col. 3:23, *“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.”*

We must remember everything we do should be done to GOD'S glory, it's not our bosses we are trying to please it is YAHWEH. He is the one that should get the glory for a job his servants have performed. If we just do it half-heartedly do we think anyone will listen to us when we preach the word of YAHWEH to them, or will they think that if we can't even take care of business at work, how we could ever take care of something as important as our spiritual work? We must not do our work grudgingly, but thankfully and heartily, let us remember Yahweh has provided it for us to do.

Next we look at dress. How should we dress at work, or anywhere in public for that matter? For this question I have a very simple answer for you, of course we will look at Scripture, but my simple answer is, if you feel comfortable standing before Christ at the judgment seat wearing it then wear it. What do the Scriptures say?

1Pet. 5:5 *“Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.”*

1Tim. 2:9, “*In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array.*”

1Tim. 2:10, “*But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.*”

I believe these verses are teaching all the same thing that men and women don't dress to be seen of men. Show your humbleness through what you wear; would Christ or say his mother Mary be ok wearing what you are wearing? That is what we should ask ourselves before we leave our house each day. One more thing on this, modest apparel, look that up in your concordance, it might actually change the way you dress, I'll let you find it out on your own.

We all have access to The Commandments of Christ. They should be read often and followed at all times.

—Bro. Richard Hurst

SIGNS OF THE TIMES (commentary)



Russia Threatens While the World Sleeps!

Russia and the Image Empire

All eyes on the Crimea and Russia's move into the Ukraine!

We have long looked for Russia to become the dominant power of Europe (Ezek. 38, Dan. 2). Christadelphians have believed this since the days of Bro. Thomas:

The future movements of Russia are notable signs of the times, because they are predicted in the Scriptures of truth. The Russian

*Autocracy, in its plenitude, and on the verge of its dissolution, is the Image of Nebuchadnezzar standing upon the Mountains of Israel, ready to be smitten by the Stone. **When Russia makes its grand move for the building-up of its Image-empire, then let the reader know that the end of all things, as at present constituted, is at hand.** The long-expected, but stealthy advent of the King of Israel, will be on the eve of becoming a fact; and salvation will be to those who not only looked for it, but have trimmed their lamps by believing the gospel of the kingdom unto the obedience of faith, and the perfection thereof in “fruits meet for repentance” (Jas. 2:22; Heb. 9:28). — Elpis Israel, preface*

No one can dispute that the Image Empire is being rebuilt by Putin. This is exactly what needs to occur to bring about the stealthy advent of the King of Israel. We found the following comments from Charles Krauthammer of interest on the moves of Russia of late, to now include the crisis in Ukraine:

“Henry Kissinger once pointed out that since Peter the Great, Russia had been expanding at the rate of one Belgium per year. All undone, of course, by the collapse of the Soviet Union, which Russian President Vladimir Putin called “the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the [20th] century.”

Putin’s mission is restoration. First, restore traditional Russian despotism by dismantling its nascent democracy. And then, having created iron-fisted “stability,” march.

Use the 2008 war with Georgia to detach two of its provinces, returning them to the bosom of Mother Russia (by way of Potemkin independence). Then, late last year, pressure Ukraine to reject a long-negotiated deal for association with the European Union, to draw Ukraine into Putin’s planned “Eurasian Union” as the core of a new Russian mini-empire.

Turns out, however, Ukraine had other ideas. It overthrew Moscow’s man in Kiev, Viktor Yanukovich, and turned to the West. But the West — the E.U. and America — had no idea what to do.

Russia does. Moscow denounces the overthrow as the illegal work of fascist bandits, refuses to recognize the new government created by parliament, withholds all economic assistance and, in a highly provocative escalation, mobilizes its military forces on the Ukrainian border.

The response? The E.U. dithers and Barack Obama slumbers. After near- total silence during the first three months of Ukraine’s struggle for freedom, Obama said on camera last week that in his view Ukraine is no “Cold War chessboard.”

Unfortunately, this is exactly what it is for Putin. He wants Ukraine back.”

—Extract from “*Putin’s Ukraine Gambit*”, The Washington Post Online

One member of Congress commented this week that “*Putin is playing chess, while Obama is playing marbles.*” We note the weakness being displayed by the Tarshish powers in this whole affair, while Russia does virtually anything she wants. This is because Russia controls the oil and gas supplies to Europe and is thus economically dominant, along with Germany. We know from Scripture that the Tarshish powers will act as protectorate to Israel in the latter day conflict yet to be revealed. The Tarshish powers will be brought into some kind of conflict with the Russian/Gogian forces when Gogue turns its full aggression towards Turkey, Egypt and last but not least—Israel. But by that time, the Tarshish powers will not be able to deter the Gogian will by force and will in fact be beaten back by Gogue (Ezek. 38:13). We are seeing the repeated displays of weakness and apathy by the West leading to the prophetically expected “point of no return” to the Latter Day Crisis. Putin now even has at least one warship in Cuba (something not seen since the Cuban Missile Crisis) and he is re-building many cold war naval bases, such as in Egypt. And Barak Obama? He is too interested in cutting the military and pushing his domestic policy of destroying the U.S. from within with his Gay marriage agenda and legalized marijuana, among other things. Thankfully we know the Elohim are in control of these developments.

Let us remain ever vigilant and watchful brethren. Yahweh's will be done.
—*Bro. Mike Jasionowski*

Meditations—Deity’s Ways No. 55

LLANDUDNO is a grand place at which to spend a holiday. Standing on the top of Great Orme, with mountains as far as the eye can reach on the one hand, and a glorious sun-lit ocean on the other, one feels that life is very much worth living. In the presence of such surroundings, how one realises the greatness and goodness of the Creator! God has not been selfish in relation to the enjoyment which the sight of these wondrous works bestows. He has made man to appreciate and share this pleasure with Himself. How easy it would have been for God to have stopped short at the unfeeling mountains, or the unthinking cattle that browse upon the thousand hills! But no, He has made man—a being who can with Himself revel in these glorious works of creation. But where is God, and where are the angels who took part in the production of nature, as it now so charmingly appears? And where is Christ to whom all things have been given? Have they

left for ever this beautiful earth? It would seem so; but no! Fetch the telescope of divine inspiration. Point it in the direction of heaven. God can be seen; Christ can be seen; and also the angels. They are looking with interest and affection towards the earth. They are standing away for the moment, beyond actual hearing and human gaze, on account of the world's unrighteousness. A day is appointed for its reformation. Things will be different then. "Blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory."

"Forget me not" has been the request of many a man in his dying moments; but there has been only one man who, after expressing it, has been raised from the dead to be the invisible eye-witness of the faithfulness of friends to his wish. He who said "Do this in remembrance of me" can now say, "I know thy works." With this thought in mind, we assemble to break bread in remembrance of Christ. But we feel that it is not only for Christ's pleasure that we meet, but also for our own comfort and edification—this was Christ's intention. To remember Christ is to remember the Scriptures which speak of him, and to remember these Scriptures is to lay hold of the divinely-promised cure for all our ills. This thought is true and precious. The remembrance of no other man, however great or good, can accomplish such a result as this. In Christ there is not only something to cheer the sad heart, to comfort the afflicted soul, to brighten and ennoble all the ways of our lives, but something to build up character—a character which God has promised to accept as a passport to the kingdom and eternal life.

Among the many beautiful sayings of God is this: "*As truly as I live all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord*" (Num. 14:21). Let us revel in its meaning. The passage is familiar to us owing to our frequent quotation of it in our controversies with the alien. But let us make a deeper and better use of it than that. To employ such grand utterances as this as proofs in our contention for first principles is only a part of the object that God had in making them. God's sayings are intended to assure and cheer us all along the probationary path. God spake the words in question some 2,500 years after sin had marred the earth, and at a time when Israel's faithlessness was rampant. God says, in effect: My purpose respecting the earth shall not fail. The purpose, we know from other prophecies, is the peopling the earth with a race of undying, glorious, God-like beings, of whom we are invited to become a part. Let us then look around, and see the earth and all that pertains to it—the beauty and richness of its produce, the sweetness of its breezes, the charms of the animate forms which inhabit tree, forest, and ocean—for this is the reward. What more could the heart desire than to enjoy in spirit nature such a reward in divine and angelic company?

Man was never made to guide himself, and if he insists on attempting the task he not only fails, but merits extinction. When fresh from the hands of his Maker he was unable to think rightly (as we know from the reasoning in Eden), how much less so now after the hardening and warping of 6,000 years of wrong-doing. Let us learn the lesson, and forget it not—*It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps*” (Jer. 10:23); *“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death”* (Prov. 14:12). If we would please God, if we would be made wise unto salvation, we must be controlled by the Scriptures, which are the voice of God (“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God”). Apart from the wisdom which the Scriptures give, and give exclusively, man occupies no higher place in the divine estimation than the animals which perish. This may sound harsh, but it is true. *“Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish”* (Ps. 49:20). This is a truth which Dr. Thomas emphasised, and it is one which his faithful followers will also emphasise. The religious world is astray on the subject (as popular theological writings abundantly testify), and in regard to it many brethren are becoming painfully lax. The laxity is largely the outcome of the growing unbelief respecting the unerringness and divine authoritativeness of all Scripture.

Bro. A.T. Jannaway—1899

A Christadelphian on the Land of Israel Sixth Visit to the Holy Land

TEL AVIV AND JAFFA

The meal-times at the Moskovitch have furnished the opportunity for partaking of something more than food for the natural man. In many ways there have been intellectual feasts in the way of interchange of thought with prominent Zionists. By invitation I called and had an interview with Mr. Semmi Tolkowsky, at his residence in Tel Aviv. He is the author of *Achievements and Prospects in Palestine*, and other works. He is a well-known engineer of wide experience, and has devoted much labour and time in the agricultural colony, Reboth. The conversation was mainly on the Arab Question, which seemed to weigh rather heavily with him.

After a good night's rest, and an equally good breakfast, early one morning, we were quite fit for the long-looked-for revisit to Petach Tikvah, and the adjoining colonies. After packing, what in England is my week-end lecturing bag, with as much as I could possibly squeeze in, I strolled forth to where the Tel-Aviv-Jaffa diligence, or buggy,

started from, and having found same and taken a seat therein, soon found myself at the old—very old—seaport of Joppa.

Joppa (Jaffa) is not a very desirable place to stay long in; although it is the seaport for Jerusalem, and second only to the capital city of Palestine. It has a population of nearly, if not quite, 60,000, made up, approximately, of 30,000 Mahommedans, 20,000 Jews, and 10,000 “others”. Over 1,700 vessels of various nationalities annually use the port, totalling a tonnage of a million and a quarter. The thoroughfares, in the main, are exceedingly narrow, and exceedingly dirty: on account of the sand, and dust, and dirt, the slightest fall of rain makes the town obnoxious. The chief thoroughfare, or business street, adjoins the Quay or Landing Stage. Harbour it does not possess. All the large vessels, on account of the dangerous reefs in the roadstead, are obliged to anchor some distance out at sea, and be loaded or unloaded by means of rowing boats. Passengers by sea, also have to adopt the same means for landing and embarking. The only residential part of Jaffa, is the new suburb of Tel Aviv, a short distance to the north, as already described. By the way, I omitted to state that the words Tel Aviv signify “Hill of Spring”, a very fitting description of this comparative new Jewish district. I have termed Jaffa “the seaport of Jerusalem”, but that term is not now so appropriate as it was in former days. The Egypt Palestine Railway renders unnecessary any call at Jaffa, as the Railway Junction at Ludd where the traveller has to change for Jerusalem is many miles from the Sea coast. The Tourist and business relations with Jaffa have decreased to such an extent since the overland route from Egypt has been opened, that Messrs. Thomas Cook & Sons, the world renowned Tourist firm, no longer finds it remunerative to have an Office in Jaffa, which fact is ominous.

I have seen many ancient pictures of Joppa from the Sea, and cannot help thinking that the scene is very much the same as it was in the days of Jonah and Peter: the scene of course as viewed from the ship—not the identical buildings such as the alleged “House of Simon the Tanner”, or that of Tabitha, which we first visited in 1901, but never since have been tempted to again enter. Upon each of the subsequent five visits our time has been put to more profitable use.

Having concluded our look round the town, the next thing was to find out how best we could get to Petach Tikvah: for train service there was not, and so far as I could learn there was no regular road service such as we find in even out-of-the way places in our own country. Of course, I could have asked in Tel Aviv friends, but for reasons already stated in a previous letter, I wanted to be quite independent and free, and not run the risk of giving offence to any too-obliging a friend by

having to say plainly, “I prefer to go alone, and be alone, and therefore would prefer you not to accompany me”.

Thus I found myself, with bag and umbrella, in a dirty thoroughfare in Jaffa, wondering what to do to get to Petach Tikvah, when it suddenly dawned on me that I had in my wallet a document, in Hebrew, which might help me—it was a circular letter of introduction and recommendation. The document had been given me by the Zionist Authorities in London—wholly written in Hebrew characters—let me reproduce a page thereof: —

TO PETACH TIKVAH

Seeing an apparently well-to-do and intelligent looking Jew, and more British-looking than most of the others here, I approached him with, “Can you speak English”? On receiving a reply in the affirmative, I further asked, “Can you read Hebrew?” The answer being “Yes”, I at once produced, and handed him, the precious document. Having carefully read it he at once became a friend in need and a friend indeed, although at first he expressed the fear that he could not help me get to Petach Tikvah that day, as the only diligence (conveyance) he knew of had taken its departure some time before, except the one he was going by himself, and in which he had booked the only available seat (he was a resident at Petach Tikvah). He thought, however, there might be some market wagon or cart returning, and said that if I waited at the spot where we were conversing he would go and see what he could do to help me—and would come back to me with all information. I had not long to wait before he reappeared with the question, “Would I mind sitting on a milk-churn?” He had discovered a couple of aged Petach-Tikvahites who were about to return home with empty milk churns, etc., and they were willing to take me back with them, in view of my credentials. Most gladly did I accept their offer, but had scarcely done so before the said old couple appeared on the scene with the disappointing announcement that they had forgotten they had to take back some goods and chattels, which made it impossible to do as they had hastily promised; their horse could not manage the load (I believe it was a mule). All this conversation took place in Hebrew, and was translated to me by our mutual friend.

Following this disconcerting news, my newly formed acquaintance suddenly rose to the occasion, and proved himself truly a friend indeed in need. “You come along with me”, he exclaimed, “I will arrange for you to have the seat I have booked in the diligence, and I will make other arrangements to follow on later”. Off we marched. An exciting conversation ensued between my friend and the diligence driver (in Hebrew, of course), with the result that I found myself jammed in a

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rickety conveyance with thirteen others, whereas eight would have been a comfortable complement. Three men occupied the driver's seat! He was in the middle, with one on either side, each holding on to the other. The driver, who could not speak English, was instructed to hand me over to a boy, who would be waiting at the corner of the Colony, and told to take me to a certain hospice with the high-sounding name of "Hotel Gisson", and there I was to remain there until my benefactor arrived, which he promised would be before bed-time.

Off we went; and what a journey! The scene, too, was good enough for a Moving Picture Show (not that I have any recent experience of Cinemas, for it is long since that I came to the conclusion that the "Picture Palaces" are no places for brethren of Christ, or their little ones, being, in the main, schools of vice. Those who contend otherwise should be kept off the Ecclesial platform, as well as off the lists of Sunday School Teachers. I have a vivid recollection of driving brother and sister Roberts through the streets of London forty-five years ago. We passed a Variety Theatre in Oxford Street, outside of which was a queue of people about to enter a door over which was written "To the Pit". "Yes", exclaimed our dear sister, "That is the only place which those houses will lead them to"! How true).

To return to our pilgrimage to Petach Tikvah. Fourteen people (and luggage) formed a load more than our three horses could manage on an incline or over a ploughed field—and we encountered both—so now and again some of us had to alight, and help the poor horses by turning the wheels round, or pushing up behind. Not a word of the conversation between my fellow passengers could I understand. It was animated enough, and very interesting on account of the gesticulations, but all Hebrew. By and bye, however, as I was ploughing my way over a field side by side with a gaunt and very unattractive individual, he looked curiously at me, and enquired, in English, "Are you English?"

At once I replied, "Yes; are you"? "No", he replied, "I am Welsh"! Conversation ensued: he wanted to know what had brought me to that part of the world, especially among the Jewish Colonies. When he heard that I was a Christadelphian to whom the "unwalled villages" meant so much, he drily informed me, that, many years ago a friend in North Wales had lent him a book on the subject. Of course, I thought he was referring to Christendom Astray. "No", he said, "it was a book by a man named Jannaway" (What a small place the world is!) His neighbours turned out to be brethren Chinnery and Forrest, near Rhyl, by one of whom he had been lent Palestine and the Powers, or Palestine and the Jews.

At last we reached Petach Tikvah and we met the boy, already referred to, at the entrance of a somewhat dilapidated, timeworn avenue: he escorted me some distance, and then, pointing to a barn looking erection, exclaimed “Hotel Gisson”! Oh, what a surprise. It required a lot of imagination to see in this tenement, barn, shanty, farmhouse, or whatever else you might call it, a HOTEL. A parallel would be to label as “The Christadelphian Synagogue”, the old bathing hut, on the beach of Port Said, where sister Jannaway and self, read our chapters one Sunday morning.

More about my experiences at Hotel Gisson in my next letter, God willing.
—*Bro. F. G. Jannaway—1926*

Christ As A Sacrifice

The English word “sacrifice” literally means “holy act” or “work of holiness” (from Latin *sacra*, holy; and *facio*, to make or do). In the Bible (which is a much better guide to meaning) in both Old and New Testaments, the original word for sacrifice (Heb: *zebach*; Gr: *thusia*) means “a slaying, a putting to death of that which is the cause of death.”

The modern, common meaning—the giving up of something for the sake of a higher purpose—is a secondary and derived meaning, and must be kept secondary (though it is a correct description, as far as it goes, of the “holy work” that was Christ in his entirety).

What God’s eternal wisdom required to open the way of life was not shed blood as such—it was the reality that the blood represented: the perfect life poured out wholly unto God.

The essence is in the perfection, rather than in the slaying. The slaying is simply the termination and culmination of the perfection, bringing the perfecting process to a head, and completing it.

The sacrificial death of Christ was the most important event in history: it was the most necessary event: it was the most beautiful event: it was the most meaningful event.

It was not just the arbitrary exaction of purposeless tragedy and suffering. It was not the orthodox Church idea of punishing and torturing the innocent so that the guilty might escape. That idea is a travesty on the justice, righteousness, and love of God. It was the

supreme manifestation of the love of God and the love of Christ: for each other, and for mankind.

It was the glorious culmination and apex of eternal perfection being worked out on a plane and a level far above our normal conceptions. In it we observe with awe the workings of eternity and divinity.

It was the loving, all-wise Father accomplishing the dreadful but necessary and beneficial disciplining and perfecting and glorifying of the loving, submissive, obedient Son.

It was the climax and conclusion of the supreme battle of the ages between the Prince of Light and the Prince of Darkness, between good and evil, between Christ and the Devil—the diabolos, the motions of sin, the destroyer of mankind. And the victory was Christ's, strengthened by God.

The conflict had to be right unto death. If the lovingly offered life were just allowed to run its course to natural death, then the element of choosing God's will over the "my" will is not carried to its ultimate point. Nor would it involve the ultimate, supreme, beautiful act of perfect self-emptying and self-surrender.

Furthermore, a natural death would not have been a condemnation—a judgment, a sentencing to death—of the sin-body. This too was part of the necessary total picture of the perfection.

Let us not look upon the question of Christ needing or benefiting from his own offering, as of some ritual or act external to, and separable from, himself. The sacrificial death was simply the inseparable completion and perfecting of the total sacrifice that Christ himself was in his entirety. We cannot separate Christ from his sacrifice. Christ as a sacrifice, a whole burnt offering, a sin offering, a joyful, freewill peace offering—from birth to lovingly-yielded-up life—is the essential nucleus of the whole Divine purpose. If we try to take this beautiful picture apart into its component pieces, we completely destroy it.

We cannot separate Christ from mankind: he IS mankind—focalized and summarized and idealized.

We cannot separate Christ from his offering: he IS his offering—without his offering he would not be Christ at all.

We cannot separate Christ's sacrificial LIFE from his sacrificial DEATH, which was but the apex and culmination of that

life. They are inseparable parts of one wonderful, perfect whole: a complete, indivisible unity.

We cannot separate sin in the flesh from sin manifested in action. They are but subdivisions of the basic sin constitution that must be swept away.

We cannot separate Christ from the benefits of his offering: because what he wrought, he wrought for ALL MANKIND, of and with whom he was inseparably one.

Paul's inspired remarks on his perfecting go to the heart of the subject, and reveal its beauty and its wisdom (Heb. 5:7-9)—

“He offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.

“Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered.

“And being MADE PERFECT, he became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”

Paul says further (Heb. 2:10)—

“It became Him (that is, it was fitting and appropriate for God), in bringing many sons into glory, to make the Captain of their salvation PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING.”

Perfection through suffering is the way to Divine glory: and Jesus was the Head and Forerunner, in this as in everything. He had first to be made perfect himself: to be cleansed and purified and perfected by his own perfect offering of obedience even unto suffering and death.

Then, having himself obtained redemption and release from the sin-constitution and its condemnation, God in mercy offers salvation to all who repudiate themselves and their own will and desires (as he did), and become and remain part of him in the appointed way—by baptism and lifelong obedience unto death—

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16).

“He that shall endure unto the end shall be saved” (Matt. 24:13).

“He is the Author of eternal salvation unto all that obey him” (Heb. 5:9).

—Bro. G.V.Growcott

A Chaste Virgin

The period of betrothal is the period of each man's probation. The ultimate issue depends upon the divine estimation of this. No man is fit to perform this part of judgment. All judgment is committed to the hands of Christ, before whom we must appear to receive it, and who at his appearing is represented as saying: "*Gather my saints together unto me, those who have made a Covenant with me by sacrifice*" (Ps. 50:5).

The supreme question of the hour in its individual application will be: How has the Covenant been fulfilled? Have we sustained the part of the chaste virgin getting ready for marriage-presentation to the Bridegroom? Have our affections fastened and fed upon Christ, our coming husband? Have we been as devoted to his affairs as he wishes?—as tender and loving toward him as he exacts?

The answer to these questions will appear in the shape of our lives, which will be made manifest by the faithful reproductive photography of the Spirit of God in the hands of Christ. The divine measurement of love is obedience. A 'LOVE' THAT IS BARREN OF ACTION IS USELESS SENTIMENT, having no value in the divine mode of appraisal—

"This is love, that we walk after his commandments" (2 Jn. 6).

"Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in DEED and in truth"(1 Jn. 3:18).

"Ye are my friends, if ye DO what I command" (Jn. 15:14).

Consequently, the DEEDS of our life will be the index of our hearts. If those deeds, written as a whole, are deeds of conformity to the expressed will of Christ, our part of the Covenant will be declared performed.

Not that there will be a perfect performance in any case, for the congregation of the accepted are a forgiven congregation: a blood-washed throng. Their Judge is their compassionate High Priest, who occupies the interval of his absence in making request for his House in his own Name.

Still, there is a point to which obedience and consecration MUST come, before the benefits of Christ's Priesthood will be extended. Jesus is the Judge of this point, in each case at which he will say, "*Thy sins are forgiven thee,*" and invite the blessed recipients of his favor to enter into life.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1880*

Wrestling with the Angel

We are not informed why the angel wrestled with Jacob (Gen. 32:24-29); but the fact that the angel requested Jacob to let him go, and had to weaken him by the exercise of divine power before he could get away, would suggest that the object of the wrestling was release. Jacob's holding him to prevent him from going would be due to Jacob's fascination with the heavenly visitor.

As to why a mortal man should be stronger than an angel, it would show that an angel's strength lies in the control of divine force, as when—he caused Jacob's thigh sinew to shrink, or the bolts of Peter's prison to withdraw; rather than in mere muscle-power, which is mechanical. An elephant is muscularly stronger than a man; yet a man by gunpowder or dynamite can blow the elephant into the air. An angel's delicate form may mechanically be weaker than the robust frame of a shepherd; but his control of spirit-force enables him, when the case calls for it, to destroy an army of 180,000 men in a night.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1891*

Why Did Christ Die?

Because of sin. And why is sin so dreadful as to require such an awful ingredient in the process of remedy? For the very reason that God is so great and terrible a majesty. This is the last thing men of our generation rise to. Yet it is the first lesson in true godliness: the godliness that God will accept (and none else is worth talking about).

God is good: God is love. But there is method in the goodness, which is its chiefest glory. This method insists on the indispensable conditions for the effectuality of goodness in wisdom and holiness. Goodness without wisdom and holiness and the firmness that in '*consuming fire*' insists upon those conditions, would not be goodness. The first of those conditions is God's supremacy—

"I WILL be exalted! ... I WILL be sanctified in them that approach unto Me!"

The second is absolute obedience. On these two points, there has not and cannot be the shadow of compromise in God's dealings with the earth. They are the two points that men instinctively dislike. Paul's words are not too strong—

“The carnal mind—(that is, the natural mind, the mind of the flesh, the mind that the brain generates left to itself)—is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Rom. 8:7).

God's goodness is seen in nothing more than in this insistence on His Own glory and supremacy as the first condition of human fellowship with Him. For how stands the fact?—that man seeking his own glory fails by the very constitution of things to attain to any good at all.

Man living for himself cannot rise to even what possibilities of good lie latent in his organization as a creature formed in the image of the Elohim. He necessarily sinks into all kinds of earth-gravitating ignobleness, languishes in sluggishness, spends his fire and interest, and sinks in a quagmire of vanity and vexation of spirit.

For a man to see God, and love and worship and serve Him is, on the contrary, to rise to beauties and joys of life even now that are outside the highest experiences or conceptions of the most dashing child of disobedience.

How good, then, for God to insist that without His exaltation in the way He has appointed, there can be no fellowship or well-being or life.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1888*

Whither I Go Ye Cannot Come

QUESTION: “In John13:33 Jesus says, *“Whither I go ye cannot come,”* and this is quoted in the Declaration as a disproof of the heaven-going theory. But in v. 36 Jesus seems to contradict himself, saying to Peter, *“Whither I go thou cannot follow me now, but thou shalt follow me afterwards.”* I have thought that Jesus must have referred to heaven in v. 33 and to a death by violence in v. 36.”

ANSWER: OUR correspondent supplies the solution of his own question. That Jesus referred to his ascension in John13:33 is proved by his allusion to a former statement he had made on the subject to the Jews—

“As I said to the Jews, Whither I go ye cannot come” (John13: 33).

His statement to the Jews is clear: *“Whither I go ye cannot come”* (John 8:22).

If it be asked ‘*Where?*’—his answer to them was— “*I go unto Him that sent me*” (John 7:33).

This is where neither Jews nor disciples could follow him. But there was a going in which his disciples both could and would follow him in due time, and which Peter in particular was prompt to promise—

“*Lord, I am ready to go with thee to prison and to DEATH*” (Luke 22:33).

In this respect Jesus, after resurrection, said to Peter, “*Follow me,*” after— “*Signifying by what death he should glorify God*” (John 21:19).

That this was the subject before the mind of Christ in John 13:36 is evident from the context. Jesus was about to go to death, as well as afterwards to heaven— “*Thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me afterwards*” (v. 36) Peter's understanding of the matter is shown in his question—

“*Why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake*” (v. 37) Jesus answered: “*Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice.*”

There is no contradiction in the words of Christ, but two separate propositions:

1. That man cannot go to heaven.

2. That the disciples could not follow Christ to death until the right time had arrived, namely, when Christ had suffered and risen and ascended, and sent them forth as his messengers to the world to bear testimony to his resurrection under the attestation of the gifts of the Spirit (Heb. 2:4).

—*Bro. Roberts, 1892*

Them That Sin Rebuke Before All

There are no “Scriptural grounds” for refusing forgiveness to “a brother who has committed a fault and has repented,” but while granting forgiveness, **there may be reason for indicating the repudiation of his offense**—reason having to do with others rather than the offender, as when Paul says—

“*Them that sin, REBUKE BEFORE ALL, that others also may fear*” (1 Tim. 5:20).

We are to (1 Tim. 5:14)—“Give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.”

And (Eph. 5:11) to— “Have no fellowship with unfruitful works of darkness.”

Now if an offender, whose sin was notorious in the unbelieving community, were to apparently pass unchallenged amongst the brethren, occasion would be given to the adversary to say that they were indifferent to sin, and thus the Truth would be blasphemed. We should be seeming to have fellowship with the works of darkness.

We can only prevent this by some outward token of repudiation: such a token as would be visible to the outside. Miriam was excluded from the camp for seven days. If an offending brother is suspended from fellowship for a period, the right token is given, and the brother’s repentance is put to the test.

In the apostolic days of the Spirit’s delegated authority, there were more effective methods (1 Cor. 5:5). In our day, no other seems available, and we cannot but suppose the Lord will approve the brethren’s action in such a case, and condone any excess of zeal for righteousness there may, in His judgment, be in it.

Whatever is done ought to be done in the spirit of kindness—with the desire to restore and not to humble a brother, while at the same time upholding the standard of that “holiness which becometh the house of God.”
—Bro. Roberts, 1890

The Theatre

“I have hated the congregation of evildoers.”

The theatre and public-house are impossible places of resort for the friends of God. We are in the world, and the world is an evil world throughout; but there are some phases of it with which we can have NOTHING to do.

We may live in the same street; travel in the same railway train or steamboat, listen in the same crowd to a lecture on some informing topic—such are extreme forms of innocuousness. Many others might be mentioned.

None of these have to do with the policy and mode of individual life. It is here where the law of Christ lays hold of us. We are not to be

“of the world” in the objects for which we live, or the principles on which we act; nor are we to expose ourselves to the corrupting influence of men who *“know not God and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Therefore, we cannot take part in their ways or their assemblies. It is not necessary to prove this for earnest servants of Christ. Reason establishes it even if precept were not so plain—

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful, but his delight is in the law of the Lord.”

“I have hated the congregation of evil doers, and will not sit with the wicked.”

“I am a companion of all them that love thy righteous precepts.”

When we talk of public-houses and theatres, we talk of institutions that have to do with every form of ungodliness and congregational sinnership.

The man who requires this proving shows he does not know what ungodliness is, probably because he is himself ungodly. It is only a godly man that knows ungodliness.

Ungodliness is the life that is lived with reference as to one's own pleasure merely, and without reference to God's object in having made us, or God's will with us while we are living.

This is the essence of public-house and theatre life, which at the same time, are worse than many other forms of life having the same essence, for they foster more active forms of corruption than any other, and have a worse reputation even among *“those that are without.”*—

—*Bro. Roberts, 1891*

The Fashion of This World Passeth Away

What is Fashion? It is the mere ingenuity of the world to vary its pleasures; and to deliver itself from what—to its foolish heart—would be the dull monotony of existence. Its enjoyments are of a kind that soon grow stale. It requires “change”; and in the matter of dress, it issues fresh decrees with every moon; and with what alacrity its decrees are obeyed! At once the millions bow the knee!

The people—vanity they are—recognize fashion as their king. As soon as he comes forth, they go and dance like fools round his throne. The little wisdom there is in the throng is found in the outer circle.

You can always tell when there is not much in the head: there is plenty of show outside. Everything is as neat and precise, and superfine as if the man had just emerged from a bandbox.

There is no necessity for being tawdry or Quakerish; nevertheless, there is a very broad margin between the high dresser and those who don't care.

* * *

Whom do you find in the inner court of fashion? The empty heads, the triflers, the people who are not governed by principle; those who have no sense of the gravity of existence: to whom God is nothing, Christ a myth and the future a blank.

Come out of the inner court, and go to the outer circles of dress, where people attire themselves for convenience and decency, and as you go, you find people becoming more and more sensible, sober, and unobtrusive, until, by and by, you come upon men of judgment and capacity and mind.

If this is the case with regard to the world, how little excuse there is for those who profess the Name of Christ indulging in the vice of “*costly array*.” Let them obey the apostle, and—

“Adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety” (1 Tm. 2:9).

There is no necessity for being odd, but there is a need for eschewing the excesses into which the world is running in the matter, and this can be done without any offence to a pure taste.

There is nothing more beautiful than to see men and women of judgment attired in a plain, unobtrusive manner. High dressing takes a considerable percentage OFF the moral dignity of such. It implies a lingering affinity with the low class of intelligence that thinks to create appreciation by the display of stuff that can be purchased over a counter.

Men and women, who walk in the knowledge and love of God, can dispense with such meretricious attractions, even if in the doing of it, they have to dispense with the favorable opinions of foolish neighbors.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1870*

Our Duty Toward Error and Errorists

IT may smack of assumption to talk of such a duty, but the duty exists, however offensive it may be to the social proclivities of some, and the personal dignities of others. If there is such a thing as Truth, there must be such a thing as Error. Is there such a thing as Truth? We speak as to those who have made up their minds. If some say: “Certainly there is such a thing as Truth! But it is the height of arrogance to profess to have found it.”—we can only remember that Truth not found is of no use to us; and that if men have not found the Truth, they are in darkness, and are no guide for those who are in the light.

If men have found the Truth, it is no arrogance to own up to the fact, and to go further and defend it, and act in harmony with the obligations it creates. Those obligations are often far from agreeable. And they are always opposed to a man's temporal interests. What then? If we would please Christ, we have no choice. And if we please not Christ, we can have no object in hampering ourselves with its obligations at all.

Christ's last communication to his friends reveals his mind in the matter in a manner that precludes misconception. His messages to the seven Asiatic ecclesias through John in Patmos (Rev. 2-3)—almost all of them—insist in some form or other on the duty of scrupulosity with regard to error and errorists.

Ephesus was commended because: *“Thou CANST NOT BEAR them that are evil, and hast TRIED them that say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars.”*

Smyrna: *“I know the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie.”*

Pergamos was found fault with because— *“Thou HAST THERE them that hold the doctrine of Balaam ... So HAST THOU also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans.”*

Thyatira was found fault with because— *“Thou SUFFEREST that woman Jezebel, who calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants.”*

So the others were found fault with for laxity and lukewarmness.

Error changes its form from age to age, but the dutiful attitude remains the same: the duty of individual repudiation and non-toleration in fellowship. We may not in the 19th century have those particular questions to trouble us that agitated the first, but we have the same duty to perform toward the errors of our time.

It is a distasteful duty, and in every way an inconvenient one. For this reason, many with whom the apprehension of divine obligations may be weak, or susceptibility to human considerations may be strong, are liable to swerve, and sacrifice Truth and Duty to friendship.

Can we imagine Christ, who addressed the seven Asiatic ecclesias in reprobation of false doctrine and commendation of the true, regarding any of these forms of treachery with anything but detestation? Can we imagine him looking with favor upon any toleration by his friends to any form of it?

Whatever others may think, we have not so learned Christ. Charity is charity, but it does not require us to submit to the corruption of the Truth.

You believe the right thing yourself, but you receive another who is in fellowship with those everywhere who believe the wrong and are leagued in opposition to the right. In this you take part with the wrong.

It would be pleasant if we were at liberty to make goodwill the rule of fellowship. But no man can act on this principle who accepts the apostolic writings as a rule of conduct. It is one of the preparatory disciplines to which the wisdom of God subjects the heirs of the Kingdom, that they be faithful to His Word in the relations of the present evil state. And however distasteful to flesh and blood are the embarrassments which this rule creates, faithful men have no choice but to submit with as much sweetness as they can bring to a disagreeable duty.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1890*

The Action of Inspiration

THE objections to the complete inspiration of the Bible based upon a few apparent textual dilapidations and some other peculiarities (such as the intensely personal character of many parts of Paul's epistles, and the frequent reporting in the narratives of the sense rather than the very words of what is spoken), are only evidence of inability to understand the mode and objects of inspiration; or perhaps, rather, of the existence in the mind of a false pre-conception as to how inspiration ought to act. These objections do not belong to the subject itself, and are no difficulty with those who have long been in affectionate touch with the ways of God in the Scriptures.

They are easily made to appear difficulties in the hands of such as have no special aptitude for spiritual discernment. And they are liable to weigh with the common run, who are either not high enough or not low enough to receive the truth of the matter. (For it is true in this as in some other matters that a man must have either the docility of a child or

penetration of a philosopher to receive some matters that stumble mediocre minds on very good terms with themselves.)

For all practical purposes, the action of inspiration may be defined as the hand of God upon a man to say or not to say, to write or not to write, according as the Spirit wills: the result being that whatever is said is the Spirit's saying, even though in form it may not appear to be such, but may appear to be the saying of the man whom the Spirit of God uses.

There is no better illustration of this than the case of Balaam (Num. 22-24). When he came to Balak, with a strong desire to say what would be pleasing to the king of Moab, he said he had: *"No power at all to say anything...the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak"*—Num. 22:38.

We read in the next chapter: *"The Lord put a word in Balaam's mouth and said, Return unto Balak and thus shalt thou speak"*—v. 5.

Now, among the words that are thus described as words put by God into Balaam's mouth, are words that are entirely personal to Balaam himself, such as he appears to utter of himself and concerning himself. His very first words are of this character— *"Balak, the king of Moab, hath brought me from Aram, saying, Come, curse me Jacob; come, defy Israel. How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed?"*

All through his prophecy, his personality is conspicuous—

"Must I not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth? I go unto my people; come, therefore, and I will advertise thee what this people shall do to thy people in the latter days ... I shall see him, but not now ... Let me die the death of the righteous, etc., etc."

Thus the guiding Spirit of God gave a Balaam-shape to the things said by the Spirit of God. It was the word of inspiration, though Balaam verbally appears as the speaker. Apply this to the Scriptures generally which are declared to be given by inspiration, and there will be no difficulty about the intensity of Paul's personal sentiments, or any other apparent human feature.

Whatever God uses or endorses becomes His. He did not lay hold on Paul or any other Scripture writer to exhibit that writer, but to use him as the vehicle of spiritual ideas. And so much of the writer as is allowed to appear becomes, by that allowance, the Spirit's own in that shape. All things belong to the Spirit, and when used by the Spirit, they are none the less the Spirit's instrument because of having an individual shape.

—Bro. Roberts, 1890

Two Bethlehem Visits?

A point of difficulty made much of by the foes of the Bible is that Luke says that Jesus' parents, after the presentation in the Temple, returned into Galilee to their own city Nazareth (Luke 2:39), while Matthew seems to intimate that they went at once from Bethlehem to Egypt, going to Nazareth afterwards (Matt. 2:1-14).

No explanation of this discrepancy is apparent on the face of the narratives; but the two accounts are not irreconcilable if we suppose they refer to two visits to Bethlehem about the same time. This supposition is necessitated by the narratives themselves; for while Luke's narrative applies to the circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus, it is evident that Matthew refers to a stage later on—

1. Because Christ had been born some time when the wise men arrived at Jerusalem. How long before does not appear, but it must have been a considerable time, for his birth had occurred before they started on their journey *'from the east.'*

2. Because Herod, in issuing the decree for the destruction of the babyhood of Bethlehem, thought it necessary to allow a margin of two years, to cover the time of the Lord's birth *"according to the time he had diligently enquired of the wise men"* (Matt.2).

In the state of facts, it is easily conceivable that after the incidents recorded by Luke (and therefore after Joseph and Mary's return to Nazareth), Joseph and Mary were called back again to Bethlehem in connection with perhaps the uncompleted business of the enrolling; and while there the second time, received the visit of the wise men, and the divine direction which led them to depart to Egypt, where they remained till the death of Herod—on which they came again to Nazareth.

This possible state of the case (and the narratives themselves involve something of the sort) would admit of both accounts being consistent one with another. The histories of the Bible are all of that concise and fragmentary character that easily admit of occasional appearances of discrepancy which the investigation of loving candor will dispel.

—Bro. Roberts, 1890

Always Learning

You can do nothing for the truth in the Modern Athens that will be recognized by the King at his appearing, if you follow your old ways when you used, as bro. Steel says, "to discuss everything, and settle nothing," and call it exhortation and teaching. Such is mere twaddle,

and will never make you appear before the enemy, the great Babylon around you, “fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.” You will only be terrible to your friends. “Discussing every thing and settling nothing” is a weakness that will never grow into strength. No good can possibly come out of it; and will cause no one to wax valiant in the fight, or “to turn to flight the armies of the aliens.” Some are always learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Such may unprofitably occupy time, but they can edify no one. All their “discussions” and “investigations” amount to nothing. The light of truth must shine clearly in a man’s head, before he can speak critically or accurately upon “the Deep things of the Spirit;” and if you undertake to implant these in the brains of Modern Athenians, who, like their brethren of old time, are exceedingly fond of gossip, you must be bright and lucid in your irradiations, that you may shine away the darkness of the subtleties, and the vagaries of the inner consciousness, with which the cup of the Old Harlot has crazed and intoxicated them. And this you will find to be, if you have not already done so, no easy work to do. The traditions radiating infinitely and at all angles, form almost an impenetrable cloud—a cloud which befogs every thing, and renders it impervious to “the simplicity that is in Christ.” But shall we despair? By no means. The work before us at present, is not to demolish Antichrist, and the tradition with which he is clothed as with a black and threatening cloud. This is beyond our power, as it is extra to the mission of the saints against whom he has prevailed almost “forty and two months.” His demolition is their work, when joined therein by the Ancient of days. This is their patience and faith.—Rev. 13:10; 14:12. The real saints are waiting for this. In the meantime, they hold the position of the witnesses for Jesus; and it is required in witnesses, who are stewards of the testimony, that they be faithful after the example of Christ and Antipas—Rev. 1:5; 3:14; 2:13. At present, they have to show the truth in every way that will make the truth shine; that it may stand out in the foreground of the picture so distinctly from all surroundings, that observers at a glance may distinguish it in all its outlines. without any possibility of confounding it with the dark cloud of the things beyond, This is the work for us to do, that men, seeing the photograph, Christ *written* upon their minds *by the testimony* which is light, may confess that it is a true, faithful, and beautiful picture; and embracing it with affectionate hearts, may so put it into their bosom, and become married, or rather betrothed unto the Lord. In this way an enlightened and affectionate, and valiant people will be prepared for him; who will not only be watching for him, but with garments kept, and lamps well trimmed with the golden oil of the good olive tree, be ready to enter in on the closing of the door against all the world.

Bro. John Thomas—1865

Hints For Bible Markers

The Psalms

Psalm 2

Psalm 2:8

“Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.”

The Adamic race (all mankind) and their habitation (the whole earth) were given, by God, to Christ for a possession. It is evident, then, that the establishment of this, Christ's dominion among the nations, dictates the removal of the present civil and ecclesiastical establishments of the world.

This is also proof of Christ returned to the earth, because it is his property. If he were taking his people to a prepared place in heaven there would be no need for him to return to the earth. It would be just as easy for him to take them away, as Elijah was taken away. However, to receive the heathen for an inheritance and the Earth for a possession necessitates a return.

Psalm 2:9

“Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.”

This verse is a strong reminder of what is written in the 27th verse of the second chapter of Revelation. This quote in Revelation could be the spirit quoting this from the Psalm.

Revelation 2:27, “And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.”

The world will be ruled with a rod of iron but it will be a perfectly just rule and holiness. Unlike current attempts by man, who rules in ignorance, lacking the knowledge and understanding provided by our Heavenly Father through the Scriptures of Truth. The evidence of man's failing rule can be found when we see the wretchedness of man, his ignorance, world poverty, and the lack of man's ability to fight disease throughout most of the world. This will end when man's brain is dashed in “pieces like the potter's vessel.”

Bro. Beryl Snyder

Continued next month should the Lord will.