

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.

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

AUSTIN, Texas Ecclesia

Loving Greetings on behalf of the Austin Berean Christadelphians,
We are writing to inform the ecclesial world of our affairs of the past few months.

There have been some changes in membership in the ecclesia, with brethren and sisters moving on from one ecclesia to another. The current membership is as follows: Bro. Lee and Sis. Kristi Smith, Bro. Jon and Sis. Leah Lorquet, Bro. Beryl Snyder Jr., Bro. Pat Brown, Sis. Sarah Brown, Bro. Seth Brown, Sis. Becky Van Pelt, Sunday School scholars: Corinne Smith and Claire Smith

We were all deeply saddened to lose our sister in Christ, Sis. Linda Brown on October 2, 2013. Although the loss has been very hard on our close knit ecclesia; it gives us joy to know we will see her soon when the trumpets sound. The Brown family would like to thank all for the many letters, cards, and flowers received and please know we find the strength we need in our brethren.

The Austin ecclesia frequently get visits from out of town brethren; including: Bro. Frank Darter, Bro. Gary and Sis. Brenda Smith, and Bro Todd Smith and family. We love getting visitors and welcome all, as we usually enjoy a meal together after meeting, as well.

Currently we meet at the Candlewood Suites Hotel in Cedar Park, off 1431 near 183A. If you need directions, please feel free to call any of us.

The Sunday schedule has been set to the following (all times CST):
9 AM: Nazareth Revisited
10 AM: Daily Bible Readings
11 AM: Memorial

As time moves forward and the shape of Our Father's plan comes together, let us all continue to strengthen ourselves in the ways of the Gospel Truth and the Hope contained within.

Love in Our Master and Messiah,
Bro. Seth Brown

NAKALIRA, Ecclesia

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

Greetings and joy from the brethren and sisters of the Nakalira Ecclesia.

We are pleased to advise that Sister Dalvin returned to fellowship on 23rd March 2014 when she was extended the right hand of fellowship. Our joy was shared with brethren and sisters from Kabusasi who were brothers Steve & David and sister Everlyn.

The reading for the day was about the lost coin, prodigal son and the lost sheep which was carried by its owner on his shoulder with rejoicing. How appropriate this was on this occasion with the return of Sis. Dalvin. Our closing prayer made reference to others in the wilderness who need to return to Zion, as we realise that the Kingdom is at hand. We thank Yahweh for the recovery of our sister. May Yahweh's grace be with you all.

Bro. Moses Wafula, Recording Brother

GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

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 (3)

"Out of whose womb came the ice? The hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it? . . . Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?"—Job 38:22-29

THE CLOUDS are held up in the sky, and given motion and directions, by the wind. In Hebrew, there is no separate word for wind. It is **ruach**—"breath, spirit."

This may at first seem unnecessarily confusing. We are inclined to think there would be less danger of misunderstanding if it were a separate word, as in English.

But there must be a purpose. It must be to teach us something. Similarly, when we come to “thunder” we find again there is no separate word, it is “voice.”

The thunder is the voice of God, and the wind His breath. Does not this give us a more intimate conception of His relations to His creation? Does it not make us more careful of ourselves, in relation to our attitude toward it?—toward all the various manifestations of His power and purpose in the weather?

We realize all too little the direct and continual dependence of the Creation upon its Great Creator. We get too detached and mechanical a view. The Scriptures try to teach us differently. Consider such Psalms as the 104th, designed to teach us how close God always is to the things that He has made—

“The young lions roar, and seek their meat from God.

“These wait all upon Thee, that Thou mayest give them their meat in due season.

“That Thou givest them they gather. Thou openest Thine hand, they are filled with good.

“O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches!

“THE LORD SHALL REJOICE IN HIS WORKS.”

There is the whole glorious secret of Creation.

Similarly when God is speaking to Job, He calls into review all the elements of the world and the universe, from the feeding of the ravens to the guiding of the stars in their courses. Do we realize, CAN we realize, the infinite scope and magnitude of God’s handiwork?

“Not a sparrow falls to the ground without God being aware.”

We find no confusion in the use of the same word for wind and spirit. Each falls into its place. All is of God, in a diversity of operation. The wind, literal and figurative, plays an important part in the fulfilling of His will and accomplishing of His purpose—

“He rode on a cherub, and did fly; He was seen on the wings of the wind” (2 Sam. 22).

“He bringeth the wind out of His treasures” (Psa. 135:7).

“Fire and hail, snow and vapours, stormy wind fulfilling His Word”
(Psa. 148:8).

“A man—that is, THE Man—shall be as an hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest” (Isa. 32:2).

“I will raise against Babylon a destroying wind.”

We have seen just recently how utterly helpless is puny man when God causeth His winds to blow.

“Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live” (Ezek. 37:9).

* * *

THE WIND then, is the motive power—that which gives motion and direction, and, as breath, that which gives life. As the wind is in the natural heavens, so the spirit is in the spiritual heavens.

Actually, the wind is not a power in itself—as the Spirit is not a power in itself, it has a source—the sun. The basic power behind the wind is temperature, heat. Herein we see God as the Source and Center of all.

In Scriptural imagery, the Sun is more commonly applied to Christ, as the manifestation of God. But it is also often applied to God Himself—the ultimate and original Source of all light and heat and power and life, just as the term Saviour is applied in its ultimate sense to God. Jesus said—

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

We must always see in him God manifested—

“Not my will but Thine be done” (Luke 22:42).

“The words I speak are not mine, but His that sent me.”

The whole purpose and meaning of Christ is as the manifestation of God, just as—if WE are to have any meaning or purpose—it must be as manifestations of God.

* * *

SO IN tracing the water cycle, we have the drawing up of the vapour into clouds, and the movement and direction of the clouds by the wind. What follows that?

God demanded of Job (38:35):

“Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?”

Here is the next step in the process—the rain. God declares through Isaiah (55:10)—

“For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth.

“It shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please.”

Moses similarly says, in his great prophetic song with which he closes his last message to Israel (Deut. 32:1-2)—

“Give ear, O heavens; hear, O earth!

“My doctrines shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, as the showers upon the grass.”

The rain from heaven is the Word of God, the Water of Life. This has various applications. In the fulness of the cloud symbol, the rain is the Word made flesh, the multitudinous Christ, overshadowing the earth and pouring out God’s blessings in the Millennial kingdom of righteousness:

“He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth” (Psa. 72:6).

Why the **‘mown’** grass? Because this will be the new, fresh, tender growth. The harvest will have been reaped, all the old coarse, growth taken away.

It is this gentle rain, falling in the midst of the morning sunshine, that manifests the beautiful rainbow symbol of the everlasting covenant of life and peace.

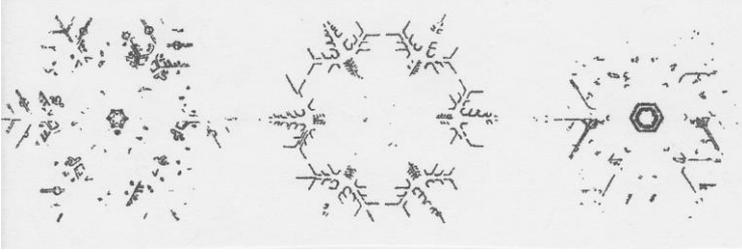
* * *

ISAIAH 55 also mentioned the snow. Snow is of great importance in the yearly life-cycle of nature. On mountain tops it stores the waters which constantly replenish such mighty rivers as the Nile during the hot summer months when otherwise they would dry up. The snow of Hermon is the source of the Jordan.

Snow provides the gentle blanket of the winter, conserving the earth’s warmth through the cold months, and protecting both vegetable and animal life, storing the life-giving moisture for the springtime rebirth.

Snow affords one of the most wonderful and awe-inspiring evidences of God’s infinite wisdom, power, and love of beauty.

Each tiny snowflake is an intricate lacy, six-pointed star of exquisitely fine and symmetrical design, far too minute to be seen by the naked eye.



These are greatly enlarged pictures of three single snowflakes. In even a small snow storm, countless millions of these fall and, as far as man is able to determine, **there are never two exactly alike**, though they all follow the same 6-fold pattern.

Infinite forms of beauty, **never seen by any eye but God's**, created in inconceivable profusion, and often lasting but for a few moments!

“He hath made everything beautiful in his time . . . As for God, HIS WAY IS PERFECT.”

These enlarged pictures of them (which we find in the Encyclopedia Britannica) are but clumsy man-made copies. The originals are infinitely more beautiful and delicate.

When we thoughtlessly take up a handful of snow, we all unknowingly crush these tiny jewels of beauty by the countless thousands. How little we know and realize about the wondrous works of God, Who creates such unseen objects of beauty in endless and infinite profusion, just for the sheer joy of creating!

Before the invention of the microscope, no natural human eye would ever have seen the breathtaking beauty of this “treasure of the snow,” to which God refers in rebuking, humbling, and teaching wisdom to Job.

There is great comfort and peace in the contemplation of these things. Our God is a glorious and marvelous God. **Goodness and beauty and life and joy are the eternal pattern of all His works.**

All things that mar that beauty and joy are but passing shadows that will be swept away when their brief purpose is accomplished.

“Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?”

These were the words of God to Job, as He marshalled before him the multitudinous manifestations of His boundless wisdom.

“HAST THOU ENTERED INTO THE TREASURES OF THE SNOW?”

The raindrop is a simple sphere which reflects the sun's light in the full range of the rainbow's spectrum of color. The snowflake, on the other hand, is an infinitely complicated pattern of symmetrical angles, forms, and surfaces which combine to reflect the light in its pure whiteness.

Snow is a symbol of purity:

“Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow” (Isa. 1:18).

“The Nazarites of Zion were purer than snow” (Lam. 4:7).

The snow of Lebanon, shining in pure white beauty upon Mt. Hermon, visible throughout all the land, was a constant type and promise of stored-up life and blessing to come, when “the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.”

It was a continual foreshadowing of the pure, white-robed city of God set upon a hill, even upon the holy mountain of God, pouring forth its blessings to all the earth, under the healing rays of the Sun of Righteousness.

* * *

THERE are many other aspects of the heavens' declaration of God's glory. Much could be said about the marvellous beauty and significance of the “MORNING” symbol—

“In the morning ye shall see the glory of the Lord” (Exo. 16:7).

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

“He shall be as the light of the morning . . . even a morning without clouds” (2 Sam. 23:4).

“At eventide trouble; before the morning he is not” (Isa. 17:14).

“His going forth is prepared as the morning” (Hos. 6:3).

“The beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning” (Psa. 110:3).

* * *

WE HAVE considered mainly the gentle and beneficial side of the picture. There is a group of aspects, however, which portrays the other side—storm, tempest, thunder, lightning, hail, whirlwind, earthquake, flood.

These things represent the righteous judgments of God against unrighteousness and disobedience. It is good that we remember both the

goodness and severity of God. God is love, and God is a consuming fire. The purity of the love requires the consuming fire.

* * *

“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork.”

May we, brethren and sisters, in our brief day of opportunity, have the wisdom to lay aside all else, and give all our hearts and minds and souls and strength to preparing ourselves for a place in those “new heavens wherein dwelleth righteousness” which will eternally show forth His glory!

“For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

“Be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

“And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people: and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard”

—Bro. G.V. Growcott

Social Media (Electronic Communication)

Brother Sid Jones now and then shares a bit of wisdom that was once passed on to him. We would hear it when he was burning trash, or starting a campfire, or using a torch...

“Fire makes a wonderful servant, but a terrible master.”

Any idea what that might mean?

It means that fire is a wonderful thing, so long as you're in control of it. It heats our homes, produces our electricity, hot water, fires our engines, and roasts our marshmallows. BUT, fire is a terrible thing when it is in control. It destroys homes, forests, cities, indiscriminately taking life and reducing years and years of work and growth to ashes drifting on the breeze. And the more it burns, the harder it is to stop.

“Fire is a wonderful servant, but a terrible master.”

What does that have to do with “communication”? What's it got to do with us talking to each other?

Well, James seemed to think it had a lot to do with talking.

“For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. Look at the ships also: though they are so

large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs.

“So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.” (James 3:2-8)

The tongue is a fire, that can set the whole course of life on fire like that of the valley of Hinnom.

The tongue, you see, or our words, makes a wonderful servant, but a terrible master.

What does that mean?

It means that our words are wonderful things, when we are in control of them. They allow us to share information, to interact meaningfully, to make people happy, or help them when they're sad. They let us live effectively, efficiently. BUT our words are terrible things when they are in control, i.e. when we are not carefully keeping them in check. They destroy friendships, confuse the truth, steal happiness and replace it with anger, hatred and sadness. They reduce years and years of trust and love and reliance to cold suspicion and unfounded hate.

The tongue is a wonderful servant, but a terrible master.

Now, what's the tongue got to do with “electronic communication”? I'm going to use the term “social media” here, interchangeably. Social media includes any form of sharing information that allows groups of people to interact – things like facebook, twitter, online dating sites, chatrooms, even YouTube. I use the term social media, because this is the “next big thing” – it's what your generation will build their lives around. Don't believe me? Let me present for your intellectual feasting the Facebook stats from a recent edition of the famous *McGuffey's News* (the free newspaper in North Battleford).

- 48% of 18-34 year olds check Facebook right when they wake up
- 50% of active users log on to Facebook in any given day
- Average user has 130 “friends”
- People spend over 700 billion minutes per month on Facebook
- There are over 900 million objects that people interact with (pages, groups, events and community pages)

For those of you who don't use social media, you'll find that the principles of most forms of electronic communication are very nearly the same, so simply consider the forms you use the most, and will use the most.

So what's the tongue, or our words, got to do with social media?

Well, what's cutting got to do with a chainsaw?

A chainsaw is a way to cut, although a handsaw was the usual way in the past.

Social media is a way to talk, although we always used in person conversation before, right?

So if we had some cutting to do, do you think it would be best to use a chainsaw or a handsaw?

It depends, doesn't it? If you don't know how to use a chainsaw – you better not mess with it, because when you mess up with a chainsaw, you REALLY mess up. You don't just nick your finger or scrape your knee when you're using a chainsaw – you cut off half your hand, or shred your knee down to the bone marrow. Besides, a handsaw takes nearly no maintenance at all, while a chainsaw needs dozens of teeth sharpened correctly, the right fuel mixture, chain oil, correct chain tension, choke adjustment, safety gear, tools etc.

On the other hand, if you've got a lot of cutting that needs doing, it may be worth it to LEARN to use a chainsaw safely and effectively.

A chainsaw gives you the ability to cut fast. It's a tool.

Social media gives you the ability to spread stuff fast. It's a tool.

You can type a message and let the whole world see it, no matter how far away they are – whereas talking is limited to those near you. You can share pictures, thoughts, videos, etc. instantly, and get a whole group of folks talking about them even when nowhere near each other. But if you're not in control of social media – you better not be using with it. If you don't know the principles that apply online, you're in no situation to be spreading stuff on it, because when you spread stuff online, good OR bad, you REALLY spread it. The whole world sees it – they all see the example you set, everyone on earth with a computer or a phone can be impacted by your words. When you set a bad example in person, you pretty well know everyone who saw it (although you never know who's going to find out about it later). When you set that example online, though, you have no idea how many people saw a display of sinful attitude, or how many ways or times it will be shared, remembered, documented, and how your reputation and values in the eyes of others are changed by it.

A chainsaw cuts fast – no matter if it’s cutting something it should be cutting or not, it will do what it’s designed to do – i.e. cut fast.

Social media shares thoughts quickly – whether those thoughts are good ones or bad ones, it will do what it’s designed to do – spread them quickly.

Just like you’d better be careful what’s being cut when you put a chainsaw against it, you better be careful what’s being said when you use social media to say it.

Don’t think it gets people in trouble?

Let’s look at some examples of how technology spreads bad things, and how it has gotten folks in a world of trouble.

We are each doubly responsible for what we communicate online, because it not only affects our reputation as a person, but as a Bible student. Every example you put forward is viewed with respect to who you are AND what you stand for. Of the non-religious, and even anti-religious Canadians I talked to, almost all, if not all of them, have cited the *hypocrisy of believers* as a main reason they don’t care for the Bible. Right or wrong, what we do affects people’s views of us, of the Scriptures, of Christadelphians, and of Christ himself.

So, let’s have some discussion for a moment.

What answers do we have for question 1?

How about question 2?

I’ve got a friend who recently graduated from University of Saskatchewan doing *commerce and marketing*. She worked in public relations at the synchrotron, while I was there. I asked her a while back what she felt was the most effective way to advertise. Her answer was basically, “It’s all about social media”. The biggest corporations and best marketing professionals, even the ones with funds for national TV ads, online advertising, radio commercials, telemarketing capabilities, they’re all turning to *social media*. And *I have social media*. And *you have social media*. Arguably the most powerful marketing tool on earth. What are we going to use it for?

“Social media is a wonderful servant, but a terrible master.”

What does that mean?

Just like fire can be used for good if kept in control, but is terrible when it gets out of control – just like a chainsaw is effective for good when controlled, but is devastating when not, social media is a powerful and effective thing, powerful and effective *positively* when used correctly,

and powerful and effective *in causing damage* to you and to others when it controls you.

When we are in control of it, technology can spread positive influence to literally thousands of people. It can be a tool that connects people with the truth – I’ve seen it happen firsthand, more than once. It offers us countless opportunities to interact positively, by encouraging, counseling, sharing knowledge, holding one another accountable, cheering one another, sympathizing with one another. BUT when it controls us, it becomes a parasitic addiction. It robs us of our time, it turns our joy in friendship into malice and distrust, turns our focus away from helping one another and towards tearing one another down through gossip and slander. It turns us from God to the sentiments of the world. It turns our influence from positive to negative.

And the more it controls us, the harder it is to bring back into control.

So, how *should* we use this technology, if we’re going to use it at all?

Every tool we’re given, every talent we’re given, requires us to be good stewards. That means *we have to use them correctly*. Technology is no different. Understand the problems people tend to have with them, understand how to use them correctly. They can be valuable tools, or they can make you miserable. It just depends on who’s in control.

—Bro. Glendon Rhoades

The Benefit of Daily Bible Reading

But why should we read the Bible daily? In what way will we benefit from it? If we have read the Bible through several times, why should we keep on without taking a rest. Can we not depend upon our memory to retain sufficient information, and not have to spend so much time reading the same things over and over again?

We think these are serious questions.

Waiting for the appearance of Jesus in this evil age is a severe test of our faith, when all we have to guide us is the written Word, and the power of prayer.

It was Jesus who said, “*When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*” Therefore, we must accept this challenge. We know what the faith is. We know what the commandments are, and we know what it means to walk in the Truth.

May we then give absorbed attention to this divine purpose that has brought us together, that our love for God, and our love for each other may be strengthened. If we do, it will help us greatly towards being rooted

and grounded in the faith, and will bring us closer together in fellowship with each other, and with God and His beloved Son Christ Jesus.

Therefore we propose to examine the matter, in order to satisfy ourselves that the reasons submitted are sound, and that we will truly benefit, in more ways than one, by a systematic daily reading of the Bible.

In the first place, we ask another question—what is the Bible? To this question, we receive a prompt and authoritative answer, because the Bible proves itself to be a revelation of God. It reveals the character of God—what He has done in the past, and the reason for it. It informs us concerning what He plans to do in the future. In fact, if we pay strict attention to its message, there is only one conclusion that we can come to, that is *“the Bible is the Word of God.”*

In the New Testament, I feel sure that we will all agree that Paul is the greatest authority next to Christ. With this fact believed, we open his second letter to Timothy, and read verses 15 and 16 of the third chapter,

“From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-inspired, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

One of the strong cords that holds us together as a body, and forms the basis of our hope is our unshakeable belief in the inspiration of the Bible. Although we are willing to accept Paul’s declaration that *“the Bible is wholly God-inspired,”* nevertheless we must individually satisfy ourselves that his statement is true.

This cannot be done by merely acknowledging the Bible to be the Word of God; there must be a vigorous determination to know why we believe it so. The only way this can be determined, is to read the Scriptures which are an excellent word picture of the mind of God. One of the foremost reasons why we should read the word is given in Psalm 138:2, where the psalmist declares, *“for Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy Name.”*

The magnification of God’s word could not be better illustrated than it has been by John in chapter 1, verse 14,

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, and the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth.”

This helps us to better understand Paul’s statement to Timothy that *“God was manifested in the flesh.”* And further, it helps us greatly to understand the relation between the Father and the Son, and the supreme importance of the Word.

Now, if Jesus were to come into your home, how would you feel? Just stop and think of that question...remembering that Jesus is the Word made flesh and, therefore a manifestation of the Father.

Therefore, to have God's Word in our home, is to have God there, and His beloved son Jesus. Now that we have them there, where are we going to place them? Are we going to leave them on the bookshelf, or are we going to place them in our hearts? Do not forget that where you place your Bible, you place Jesus and the Father. Therefore, if we neglect the Bible, we neglect them. That is an impressive thought, is it not?

The place God demands of us is to be in our hearts and minds. Jesus brings that forcibly to us when he quotes from the law, saying,

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy strength, and all thy mind.”

It is only reasonable that God should demand the highest place in our affairs. When Samuel was a child, *“The word of God was precious in those days—there was no open vision.”* Should it not be just as precious now? One of our brethren has said, “When we are thinking of God, we are drawing closer to Him; but when we are thinking of our own affairs, we are getting farther away.” That well expresses the thought emphasised by James, *“draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.”*

Having, then, become convinced that the Scriptures are the Word of God, and wholly inspired by Him, we will want to know how they are able to make us wise unto salvation. We introduce this part of our discussion with another statement of Paul's in Rom.15:4— *“Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our instruction, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”*

It is evident, then, that the Scriptures that were written for our instruction, are the Scriptures that will make us wise unto salvation.

“Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; THEN shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.”

The effect of this is shown in verses 10 and 11— *“When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; discretion shall preserve thee and understanding will keep thee.”*

In ch.3:13-15 we are carried a step further and shown *“the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God,”*

“Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the

merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her."

Oh, that this could be stamped upon our minds with a fire that would never grow cold, and cause our hearts to swell with grateful emotion as we contemplate the infinite goodness of God.

If we must search for wisdom and understanding as for hid treasure, does it not signify that the wisdom of God is hidden in the Scriptures: and that it is only obtainable by those who study ploddingly and prayerfully. For, says Paul,

"He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him"—*Heb.11:6.*

In addition to that, we have God's own words given by Isaiah in ch.66:2— *"To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My Word."*

Could any instruction be plainer? Is that not sufficient to show us that our Bible reading should be done daily? And not only so, but it shows us that it must be done in a spirit of reverence.

You will recall that when the children of Israel gathered manna, they did it systematically—a certain amount each day; and it was not to be left over to the next day. The quantity gathered was to be eaten the same day. Is that not typical of our system of Bible reading as regulated by the Bible Companion? If we follow it faithfully, we will become acquainted with every part of the Bible, and will therefore be guided *by "the whole counsel of God."*

It has been said by some that they are so busy they do not have the time to read every day. If there is any one here that ever feels that way, we suggest you sit down for a few minutes and make a list of the things you do each day, and the time involved.

Such a form of self-examination becomes a great surprise to many, because they discover that they spend time on things that could much better devoted to the Word of God. If they read it daily, there would come a day when they would read a portion of the first chapter of Proverbs, vs. 24-28,

"Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and

anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me."

How graphically Jesus depicted this in the parable of the ten virgins. According to Jesus, there are but two classes of saints—the wise and the foolish. He speaks of oil in their lamps. What is that but the Scripture of Truth, for it is written in Psalm 119:130, "*The entrance of Thy words giveth light.*"

All of the virgins had oil in their lamps at one time. But when the bridegroom came, the foolish found their supply was low, so they said to the wise, "*Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.*" They were going out because they had failed to replenish them with oil. What a picture to contemplate. The Master in the earth again, and some of us unable to greet him because our lamps are going out.

They will then turn to the wise and look upon their lamps as they burn brightly, and will cry out in despair. But it will be too late. As they turn to their flickering lamps, they will watch them sorrowfully as the light grows dimmer, and finally goes out.

My beloved brethren and sisters, if we love the Lord as we profess to do, we will love His word, and if we love His word, we will read it and meditate upon it, watching daily at the gates of wisdom, "*For whoso findeth wisdom findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord*"—*Prov.8:35.*

When shall I read, is a question that has been asked many times; but it is one that must be answered by each one of us, because our circumstances differ.

Whatever we do, let us not sit down to read the Bible late in the day when we are tired and sleepy. It is much better to arrange our daily courses of action so that we can give our best time and attention to God's word with a clear mind by which we can meditate upon what we read.

"*Meditate upon these things*", said Paul to Timothy, "*and give thyself wholly to them.*" "*Open thou mine eyes,*" said the Psalmist, "*that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.*" There is a rich blessing in store for those whose delight is in the law of God after the inward man.

"*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; and in His law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not fade; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper*"—*Psa.1:1-3*

Some have asked why we have to read so much. A good answer comes from Paul, *“I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.”* And again, *“the minding of the flesh is enmity against God; so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”*

This indicates that we are in danger if we rely on the natural man, *“I know,”* says Jeremiah, *“that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.”*

That is why we must read and meditate upon God’s Word daily. We must overcome the mind of the flesh by the efforts of the mind of the Spirit. It is an internal warfare that must be waged daily.

It is written that *“every word of God is pure.”* Therefore, it is the purifying influence of the Word of God that dispels the darkness of the natural evil mind.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,” says Paul. But it cannot dwell in the mind of the flesh; therefore we have to overcome it by the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

If, then, we do our daily Bible readings faithfully, we will soon discover that the application of the mind to the divine ideas, principles and affections that we will find stored in the Scriptures, will give us the necessary strength to overcome the old man of the flesh.

If we persist in it, the principles and affections of the mind of the flesh become weakened as we fill our minds with those things that are pure, lovely and of good report.

As a result of this, we will be able to set our affections on things above, so that our speech will always be gracious and seasoned with salt.

There is no secret about the salting process, says Brother Roberts; those who are salt, are so for one reason only: and that which makes them salt will make others also.

They are salt because they steep in salt. The continual reading of the Word saturates their minds with the Spirit Word; and changes the insipid, purposeless old man of the flesh into a new man, full of interest and noble qualities.

An attentive reading of the Bible keeps in play a class of mental forces which enable us to overcome, and to live as *“good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”* Therefore, says Paul in Heb.2:1— *“We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we drift away from it.”*

If we forget what we have learned, we shall drift away, and when the Lord Jesus appears, we shall find that our lamps have gone out. Then it will be too late.

It is written that, *“Man shall not live by bread alone; but by every Word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God”*—Deut.8:3.

We may live like the animals by bread alone, but it requires the daily eating of the *“bread of life”* and drinking from *“the fountain of the water of life”* to enable us to store up in the heart an abundance of good treasure that has been extracted from the Word of God.

The wisdom of faithful and prayerful daily Bible reading cannot be too highly rated for by it we will be able to keep in remembrance the things that were written for our instruction.

To sum up then—the Scriptures, being wholly God inspired, come before us as a revelation from the Deity. If He had not given us such a revelation we would know nothing of His great power and what He requires of us.

By reading the Bible daily, and meditating upon the things we read, our minds are kept occupied. As our knowledge and understanding increase, we find ourselves revelling in the past.

Then we come to observe, and understand the present, and joyfully anticipate the future. The things of the kingdom and the Name of Jesus are kept constantly before the daily reader.

We soon discover that the purpose of God begins to unfold with the covenant made in Eden, where a seed is promised that ultimately would overcome the power of sin, and conquer death. This great purpose comes to light again in the promises made to Abraham, who is informed that his seed should overcome the world, and bring blessing to all families of the earth.

Again the golden thread of the Gospel appears as God informs Moses concerning a prophet and deliverer who would appear in Israel. At Sinai, the people had just been formed into a nation, and given a code of laws that have never been equalled in all the earth.

Incorporated in this law was an elaborate system of worship which included a tabernacle, the priesthood, and the sacrifices and offerings. All these typified and foreshadowed that which should be revealed in substance. The New Testament shows beyond all doubt that the substance is Christ; that his life was a wonderful fulfilment of the types of the law in every detail; that these types reveal doctrinal truth, and important lessons which form the foundation of true religion.

As we look back upon the Mosaic constitution, we realise that these things are not apparent on the surface. They have to be searched for as for hid treasure. That is the lofty purpose of daily Bible reading. By it we come to understand God's plan of redemption, as our minds become attuned to divine things.

The wisdom that comes from above takes away the veil of darkness, and superstition that covers the faces of men and women. As the wisdom of God is daily impressed upon our minds, we get understanding; and as we look beneath the surface we discover the unsearchable riches of Christ. A faithful student of God's Word, who reads it daily systematically and prayerfully, will come to know more about the Bible than any other book in the world, and will be able to say with David— *“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee. I will meditate in Thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto Thee because of thy righteous judgments. Through Thy precepts I get understanding: Therefore I hate every false way. Great peace have they who love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them.”*

If we are to understand the teaching of Jesus, we must adjust our way of thinking to his. We make a serious mistake if we try to force his message into our own pattern of thought.

Brethren and sisters, let us remember our exalted Name, and determine within ourselves that as far as we are concerned, it will never become dishonoured and meaningless.

What a great salvation is revealed in the Bible! In our joy we cry out with Paul— *“O the depth of the riches and wisdom, and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and how inscrutable His ways.”* Yes, our Bible is a book of wisdom, therefore says Solomon— *“Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.”*

Paul's final instruction to Timothy is found in these words— *“Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation and doctrine”*— *1Tim.4:13.*

It is important that we look at this word “ATTENDANCE.” The word used by Paul means ‘to hold the mind’, ‘to pay attention to’, ‘to be cautious about’, ‘to beware’, ‘to give heed’ and ‘to have regard’. That is the purpose of our message this morning but the Lord Jesus sums it up in this manner— “Whoso readeth, let him understand.”

—Bro. G.A. Gibson

Signs Of The Times

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous (fond of money), boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent (without self control), fierce (savage), despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady (rash), highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.” 2Tim. 3:1-4

In recent months we have witnessed riots all over the world; some rising from political causes, some because of anti-Semitism, and in this country and Canada it seems over a love of violence. The UK watched in disgust for five days (Aug 6-10) as looting, burning, smashing, pillaging and vandalising of high street shops, homes and vehicles went on largely unchecked by police in London and many other cities in the UK. Police officers were being assaulted not just by the deprived youths of our nation, but of some who were thought to be models of society. “Here are the bitter fruits of 40 years of liberal democracy where all moral restraint and discipline, has been cast aside in favour of unbridled permissiveness and decadence. Here is a preview of what is coming upon the nations: total lawlessness and anarchy.” (Apoc. Mess. 8/11)

Canada is officially ranked as one of the wealthiest and most peaceful nations in the world, but earlier this summer riots broke out in Vancouver after the Stanley Cup in which nine police officers were injured. “One required 14 stitches after trying to stop looters at a sports shop. Another was hit in the head by a brick and several others suffered human bite wounds. More than 150 people were treated at hospital.”(LFPress, 6/11) We know that such wickedness is why the world must be judged at our Lord’s return. “The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth” (Ps 11:5) As servants of the Living God we must follow the commandments of Christ: “And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.”

Now “Egypt is on alert after the attack, in which three people died as security forces fought rioters in Cairo. Anti-Israeli feeling rose after five Egyptian policemen were killed as Israeli forces pursued Palestinian militants. Israel evacuated its ambassador Yitzhak Levanon and nearly all its diplomats. Altogether 80 people — embassy staff and their families — were flown out overnight to Israel. Six members of the embassy staff were trapped inside the building during the riot and had to be rescued by Egyptian commandos, an Israeli official told the BBC. There is a sharp increase in tension in what was already a very cold peace. Egypt is one of only two Arab countries to have a peace deal with Israel. Anti-Israel sentiment is certainly very deep-seated here, but this open expression is something quite new. I spoke to one of the protestors and she said, “We’ve been brought up to hate Israel but now we can express this openly. Since the fall of Hosni Mubarak, no Egyptian blood will go unavenged”.

(BBC 9/11) Such threats would sound alarming to those who love Israel, except that we know what has been prophesied in Joel 3:19, “*Egypt shall be a desolation...for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land. But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation... for the LORD dwelleth in Zion.*”
—Contact Magazine

Meditations—Deity’s Ways No. 56

FOR forty years and more this element of the doctrine of the Judgment, *i.e.*, the resurrectional responsibility of the enlightened, has been steadily maintained. Shall we now in any way strengthen the hands of those who deny it? To do so with our eyes open would be to imperil our salvation. “The whole counsel of God” was Paul’s maxim. Let it be ours. No man alive to the value of the truth, and to the significance of apostolic example and warning, will sanction any compromise of the one faith, nor join in the cry of “unimportant” in regard to any of its items. The new doctrine of no resurrection for unbaptised rebels (new in the sense of being set forth by novel arguments) is opposed to the plainest declarations of Scripture. Let the doubtful man shut himself up for a few hours with the evidence marshalled by brother Roberts in his clearly written work, entitled *Resurrection to Condemnation: Who will come forth to it?* Whatever may have been the deficiencies of anyone in the past, the duty before everyone now is to take on and hold fast to the divine mind.

A royal wedding—a joyous assemblage—gathered together jubilantly, and expectantly looking to the delights of the festive board. The king enters, spies a man, who, by his dress, disgraces the company, but who shows no signs of anticipating exclusion. As an invited guest he is looking for a participation in all the pleasures of the occasion, but his presence is called in question by the king. The man’s impudent conduct is made manifest. Shame and speechlessness ensue (See Matt. 22:1–14). What is the lesson of Christ’s impressive parable? It teaches, first, that a certain preparation, a becoming state of readiness, is needed on our part in order to obtain Christ’s favour in the day of account. Secondly, that that day will reveal sad disappointment in the case of some who will only be brought to their senses by a little talk from Christ upon truths once known but carelessly or foolishly ignored or forgotten. Now is the time to think upon these things. God’s kind offer of salvation is coupled with conditions which He will not break. Let us beware of trifling with God. This applies to all whose eyes have been opened to the truth, whether baptised or not.

Man has departed from the right path, and has become hardened in ways as hurtful to himself as they are abhorrent to God. A halt and a

right-about-face are imperatively needed. The gospel contains the call in this direction—the command to “repent” as a preliminary to acceptance and salvation. Man hates this reasonable condition—the insistence on the part of God that He shall be heard, believed, and obeyed. This human weakness accounts for the sad and true words of the Lord Jesus: *“Many are called, but few are chosen.”* How wonderfully, and in what manifold ways, has God inculcated in the Bible the essentiality of obedience. It is this feature that makes the book a neglected one. People who have no relish for submission will not endure the chafing and pricking which a proper reading of the scriptures inevitably entails, and hence relegate them sooner or later to an unreachable shelf. That men should do this, or when compelled to face these scriptures, should resort to abuse and perversion, are items which should not distress us, but should increase our belief in the divine origin of the Bible. Christ’s testimony concerning himself is equally applicable to the Bible,— *“The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.”*

Bro. A.T. Jannaway—1900

A Christadelphian on the Land of Israel

Sixth Visit to the Holy Land

AT PETACH TIKVAH

My last letter concluded with a reference to the experiences met with at Petach Tikvah generally, and the “Hotel Gisson” in particular. Whatever the latter may have been in the pre-war palmy days, the Great War has left its marks here. Maybe I was not in the best of moods—in any case the place had by no means an inviting appearance, not at all as it was when I last visited the colony (1912), and as fully described in the Christadelphian for 1914 (April). This time I did not perceive “welcome” written or unwritten anywhere, and there did not appear to be anybody about with a kindly greeting. On opening the door of the hotel—all alone in the semi-darkness, for the boy-guide had left me at the end of the avenue leading to the “hotel” (!) — here I found myself in a big, barren apartment—room, cabin, hall, or whatever else one could call it, containing a bare wooden table, a few uninviting looking wooden chairs and seats, a few shelves and a little crockery—bare boards, and an apparently empty larder. My heavy, mud-covered boots, as I walked across the bare boards to another door, created sufficient noise to arouse the attention of a middle-aged Jewess, in an adjoining room, and I was pleased to find she addressed me in English, asking what I wanted. I enquired “Are you the proprietress?” “No”, she replied, “I am only staying here till we find something better: my husband and I came here about two years ago, and have wanted to get away ever since we arrived: we only occupy one room”. Upon enquiring about a bedroom, she smiled

a sickly smile, and further damped my feelings by saying she thought there was a spare room, but as to whether it contained a bed she could not say—she only knew of an iron bedstead! Well, could I have some tea? She could only say “I will go and see if I can find the proprietress”. In due course the latter appeared, but we had to use the lodger as our interpreter. Never have I been taken so literally: I asked for “Tea”; and I got it, and nothing more; tea in a glass mug; not a drop of milk, not a bit of sugar, and not a morsel of anything to eat! Six o’clock in the evening, all but dark, the end of a long and tedious journey, and nothing to eat since an unusually early breakfast! By and by a young man appeared upon the scene who spoke excellent English, in fact an English Jew. When the war ended and he became eligible for demobilization, the Palestine manager of the American Fruit Packing Incorporated Society “spotted” him, and, knowing a good man when he saw him, at once, with a tempting financial offer, secured him for their Factory at Petach Tikvah. I found my newly formed acquaintance an intelligent and desirable companion, for he became most interested in my Petach Tikvah programme, although he was sure it was impossible of fulfilment in the time marked out. My hostess did not seem at all anxious to shew me where I was to sleep, but I insisted, and was then led up a kind of outside ladder staircase—not unlike a derelict companion-way of an ocean liner—then along a narrow balcony from which a door led into my “bedroom”; a big room with accommodation enough for several bedsteads, but only contained one—a little one, in one corner of the room, not a shred of bedding (that was to come!)

Then there was an old-at-one-time painted washstand, but no crockery; a shelf and a candlestick. No carpet or floor-covering, no curtains, no blind, no table—almost enough to make one exclaim “No nothing”! But there is a nauseous uncanny odour, not unlike that of the Catacombs on the Appian Way outside Rome. The landlady promised there would be a mattress provided by the time I wanted to go to bed; also a basin of water for a wash.

As stated in my previous letter, the “friend-in-need”, who proved such a “friend-indeed”, and let me have his seat on the Jaffa-Petach-Tikvah diligence, had promised to follow in due course and bid me await his arrival at the “Hotel Gisson”. While doing so, I spent the time in getting all the information I could on things Zionist, from my young friend, the demobilized Jew. He protested that a visit to Ain Ganim must be deleted from my programme; but on that detail I was adamant. Impossible, he exclaimed, unless you get up at 4 a.m., and walk there and back before breakfast, and before carrying out the Petach Tikvah explorations. He was quite willing to accompany me. It was not long before all arrangements were made for him to call for me at the time stated. In the midst of our interview my friend in need appeared upon the scene, and I at once placed myself in his hands, suggesting the carrying out of what he had hinted

at—a round of visits to the leading lights of Petach Tikvah, including the “Mayor” as we should call such an official in England, and as, in fact, is now found in many of the Jewish Colonies. At the Mayor’s house, where I was regaled with the usual Jewish evidences of hospitality, I was given vivid word pictures of the Arab invasion of the colony on that memorable 21st day of May, 1921, when had it not been for the timely appearance of a British aeroplane with a supply of bombs, there is not the slightest doubt that not a single one of the three thousand Petach Tikvites would have survived to tell the story. I was presented with some gruesome mementoes of the slaughter, in the shape of actual snapshots—photographs of Jewish corpses, with names and details.

It was very late when I arrived back at my temporary resting place, thoroughly worn out and ready for bed, although not with the anticipatory relish that one would like, for I had not yet seen the “bed”! Upon arrival, instead of being taken to my room, I was taken into an apartment in which was a table spread with food enough for several days, and to which the reader can guess, I did ample justice. The repast even included what is so frequently associated with hospitality in the Holy Scriptures, “a bottle of wine” from Rishon le Zion.

Upon retiring to rest I found there were added to the “furniture”, a mattress and sheets, a basin, can of water, and a little looking glass nailed on the wall; in fact, one would now call it a “furnished room”. My heavy boots made such a noise on the bare boards, through the cracks of which you could see “down below”, that I at once took them off—not to be cleaned however, for had I put them outside the door, in the open air on the “companion way” already referred to, it is not certain there would have been any boots left in the morning (Oh, those Bedouins!). The little looking glass could not have been a later addition, for when I went to hang my mackintosh on the nail by which it was hung—the only nail in the room—down it came, revealing spiders, and centipede-looking insects; old inhabitants evidently.

At 4 a.m. prompt, after a good night’s rest, my young volunteer-dragoman arrived, astonished apparently at finding me up and ready. The daybreak walk across tilled and untilled land was delightful—the rising sun adding to the beauty—and in due course we reached the little colony of Ain Ganim—the Workers’ Settlement, as it is called. The 200 inhabitants are almost wholly occupied in orange and lemon growing, dairy farming and bee keeping. Having taken a few photographs, we returned to Petach Tikvah in time for breakfast. It was during this visit that I was forcibly reminded of the ailment generally known as “Anno Domini”. Being of the opinion that my companion had been compelled to bestir himself to do the journey in the given time, I remarked how well we had done the journey, to which he demurely replied: “Ah, not so bad. Of course, Sir, had you been twenty years younger, we might have done it in about half

the time”! And that, too, when I thought I had set the pace. The recent ailments and troubles had left their mark.

I spent much time in viewing the Factory of the American Fruit Growers’ Syndicate, where oranges are graded, washed, polished, and packed by up-to-date American machinery. The time was well spent. Hitherto, the great disadvantage under which these Colonists have laboured has been that their work has been a “season” one only, and that consequently, they have had practically nothing to do for a part of the year. Now, however, the Society is laying down new machinery for the preserving and canning of the fruit, so as to give employment to the inhabitants all the year round.

At Petach Tikvah I experienced what it is to be overwhelmed with hospitality, for the local head of the Fruit Growers insisted on my accepting the present of a “sample” of the Firm’s work, in the shape of a case of one hundred and twenty Petach Tikvah oranges. Just imagine the writer’s pitiable plight. With such primitive means of locomotion, and so many changes en route, and frequently dependent on “Shanks’ Pony”, having added to one’s luggage a case of 120 oranges! How, and with what pains, I did eventually manage to get them to Jerusalem, via Tel Aviv, Jaffa, and Ludd, can be better left to imagination than described in a letter. Petach Tikvah makes a charming picture at sunrise, with its orange groves, vineyards, and almond plantations. It possesses two large wine cellars, and several good schools. In all, it covers about seven thousand acres.

By the way, I do not think the Arabs will ever again venture to attack Petach Tikvah. If they do it will be a sorry day for them—the Arabs I mean—for the Colonists there are not likely to again be “caught napping”!

I left it to my hospitable friends to find out some vehicle bound for Jaffa to convey me and my increased belongings; and thus, in due course found myself one with a party of Colonists in a three horse wagon, wearing two coats and a mackintosh, for my travelling bag was more than full—even my Beloved could not have squeezed more in: and, then too, there was that case of oranges! and an umbrella; and a camera! Oh, dear: I must close this letter, but not without recording that Ezekiel xxxviii :11, is more pronounced than ever as a result of this visit.

—*Bro. F. G. Jannaway—1926*

Has the Judgment Begun?

A correspondent suggests that the judgment of the Household of Christ may be in progress in the recesses of Teman. We share the doubts entertained by most as to this.

All the New Testament allusions to this solemn matter seem to assume a collective and simultaneous assembly. True, Paul speaks of the dead as first dealt with, but he also speaks of the living ‘we’ as taken *‘together with them’* (I Th. 4:17), which would be inconsistent with the idea of a part being taken first, and the rest after.

The shame of rejection and the honor of acceptance seem to require the presence of the whole Household.

It is said the judgment must take time. True, but perhaps not so long as we are liable to imagine. We are apt to overlook the resources of the Spirit of God. There is such a thing as a simultaneous individual dealing: that is, where many are dealt with at the same time, and yet each treated individually. The Lord is now High Priest over his own House. In this capacity, he must often have to deal with 100s of prayers offered at the same moment. Though inconceivable to mortal faculty, such an accomplishment is not above the reach of reason.

The Eternal Mind is cognizant of the infinitude of detail that goes to make the universe, so that not even a sparrow can fall without His knowledge and permission. This power is now possessed by the Lord Jesus. It is possible that on some principle not known to us, he may judge his people simultaneously while dealing with them individually. Each man will feel that his case is attended to with fullness and deliberation, and yet many may be judged at once.

We cannot know: but the possibilities that we do know preclude our arguing anything from the assumed necessity for a length of time being required. It is more natural to suppose that all will be convened before the dread assize begins, and that none will be judged till all are assembled.

—*Bro. Robert Roberts, 1880*

I Go To Prepare a Place

Question: “If Christ is gone to prepare a mansion for believers in his Father’s House (Jn. 14:2-6), is it not natural to infer that it must be in heaven?—especially when we well consider the words, *‘And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself.’* It appears to me that the only way in which a visitor can receive the visited must be by returning with the latter to his own abode. If Christ comes to establish a Kingdom on the earth, it will be the believers who will receive him. *‘That where I am ye may be also.’* But where? If Christ alluded to Palestine, would he not have spoken in a less mysterious manner?”

You say it is natural to ‘infer’ that the prepared place must be heaven. The real question is, What did Christ mean? He was about to die as the appointed bearer of the sins of the world, and was then to depart to the Father’s presence to act as *‘priest over the House of God’* (Heb. 10:21), and was then to return to *‘sit on the throne of his glory’* (Mt. 25:31), which he should share with his ransomed brethren (Rv. 3:21). The whole of these acts

constitute a preparing of the appointed place (in glory) for the disciples, in harmony with the facts of the case as discernable in the Covenants made with the Fathers, and the *'great and precious promises'* so numerous promulgated in the Prophets.

But if we understand that Christ will take his people away from the earth to the Father's dwelling-place, we destroy what is revealed in the Scriptures of Moses and the Prophets, and the apostles too, and throw the whole Scriptures into confusion. This is disproof of the correctness of the interpretation suggested.

'But,' says our friend, 'consider the words: If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself. Will not Christ, the visitor, return with his people, the visited, to his own abode. If not, it is his people that will receive him, and not he his people.'

Are we to ignore the whole body of plain teaching concerning the work and mission of Christ? We cannot do this. We must take all parts of the subject into account. Doing this, we see the necessity for Christ coming again for the work of reception, because the work is a work affecting the earth (Christ's property: Psa. 2:8)—for his people, whom he is to cause to inherit it (Mt. 5:5).

If it was a question of taking his people to a prepared place in heaven, there would be no need of his coming again. It would be sufficient for him to take them away in the manner of Elijah. The very fact of his *'coming again'* points to the locality of the reception. He comes to *'receive them'* where he will be when he comes—that is, on the earth.

'But,' says our friend, 'that would be Christ's people receiving Christ.'

Nay, dear friend, when Christ arrives, the bulk of his people are in the grave. If he did not act as the receiver, there would be no reception. Present on the earth, at his return in power and great glory, he recalls his people from the dead, asks them to his presence, and *'receives them to himself,'* to share his life and joy and Kingdom and power, forever.

That he 'alluded to Palestine' is certain from the fact that he is co-heir thereof with Abraham under the Promise (Ga1. 3:16; Heb. 11:8) and from his own allusions on other occasions, such as when he said—

"Many shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south [these expressions point to a convergent assembly on the earth, for they are terms of local application only], and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets—[where?]-in the Kingdom of God" (Mt. 8:11; Lk. 13:29).

And where is this?— *"The Kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem" (Mic. 4: 8).*

Therefore: *"In that day (when tears are dried: Is. 25:8) shall this song be sung IN THE LAND OF JUDAH" (Isa. 26:1)*—the very land

where the Lord was born, according to the same prophetic terms (Mt. 2:5-6; Mic. 5:2).

Again our friend asks: “Does it not appear strange that Jesus made no plain allusions to his future reign at Jerusalem?”

The answer is that Jesus did make plain allusions of this sort. Such is his statement— “*Ye (Jerusalem) shall not see me henceforth until the time comes WHEN YE SHALL SAY, Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord*” (Lk. 13:35).

Such also is the declaration: “*When the Son of man shall come in his glory and all his holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory.*”

Where is this? “*The Lord of hosts shall reign on Mt. Zion, and in Jerusalem*” (Is. 24:23).

“*At that time shall Jerusalem be called the throne of the Lord*” (Jer.3:17).

Again, Jesus speaks of Jerusalem as ‘*the city of the Great King*’ (Mt. 5:35). And because he was ‘*nigh to Jerusalem*’ on a certain occasion, he spoke a parable to intimate that the Kingdom was not near then (though the disciples thought so), because he must: “*Depart to a far country to receive for himself a Kingdom and RETURN*” (Lk. 19).

What then?— “*I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel*” (Lk. 22:28-29).
—Bro. Robert Roberts, 1889

Where Will the Judgment Be?

Concerning “the removal of the saints” at the time of the end, there need be no difficulty as to “where they are removed to.” They are removed to “*the presence of Christ at his coming*” (2 Thess. 2:1; 1 Thess. 2:19).

But where will this presence be? The answer is, at that point of the earth’s surface to which he comes. **Where is that?** We know where he went away from—the Mount of Olives (Luke 24:50; Acts 1:12). We know also that—

“*His feet shall stand at that day—(the day of his coming)—on the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east*” (Zech. 14:4).

But will he stand nowhere else before he stands there?

We are justified in thinking that he will.

Why? Because when he stands there, “*all the saints*” are with him (v. 5), and they must have joined him beforehand somewhere else, seeing

they must all stand before his judgment seat, faithful and unfaithful, before their selection (2 Cor. 5:10).

Is there any hint as to the locality of this judicial meeting?

The analogy of things connected with the first establishment of the Kingdom of Israel suggests an answer. The congregation was thoroughly organized in the wilderness before its appearance in Canaan, as the sword of the Lord under Joshua.

The people are **again** to be “*brought into the wilderness*” (Eze. 20:35). The saints are the heads of the people; and their gathering into the same locality would be involved.

The conclusion seems finally set at rest by sundry **allusions in the prophetic Scriptures to that neighborhood** as the region whence the glory of God (in Christ and his brethren) first emerges upon the world’s horizon. Thus Habakkuk, speaking of the day when God would—

“*. . . go forth for the salvation of His people with His anointed (Christ)*” (v. 13).

—says in v. 3 (in the language of accomplished fact, common to Bible prophecy)— “*God came from Teman and His Holy one from Mount Paran.*”

—both localities in the Sinaitic wilderness. Thus also in Psa. 68:17, in connection with the time for the Lord’s everlasting dwelling in Zion, there is a reference to thousands of angels as his chariots, and “*the Lord among them IN SINAI*” —omitting the “as” which is wanting in the original.

There is fitness in the idea that the Lord’s people should be removed to Sinai for judgment. To everything there must be a beginning. The glorified Body of Christ must be prepared **somewhere** before installation in the Holy Land as the new heavens of the Age to Come.

No more fitting place could be suggested than the seclusion of the Sinaitic desert, while we have the fact before us that in that very region, the congregation of Israel under Moses was organized, and prepared for the work which was but a type and shadow of the greater work to be carried out under the greater prophet like unto him.

—*Bro. Robert Roberts, 1890*

Judgment to Come

GOD is kind and long-suffering, but He has another side: ‘*Our God is a consuming fire*’ (Heb. 12:29). God is Love, and ‘*His tender mercy is over all His works,*’ and yet Paul invites us to ‘*behold His severity*’ in certain relations (Rm. 11:22). The history of His transactions with men is full of illustrations on this point.

The Flood is a standing instance to which Jesus more than once refers. An eruption of merciless waters drowned the whole population:

nice babies, pretty children, beautiful girls, stalwart, fine-looking men, and old men of gray and venerable aspect. What was the cause of the terrible visitation?—

“All flesh had corrupted His Way, and the earth was filled with violence” (Gen. 6:12).

Men thought it a light thing to corrupt the Way of God. They were not afraid to disregard His appointments. They thought it a weak and womanish thing to fear to do wrong—just exactly as it is now, as Jesus said would be the case.

After a time of long-suffering and expostulation, destruction swept them all away, and so it will be again, except that the destruction will not be of so sweeping a character, as the times and circumstances are different. The judgment to be inflicted on the world’s population at the coming of Christ is to subdue and enlighten them, and bring them into harmony with God, for the glory of God and His people in the Kingdom to be set up.

Yet, as regards vast masses of mankind, it will be as thorough a perdition as that which overtook the contemporaries of Noah. Sodom overwhelmed in the most direful destruction is another instance. So also with the plaguing of the Egyptians, the slaughter of the Canaanites, the affliction of Israel in various ways till the piled-up wrath of God descended upon the unhappy nation in an avalanche of destruction at the hands of the Romans.

—*Bro. Robert Roberts, 1892*

Live till Lord Come?

“Would you not rather live till the Lord comes?”

THIS question is best met by the counter-question—

“Would you not like to meet the Lord TODAY, rather than have to wait through a further interval of the sore evil that now prevails?”

If the answer to the second question is ‘Yes’ (as it will be in the case of all Christ’s true lovers who may have attained the answer of a good conscience toward God), then the answer to the other question becomes not so much of a ‘Yes’ as most people take for granted. If the mind once grasps the idea that death destroys time for the dead, death becomes a hastening rather than an interfering with the Lord’s coming.

Righteous men will be content to wait in this probation as long as the Lord appoints. At the same time, when they are asked which they would choose, they are liable to feel with Paul, not only *‘in a strait betwixt two,’* but that to *‘depart and be with Christ’* is *‘far better’* than remaining separate from him in this evil state. If Paul had had to *‘live till the Lord come,’* what a weary man he would have been by now! So it all depends upon how long, and whether we are ready.

—*Bro. Robert Roberts, 1897*

Peace On Earth

“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword” Matt. 10:34.

THERE is no greater proof of the divinity of the word and work of Christ than that he should predict such a result. We have had a fulfillment of 1800 years duration. The world is no nearer peace now than ever it was, and left to itself, it would never approach it. A shallow reading of the situation would have predicted peace. Christ with an eye that penetrated to the remotest labyrinth of time, and to the deepest springs of human action, foretold war. And war it has been and will be till he stop it by his own appearance on the scene. Peace at last—profound, perfect, imperturbable—will be the effect of Christ’s work upon earth. But in the first stage, in the absence of his enforced power, the reverse is the result.

—*Bro. Robert Roberts, 1887*

The Abrahamic Covenant And It’s Mystery

According to the law ordained by angels in the hand of Moses, and styled *“the word spoken by angels”* (*Heb. 2:2*), mankind are separated into the *holy* and the *unclean*. It constituted the twelve tribes of Israel *“a holy nation”* a special and peculiar people (*Ex. 19:6, Deut. 7:6, 14, 2*), while it left all other nations mere *“sinners of the Gentiles”* (*Gal. 2:15*), as all men were originally constituted by the disobedience of Adam (*Rom. 5:19*) from whom they derive their descent. The national holiness of Israel was constitutional, not inherent. The nation was composed of a stiff-necked, perverse and intractable people who were more disposed to the wickedness of other nations, than to the practice of the law of Jehovah, their king. But the holy seed of Abraham was the substance in the nation’s loins, on account of whom, and the things affirmed respecting him, it was not consumed (*Isai. 6:13, 65: 8, 9; Rom. 11:16*) but carefully preserved, as having a *“blessing in it,”* even *“an inheritor of Jehovah’s mountains,”* who shall cause His servants to rejoice, and the nations to shout aloud for joy.

Anything separated by Jehovah from things in general for His own special use is holy, irrespective of the nature or character of the thing. Hence, things animate and inanimate, animal, vegetable and mineral, solid and fluid, &c., have all been constituted holy by the law. Thus there were holy *utensils*, holy and most holy *places of worship*, holy mountains and cities, and holy *officials*, though oftentimes very unrighteous men. The holiness of this kind was, the national holiness of the twelve tribes—a holiness conferred by the law of Moses, *“which could make nothing perfect.”* It bestowed upon things a relative external holiness, a sort of halo of holiness confined to the surface, which left the mind and disposition, or heart of its subject untouched.

Let us look into the matter a little more minutely. A babe, though born of Israelites, was unclean (*Job 14:4; 25:4*), which is the same thing as unholy, until its circumcision, and after presentation to the Lord. *“Every male that openeth the womb, shall be called holy to the Lord.”* This was

the law, but how great the number so called were wicked men, Israel's history shows abundantly. Some, however, desired to keep the law. They grew up "blameless" (Phil. 3:6), observing all the precepts of the decalogue, conforming to the temple worship, and abstaining from contact with all legally unclean and interdicted things. This was a man's own righteousness acquired by working according to the law (Phil. 3:9). This was the righteousness Israel followed after, which they sought to establish in opposition to the righteousness Paul preached (Rom. 9:31; 10:3), and styled by the prophets "filthy rags." Many such men were ignorant.

They had the token of the covenant in their flesh, but they were "*children in whom was no faith,*" and "*without faith it is impossible to please God.*" Thus an Israelite might be legally blameless, but if without faith, his legal righteousness could entitle him to no more than length of days in the land which the Lord had given His people. The twelve tribes inherited the land under the law of Moses, which could confer upon their generations only a temporal life interest in the country. Could it have given them an everlasting inheritance therein, the nation, whatever its misdeeds, would not have been expelled; and its citizens might have attained to everlasting life as a recompense for keeping the law. The transgressions of Israel consummated in their rejection of the gospel of the kingdom, would doubtless have brought down heaven's judgments upon them, which would have ultimated in the triumph of the truth; but they would not have been punished in the way they have, by an expulsion from their country, if the word spoken by angels in the hand of Moses, could have conferred an everlasting title to it.

Covenants are of no force until purged. "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood." To purge anything in the Scripture sense, is to cleanse it from legal or from moral defilement; and to impart to it a virtue co-efficient with the detergent or cleansing principle. This is a general definition which may not apply in every case, but it is sufficiently precise for the subject in hand. The covenant made with Abraham was confirmed with Jehovah's oath, saying, "*Know of a surety,*" and by the consumption of sacrifices by fire from heaven (Gen. 15). This was confirmation not purgation. It was not purged until two thousand and eighty-nine years after, when a virtue was imparted to it co-efficient with the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel; that is, the blood of Jesus, which he says is "the blood of New . . . (testament) shed for many for the remission of sins."

The history of the death and resurrection of Jesus is that narrative which relates the story of the purging, or the rendering effective of the covenant, testament. . . through which remission of sins, eternal life, and an everlasting possession of the land, with all its inseparable attributes, may be obtained by every one *who believes the things promised therein.*

Four hundred and thirty years after the confirmation of the New Covenant (styled *new* because of its coming into force at a time when that of Moses had waxed old), and sixteen hundred and fifty-nine years before its incipient enforcement, Moses dedicated or initiated "the law ordained

by angels.” This he did with blood. “For when he had spoken every precept to all the people according to law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both *the Book* and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the Testament which God hath enjoined upon you” (Heb. 9:18–20). Here was a solution of blood in water, into which a sprinkler of scarlet wool and hyssop was dipped, and the Book and people sprinkled by the hand of Moses. These materials were purification-emblems. “Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission,” or sending away, as if sin and uncleanness were sent away into a land not inhabited (Lev. 16:21, 22). This is a first principle of God’s religion under both covenants. Blood is therefore regarded as purging, purifying, or cleansing. The only answer that can be given to the question, why is there no expiation without blood-shedding?—is that Jehovah wills it. The blood of the living creature is the life thereof; and as it has come under sentence of death, God wills that life shall make satisfaction for sin (Lev. 17:11, 14). “It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.” Water is also cleansing. Hence, “wash you, make you clean” (Isai. 1:16). The water and the blood with which Moses sprinkled the Book of the Covenant and the people, find their antitypes in the blood and water that issued from the pierced side of Jesus, with which he sprinkled the new covenant...But the efficacy of a covenant depends on the virtue of the blood with which it is purged. This principle is fatal to the idea of perfectibility by the law of Moses; for “it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins” (Heb. 10:4). Hence it was weak and unprofitable, and made nothing perfect (Heb. 7:18, 19). This defectiveness of the law, which even faith in the unpurged Abrahamic covenant could not remedy (Heb. 9:15) was referable to the nature of the sacrifices with whose blood it was dedicated; and to the weakness of the flesh (Rom. 8:3), which it could alone sanctify (Heb. 9:13) without reaching the inward man. Calves and goats were as destitute of righteousness as they were devoid of sin. Their blood therefore was a negative principle, and could impart no virtue to a covenant by which those who were sanctified under it could obtain a title or justification to eternal redemption. And furthermore let it be observed, that besides this defect, their blood was unprofitable for everlasting results, as being the blood of the dead, and not of the living. It was therefore ceremonially incommunicative of any kind of vitality. Even the blood of the innocent and righteous Jesus, would have been as unprofitable for covenant purposes as the blood of Moses, Abel, or calves, if he had not risen from the dead. This is the doctrine taught concerning him in David. The thirtieth Psalm is prophetic of Messiah’s death and resurrection. “All things must be fulfilled that are written concerning me in the Psalms” (Luke 24:44), said Jesus. In the third verse of the Psalm quoted, the spirit which afterwards dwelt in him and spoke by him, says of him and for him, “O Jehovah, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave; thou hast kept me alive (or preserved from corruption), that I should not go down into the pit (or be reduced to dust)”. In the eighth verse he says he “cried unto the Lord, and made supplication.” This occurred before his soul went down into the grave. In

view of its hypothetical continuance in that gloomy place, he inquires in his supplication, "What profit is there in my blood, if I go down to the pit (or become dust?) Can the dust praise thee? Can it declare thy truth?" This interrogative argument teaches the doctrine of the 15th of 1Corinthians, that if Christ be not raised from the dead, or, in other words, be mere dust in the pit, "faith is in vain;" sins are not remitted; and dead believers are perished: which is equivalent to saying "there is no profit in his blood;" for it was shed for remission of sins, which, however, are not remitted, if he be not raised up, or "healed" of the "evil disease" which laid him in the tomb (Psa. 41:8). An unrisen Christ is an unprofitable sacrifice. His blood could purge nothing; and as to praising God, and declaring His truth in heaven or earth, it would be impossible; for "the dead know not anything" (Eccles. 9:5), in the day of their return to their dust their thoughts perish (Psa. 146:4), and therefore the dead cannot praise Jehovah (Psa. 115:17). Jesus was "delivered for our offences;" but if he had not been raised, we should have remained unjustified, and in our sins, and without any title to things everlasting; happily, however, for the faithful, God raised him from the dead; whereupon the apostle adds, "And was raised again for our justification." Thus, his blood was made profitable, and he is prepared to praise Jehovah, and to declare his truth in the midst of Israel's congregation (Psa. 22:22, 23, 25) when the time comes.

Now this doctrine being true of the blood of an unresurrected, innocent, and righteous man, it is clear that the blood of dead animals, such as calves and goats, must be utterly worthless for anything else than a shift devised for the exigency of the case. They had no righteousness; therefore their sprinkled blood would constitute no one righteous: they had no life; therefore it could impart no title to eternal life; and not being human, they could not expiate humanity's offence, inasmuch as the wisdom of God determined that sin should be "condemned in the flesh," not representatively of animals only, but literally in that of man (Rom. 8:3). As it was not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins, and this being the blood of the Mosaic covenant, it was as impossible for that instrument to give the twelve tribes or a single faithful Israelite, even a title to inherit the land for ever. "The wages of sin is death;" hence sins untaken away or transgressions unredeemed, leaves the transgressor under death's sentence. A man under sentence of death, is as good as dead; he is therefore styled "dead in trespass and sins." This was the condition of the whole nation under the law. No man thereof could show his title to eternal life in Canaan, or elsewhere. A *faithful* Israelite might *hope* that when Messiah came, he would not prove like Adam the first, but be obedient unto death; and by his shed blood, purge the Abrahamic covenant in which he believed, and by thus redeeming the transgressions committed by the faithful under the law (Heb. 9:15), gave them justification unto life eternal, by which they would be enabled to possess the land for ever. No, the only title to the land the Mosaic law could give was conditional and limited to their mortal existence upon it.

Bro. John Thomas—1865

Hints For Bible Markers

The Psalms

Psalm 2

Correction: Brain should read reign in the last sentence of last month's Hints.

This will end when man's reign is dashed in "pieces like the potter's vessel

Psalm 2:10

"Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth."

Man is not wise but does consider himself so and therefore when Christ returns, this Psalm and this verse in particular, will be disregarded by most of the world. There will be proposals sent to the rulers of the world and they will be rejected. They will not see the wisdom of God. And will seek to hold onto their power and their foolish notions, all the while disregarding the glory, beauty, and wisdom of God and his son.

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction." (Proverbs 1:7)

This new stanza is also a lesson for us today. Only the wise are seeking instruction and being taught by the Scriptures of truth. Seeking to put God's will, his commands, in their hearts and minds. They know they must be instructed and trained, learning obedience, for in the kingdom age they will be the judges of the Earth.

Psalm 2:11

"Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling."

This verse may seem a little odd, when we think of serving the Lord with fear and rejoicing with trembling. But it would not have been given if it was not possible to do. As with the last verse it is prophetic, but also has a current application.

Understanding and BELIEF of the Lord's great power, allows the righteous man to discern what will happen if he does not put his best efforts toward serving the Lord. Not caring for the things of this world, but seeking that which is to come. Knowing that great day of judgment is to come, they surrender themselves to the will of God.

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments:" (Psalm 111:10)

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

(Philippians 2:12)

Continued next month should the Lord will.

Bro. Beryl Snyder