

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

Dallas, Ecclesia

Sunday School 10am Elpis Israel, Memorial 11am, Wednesdays 7pm Temple of Ezekiel's Prophecy Study Class.

Greetings Brothers and Sisters in the one hope of Israel. It has been some time since there was news from this part of Yahweh's Vineyard.

Since our last correspondence we have had additions to our Ecclesia. Bro. Craig and Sis. Lacy Kiley along with their children have relocated to the Dallas area and are members of the Dallas Ecclesia. We currently still meet in brothers and sisters' homes and as our Ecclesia continues to grow we shall evaluate the need for larger space.

We have also had visitors to the Dallas area. Bro Jesse Gustavsson, Bro. Nathan and Sis. Joanne Phillips, Bro. Harry and Sis. Cindy Cassidy. We enjoyed the visits very much and the fellowship we share around the Table of our absent Lord. Thankful we are of the exhortation given by Bro. Jesse on his visit. We always look forward to visits from any passing through the Dallas Fort Worth area.

The Ecclesia continues our monthly visits to Sis. Linnie Hennig in Weatherford, about an hour's drive from Dallas. We enjoy the fellowship around the table with her and conversations with her are always delightful, as she shares her history and those of the elder members of the Texas Ecclesias. We pray that our Heavenly Father continues to be with her and watches over her.

On a sad note we had the hard decision of withdrawing fellowship from Bro. Darin Anderson due to continued absence from the Ecclesia and the Memorials. The doors of communication are not closed with our brother and we pray that he comes around and reestablishes communication with us and rejoins the fellowship so we all can walk hand in hand towards Yahweh's coming Kingdom.

Our hope and expectation is that we continue in the things of the spirit and we can show God's mercy and goodness in our lives to all who are in search of the true message of the Things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ.

Love in Christ Jesus,
Upendo katika Kristo Yesu (Swahili),
Bob Bent

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.

There Must Be Heresies

“Thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but do them not.”—Ezekiel 33:32

IN the first reading for this morning (2 Kings 24 & 25) we are at the end of the major epoch in the great plan of God—a time when things that had seemed unchangeable began to crumble and fall.

Such times call for deep foundations. Lives grounded merely upon the upper layers of immediate fact cannot stand the shock of these periods of earth-shaking transition.

Within the Household of God, the present time is of a similar nature.

The old landmarks are disappearing. Rifts are developing where solid rock was expected, and every individual is forced again and again to examine his own foundations to see whether they are still firm and

unchanged, or whether they turn out to have been built upon what had only the appearance of stability.

Paul said to the Corinthians—

“There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you” (1 Cor. 11:19).

Mere membership is meaningless. Each must stand upon a firm foundation of intelligent belief and perception, cemented by constant study. Vital decisions are being forced upon us. Only a daily and affectionate familiarity with the Word will make us ready for them. Those that are not ready will be weeded out and left behind.

“There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you” (1 Cor. 11:19).

After the storm has passed, some houses will be left standing—some will have been swept away. It is hard, but it is necessary. The stones of the Temple must be sound and solid. In battle training, real bullets are used. A false move means death, even in the training period. It is hard, but it is necessary. Facts are always hard, but wisdom will face them.

* * *

THE end of Israel’s kingdom is a sad consideration. Not particularly because of the immediate circumstances and individuals concerned, but because of what lay behind—because of the great underlying tragedy that was involved.

Our minds go back to the beginning. To the glorious blazing mountain, enveloped in cloud and smoke, and rocked with thunder—to Moses, the man of God—to the commandments and the Covenant. Then to Solomon at the dedication of the Temple—the House filled with the glory of God—the nationwide dedication and rejoicing.

Wonderful beginnings! — so full of possibility and promise!

But now this is the end. The Temple plundered...the city burned...the leaders slain...the people scattered.

Why? Because the pull and example of the world had overcome the influence of God’s law and institutions. They never thoroughly grasped the superiority of God’s way, nor the necessity for their own well-being of following it.

To them it was always a burden—a meaningless restriction upon their natural desires. They never perceived its spirit and purpose, so

the day of judgment came upon them unawares. They had never really come out of the world.

The clouds of judgment were gathering for a long period, but they were unheeded. The great fallacy that prevented them from discerning the ominous trend of events was their dependence upon Egypt as the basic stability of the times.

Stretching far back in the dim past, Egypt had always seemed vast, solid and unmovable. The world revolved around Egypt, and Egypt was their friend. These upstarts from the East, Assyria and Babylon, would soon pass away. Egypt would arouse, gather her strength, and crush them.

But history had reached a turning point. Something deeper than dependence upon Egypt was going to be necessary to carry them through this time.

Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, all the prophets repeatedly urge the children of Israel to lay a deeper foundation than upon the fleshly arm of Egypt. But allegiance to Egypt appealed to them more than allegiance to God because their ways were more in keeping with the ways of Egypt.

Egypt offered them insurance, and God offered them insurance, but Egypt's requirements were less exacting and more pleasing to the flesh and more assuring to the natural eye.

The economic system that God had set up under the Law of Moses was entirely different from the selfish way that natural man carries on his business. If they were to depend on God, they would have to do what God wanted and live the way He commanded. They would have to give up a lot of things that were very desirable to the natural man.

The Law of Moses prevented the accumulation of great wealth and the development of a class of exploited workers. It was aimed at general national well-being and equality, rather than personal ambition and advancement.

They had long since forsaken all these principles. They had built up a system of caste and oppression. They had patterned themselves in all things according to the heathen who surrounded them. The rich oppressed the poor; and the Lord's inheritance, which was given impartially to all, was seized by the stronger who trod down the weak.

Born with superior ability, or favored by superior opportunity, by some perverse twist of logic they came to feel that they were entitled also to superior prosperity, and that the less favored and less fortunate

were fair game, provided they kept an appearance of legality.

They forgot that all that they had was of God, and given to be used solely for God's purposes. They forgot that their possessions and abilities were not a favor from God to be squandered on selfishness, but a responsibility and stewardship.

This is how the heathen have always done. It is the way of the world. God gave them a law designed to develop unselfishness, generosity, consideration for others, and disregard of personal advancement. They were not to glean their fields or orchards; they were to be open-handed; they were to lend freely without interest. They were taught that all was from God and intended for the general good and not personal aggrandizement.

They were above all not to make profit out of the position of others less fortunate.

Such were the self-destructive abominations of the heathen. He had showed them a better way—burdens mutually borne and joys mutually enjoyed.

The natural way has the great advantage of being the natural way. It takes no effort, no patient investigation, no tiresome self-analysis and burdensome self-discipline, no stepping out of line and opposing the majority. Relax the efforts and it immediately asserts itself. And it is always SO reasonable—to the natural mind.

God's purpose was that the Jews should be a witness to the world of a community operating according to the divine Way, to demonstrate that Way's infinite superiority to those who had eyes to see. HE HAS THE SAME PURPOSE TODAY.

But the great lament throughout all their history was that they had no mind or attention for the way of God. They would not rise above the natural level of vicious selfishness and greed. Again and again they were forcibly raised above that level—the way of God was forcibly thrust upon their consciousness, but they fought it bitterly, and settled back as soon as the pressure was released.

And so the judgment descended on them, and the privileged classes were destroyed or removed to Babylon, and Palestine was given to the poor of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen, and the Kingdom of the Lord came to an end.

And yet, even those that were left in the land still clung to the empty shell of Egypt — and went down to ruin with her soon after.

* * *

The reading from Ezekiel (ch. 9) is from the same time in Israel's history. Ezekiel was one of the great historic figures who stood out during this period pointing out the way of wisdom and life.

Like all the rest, his words received little attention. Not that he was ignored. He was politely—even eagerly—listened to, and looked upon as a great prophet from God—but, as God said to him (Eze. 33:32)—

“Thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument:

“For they hear thy words BUT THEY DO THEM NOT “

They listened to him, and solemnly agreed with him, and remarked how sad it was that things had come to such a pass. They doubtless gravely discussed, and lamented, and protested, and deplored.

But it went no further. This effort exhausted all the urgency and vitality of their disquietude, and they drifted along with the rest. They could not see that they were called upon to DO something about it—to courageously take a clear stand for God and for the Truth.

They could not see that this was THEIR hour of decision and destiny—that this was God's test for THEM—

“There must be heresies, that the approved may be MADE MANIFEST.”

Today's reading from Ezekiel is a bitter denunciation of the prophets who said “Peace,” when there was no peace. Those who smoothed over the problems and soothed the people, instead of stirring them up to the ever-present dangers of complacency.

Soft, flattering words that “All is well” always grate upon the ears of wisdom, for there is never any justification for relaxed vigilance or for the pleasant indulgence of self-satisfaction—

“Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”

“When you have done all things commanded you, say. We are unprofitable servants.”

“If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?”

Such is always the trend of Scriptural admonition. The reward is within everyone's reach. There is no excuse for defeatism. With God all things are possible, and He delights in strengthening the weak.

But still God is not mocked, and He can see what infinite time and
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effort we can give other things—if we want them badly enough.

In sacrifice, God demanded the best that a man had. A man might be poor, and his best might be but a handful of meal, but it **MUST BE HIS BEST**.

And a man seeking to draw near to God in sincerity and love would be content with doing no less. Anything less than our utmost effort and devotion cheapens the whole transaction and robs it of much of its unique satisfaction and pleasure.

Man is only truly happy when he is using his best possible efforts in the best possible direction — when he is giving his whole heart and soul to the one great thing he believes in.

But it must be free from pride. That is where wisdom comes in to direct. Pride is the delusion of limited minds that do not realize how poor their best really is.

We cannot overcome pride by just concealing it. If we do, it will break out in the repulsive form of false humility. Pride is an inseparable companion of ignorance and limited vision, and it is only cured by enlightenment and a divinely-adjusted perspective—

“What is man that Thou are mindful of him?”

—*Bro. G.V.Growcott*

Strive To Enter In

In Chapter 13, Luke tells us that as the Lord Jesus Christ made his way through the towns and villages on his way to Jerusalem, one asked him a certain question:

“Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved?”

Jesus’ reply is the subject of this exhortation: *“And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the Strait Gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.”* (v. 24)

Jesus was continually thronged by crowds of people, jostling, arguing, watching and listening, but his parables showed that he knew that the great majority did not grasp the full import of his teaching and many that listened would subsequently go away to forget the great truths that they had heard. By his reply to this question Jesus revealed his foreknowledge of the result of his work; that, although many would rejoice at the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God, only a comparatively few would take the trouble to pursue the matter energetically enough to comply with the conditions of salvation and thereby secure a place in it.

Notice the contrast in the two different words employed in verse 24. Many would “*seek*” but that would not be enough; we must “*strive*” if we would enter in at the Strait Gate that leads to the Kingdom. Many in all subsequent ages, have realized in some measure, the boundless opportunity which the Gospel offers, but not being energetic by nature, they only seek, or wish, and no more. They do not struggle to make sure that they will secure a place in the Kingdom. We shall recall that right at the beginning, Cain wanted the blessing of God, but he was not prepared to take the trouble to make sure that his offering was acceptable and his indolence cost him dearly. Christ’s words teach us that to walk in the way of life requires continual effort and a conscience, earnest, endeavor to keep our feet on the straight and narrow path. Recall his words in the Sermon on the Mount:

“Enter ye in at the Strait Gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat: because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matt. 7:13-14).

God has not made the way to eternal life easy. He has designed it to test our obedience and to develop our characters. The way is clearly marked out by the Father in the Scriptures; it is well within our ability to keep, but it is, of necessity, narrow. The broad, easy-going way of the world outside can produce no well-disciplined characters for God’s use. The gate to life is therefore said to be strait.

We have already noticed the difference between the words “*seek*” and “*strive*” in this saying of Jesus, but the difference is even greater if we go back to the original. One of the short comings of our English translation is that it often employs the same word to translate a number of different words in the original, each with their own distinct meaning and emphasis. It is so in this case. There are nine words in the Hebrew and as many in the Greek which are all translated “*strive*” in the English, but which have quite different meanings. Thus, we can read in Paul’s second letter to Timothy:

“The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient.”

The word there should be “*fight*” i.e. “*The servant of the Lord must not fight but be gentle to all men.*” And we have another example, in Matthew, where we have that quotation from Isaiah applied to Christ:

“Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased; I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.”

There the word is “*dispute*.” Christ did not contend with his fellow men like the politicians of the Earth. He declared the things which the Father had revealed to him, in meekness and soberness. He knew that a word to the wise would be all sufficient, and they would seek and strive in the right sense to keep it.

What then did Christ mean when he said, “*Strive to enter in at the Strait Gate*”? The word in the original is “*agonize*,” the margin renders it “*strive as in agony*”—a much stronger word than our English word strive. Strain every nerve, not against your fellow man, but against the sin that does so easily beset us. Strain every nerve against that willful disregard of those clear councils of God. Councils which, if heeded, are able to make us wise unto salvation. Christ’s meaning is brought out in the context of this passage—verses 24-25:

“Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are ... Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.”

Because they had failed to agonize in paramount determination to overcome the sin that reigned in their members, Christ will repudiate their connection with him—“*I have not known you*”.

Now the purpose of exhortation is to warn ourselves of the dangers in our path and to extract from the Word the inspired advice, which will save us from failure, and the encouragement to take the path, which will lead to eternal life. Do not Christ’s words in this passage mean that many will seek a place in the Kingdom but they will not strive for it? Do not these words remind us of that great difference which we see between the lives of the sons of God revealed in the Scriptures, and the lives of the mere professors of the truth in their respective ages? The true sons of God have recognized the truth of his word—that man, by nature, is of the earth, earthy, and his thoughts cleave to the dust; that by nature he has no pre-eminence over other animals; he is destitute of any inherent holiness, righteousness, immortality, honour or glory. But the grand truth of God’s Word is that glory, honour, incorruptibility and eternal life are the reward of a character formed by diligent application of the divine commandments. They are the reward of a good character—one which shall be pronounced by the divine judge in that day as “*without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing*,” and shall be pronounced “*holy and without blemish*.”

Those who are truly wise, have recognized that God's way is the only way to life and for that reason they have chosen not to strive with their fellow men for present possessions, power or position, but have agonized and endeavored to keep under subjection, the natural mind and to cultivate the mind of the spirit. It was in this spirit that Abraham forsook his place in Ur of the Chaldees to go in the way that God would lead him. It was in this spirit that Isaac gave way before the men of Gerar when they strove with him for his wells. They were his; but he had treasure far greater than them in the promises of God—treasure far transcending anything that man could take from him. In the same spirit Moses forsook the treasures of Egypt, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the children of Israel, because he had respect to the recompense of the reward offered by God.

That brings us to the next point. It did not mean that these servants of God were men of inaction. On the contrary, action is the very essence of the character of God's sons and daughters. Let us recall those words in Hebrews 11:

"Time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae, of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets; who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

None of these actions came easily to the men and women concerned; they had to strive to overcome the reluctance of the flesh. But the record showed that they did overcome.

In the wisdom of God, every generation has had its own peculiar trials and difficulties. They have had to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, working out the matter afresh from the fundamental principles of the truth. Abraham had to learn the great lesson of separation from the world of the ungodly, and by his own obedience, left an example for all succeeding generations. It was not easy; life in Ur was pleasant, and to do as God required necessitated unprecedented faith, but it proved to be the best way. Moses had to learn by bitter experience the absolute submission required by God of those who would be His servants. We are reminded of the words of Scripture: *"If thou shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord, who should stand?"* Moses was a man of meekness, yet in one moment of forgetfulness he called in question the way God had ordered him to go.

The prophets in turn had to strive against their natural reluctance to speak forth the Word of God, knowing from experience that to speak

the truth to a rebellious people would bring persecution and death. But they triumphed over their fears and passed on to all succeeding generations the sure word of prophecy.

The apostles had their own peculiar trials and temptations in meeting the opposition both of the secular and the religious rulers in an age of transition from the Law of Moses to the Commandments of Christ. They had to learn the truth of the Scripture: *“Put not your trust in princes.”* And they said to the leaders of Israel: *“Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.”* They learned to work out God’s purpose in their lives, and transmitted to us these writings of the New Testament, which have been of paramount importance for all succeeding generations.

In the same way, we, in our own day and generation, have our own particular trials. Temptations against which we have to learn to strive lawfully, applying to them the Commandments of Christ. What are our trials? The spirit has listed them for us in advance—the special temptations which have come with the development of the clay principle in human affairs, the comparative ease and freedom and worldly wealth of our days, as a result of which, men have become *“lovers of pleasures,”* proud, boastful, ungodly, *“unto every good work reprobate.”*

If we keep in mind that this last generation is likened to that of Noah, and to be almost entirely destroyed, we shall realize that their way must not be ours. God demands our wholehearted service. Jesus says in Luke 14:26-27:

“If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.”

Then Christ points out to us the obvious corollary of these things—we cannot take both roads. We cannot love this sinful world and our heavenly Father simultaneously. We each have to make our choice, and if we are wise, having made it, we will keep to it:

“For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it. Lest haply, when he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, this man began to build, and was not able to finish.”

Christ himself had no hesitation in making his own choice. In this same Gospel record we have the account of his early years that, *“The*

child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.” The earliest records of his life showed his natural industry and his energy and his zeal. At the age of 12 his parents found him in the temple, *“Sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions.”* Jesus was making sure his knowledge of the straight and narrow path. His simple answer to his parents inquiries showed the same presence of mind; *“Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business.”*

As we read the Gospel records our minds are so often taken up with his words and actions that we do not always notice the effort and energy which his arduous life entailed. An atlas of the journeys of Christ and his apostles show that in days when any form of transport was practically non-existent, Christ journeyed to and fro throughout the length and breadth of the land to ensure that all the *“lost sheep of the house of Israel”* might have the opportunity to hear of the priceless treasures of the Kingdom—the way to life eternal.

And all the while, there was that ceaseless striving within himself to keep every commandment of his Father in full and true measure. It was no easy task. He had not only to overcome the temptations of the flesh; he had also to reject the false teachings of his day. He had to meet and cope with the constant contention and harassment from his enemies. He had to set forth that new and living way, which was to supersede the Law and bring in grace and truth. He had to manifest untiring patience and unflinching wisdom in all the trying circumstances of his active life. He truly set an example of “agonizing” to attain the high calling to which he had been called; and for the joy set before him was able to overcome the natural tendencies which lead to destruction. Recall the record in Hebrews 5:7-9:

“Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto 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 which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation (not for himself only) unto all them that obey him.”

God has declared: *“So shall My word ... not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it”* (Isa. 55:11). As surely as the character of Jesus was perfected by obedience to God’s Word, so in God’s mercy, will that time arrive for us also if we are faithful. We have Christ’s comfort and promise given us in Luke 13:29:

“And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God.”

Jesus knew that after his death, his words and his works would be spread abroad to all nations. Recall his words: *“And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.”*

And is there not encouragement too, in the words again of Luke 13, verse 30: *“And behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.”* Jesus had just spoken of us as Jews of adoption, who would come from the four corners of the earth to join the true and natural Israelites with Abraham and all the faithful of old in the Kingdom of God.

In point of time surely we must be among the last. In our days, it has to be pure faith; for, apart from the signs of the times, there are no mighty miracles to behold and no open manifestation. But we remember Jesus promised a special blessing upon such. To Thomas he said: *“Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”*

If we hold fast, then we shall know by experience the truth of Christ’s promise, and we shall stand to see the fulfillment of those prophetic words of the Psalmist which declare what will happen when the state of Israel becomes the Kingdom of God:

“Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King ... For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation. Let the Saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people. To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters iron: to execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints.”

That will be our reward too, and we believe very soon, but let us always remember that it has been made sure to us by this great sacrifice of our Lord, who first strove and agonized to the utmost to open the way to eternal life, first for himself and then for us. As we now remember the work he accomplished and the life he laid down for his friends, let us crucify the old man of the flesh daily and overcome, that Christ will be able to look upon us and see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.

—Bro. Frank Darter

Signs - Christadelphians and Social Media

In this marvellous era of technology, Believers have been given opportunities that did not exist in previous generations. With the meteoric rise of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and others, we should ask how these modes of computer-mediated social interaction are affecting individuals, groups, and culture at large. One may have hundreds of Facebook “friends,” but what kind of friends are they? And what kind of “community” is Facebook and related social media outlets? What are the beneficial elements of social media and what are its dangers? Consider two hypothetical episodes that highlight the strengths and weakness of this new medium.

A Sister is placed in a situation where very expensive medications are required, but due to financial hardship she is unable to afford them. Once her plight is made know to her social media community (probably a mix of Bereans and others in the world), they reach out and provide the funds necessary to buy the medicine. This would have been difficult if not impossible apart from the connections available through social media. This highlights new forms of social association and action that would have been impossible previously. On another occasion, a Brother or Sister decides to use a Facebook post to express an opinion on a particular subject, and someone else in their particular “network” takes an opposing viewpoint. Both parties then vent pent-up frustrations, indirectly attack the other person’s character and may even issue false accusations. Although both are Believers, they fail to communicate first with the other person about their complaints (see Matt. 18:15-20). Instead, they issue a broadside in a media environment where all of their “friends” can read the post. This takes gossip to a whole new (social media) level. Feelings are hurt, and no one is the better for it.

Internet technologies have swiftly changed cultures around the world through their speed, availability, and new contexts for information exchange, whether through text, audio, still images, or video. The rise of social networking has raised significant questions about the meaning and experience of community in the digital domain. Believers must be especially concerned with how these new and nearly ubiquitous technologies are shaping our behavior as the Ecclesia (called-out ones). If the greatest commandment is to love God with all of our being and to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matt. 22:37-39), then it behooves us to discern the strengths and weaknesses of these

technologies and “hold on to the good” while avoiding “every kind of evil” (1 Thess. 5:21-22). The place to start is at the beginning of humanity. Only this framework is large enough to give us discernment regarding the wise use of this media.

Human beings, as image-bearers of God, are social creatures. We were designed by Yahweh to reflect his Image and Likeness. The first man, Adam, even before the fall, would have been lonely and incomplete without another image-bearer of the Elohim who was fitted to be his partner and “help-meet”. Although put into a garden of goodness with unrestricted fellowship with God (Gen. 1-2), Adam and Eve listened to the lie of the serpent, opting to go their own way by doing the one thing that God had forbidden: eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 3). As Brother Thomas tells us, humans now retain the “Image” of the Elohim, but no longer the “Likeness” in character due to sin in the flesh:

But, though Adam was “made in the image and after the likeness” of the “Holy Ones,” the similitude has been so greatly marred, that his posterity present but a faint representation of either. The almost uncontrolled and continuous operation of “the law of sin and death” (Rom. 7:23), styled by philosophers “the law of nature,” which is an indwelling and inseparable constituent of our present economy, has exceedingly deformed the image, and effaced the likeness of God, which man originally presented. ...Elpis Israel, p.40.

This Likeness will only be restored when our nature is changed at the Judgment Seat. Believers should discern the results of the Fall and whether or not their actions bring glory to Yahweh. This includes social interaction. As Jesus said:

“Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

“Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” (Matt. 5:13-16).

To be salt and light requires an understanding of culture and its effects on us all. We should be like the tribe of Issachar, “who understood the times and knew what Israel should do” (1 Chron. 12:32).

Facebook and related social media tend to foster the *overexposure of the underdeveloped self* by facilitating the mass distribution of text and images related to one’s self. The problem is that one may expose a self that is not mature enough for that exposure. As the Book of Proverbs so often says, “The wise hold their peace, but fools proclaim their folly”. We should also be careful of gossip. Given the nature of Facebook, gossip can spread rapidly and widely. Gossip can be defined as repeating unfavorable things about people for no good reason. Biblically understood, gossip is sinful and requires repentance. Some of the statements may be true, but they are unedifying and without constructive purpose. Paul includes gossip in several of his “sin lists,” putting it alongside adultery, murder, and so on (Rom. 1:29; 2 Cor. 12:20). Moreover, there is a time to retreat from words entirely, as the Preacher of Ecclesiastes warns in paraphrase: “The more the words, the less the meaning, and how does that profit anyone?” (Eccl. 5:1-2). The same is true for images. Many Facebook users recklessly post photographs of themselves in immodest and/or narcissistic poses. Even innocent photographs may be misunderstood given the often-ambiguous nature of the image. Facebook comments and images have come back to haunt their authors, as when potential employers assess the Facebook pages of those they are considering hiring.

Social media provide fast, far-reaching, and free interaction with a huge number of people. Yet we should not become intoxicated with this rapidly expanding and easily addicting social world. All signs point to the return of our Lord as imminent. Our responsibility during our probation is to bring honor to His Name. The next time that you prepare to press the “Send” button on a Facebook post or reply, “check-in” at a place where you would not want to be found when we are called to the Judgment, re-tweet without thoroughly reading the message for appropriateness or content, or add a photo to Instagram that may seem innocent enough, consider the words of Christ in Matthew 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.”

—Bro. Bob Holley

Meditations—Deity’s Ways No. 57

THE origin of the world and its occupants is a problem that has exercised the thoughtful of all ages in all countries. Without divine revelation how far can we get in the solution of it? A glance at the article “Myths of the Origin of Man” in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* will show man’s inability to furnish an answer. In bygone days it seems that man groped and speculated as unenlightened human thinkers do today. Evolution was a favourite theory with some. In Australia it was suggested that man was developed from lizards; in America from beavers and apes; in Greece, from the cow, ox, swan, and, according to some, from trees, rocks, and plants. The special creation idea has at the same time also been held by many in all countries, but where the Bible has not been fully known, and corrupt tradition has led, how absurd are the conceptions even of this. According to a religion in India man was made, after many experiments, by Prajapati. In Greece he was a figure baked in clay by Prometheus. In New Zealand he was formed of red clay by Tiki, and kneaded by his own blood. And so on. But take the Bible account, how clear, simple, and harmonious! Christ confirms that account, therefore let us not be distressed by the oppositions of the so-called learned of our day. Truly *all* the great and learned are not opposed to this account, but we must decide these matters apart from man, and this we can do. God speaks in the Scriptures, and He can be heard, where men do not stop their ears.

Many beautiful figures are employed in the Scriptures to describe the close and affectionate relationship between Christ and his people, but there is none more beautiful than that of marriage. What is marriage? For an answer we must turn, not to the many unhappy alliances which obtain on all hands, but to God’s ideal of marriage. God made “male and female” that they twain should be “one flesh” (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:4–5). Where this oneness — this divinely intended unity—exists, men nourish and cherish their wives, they love them as their own bodies (Eph. 5:28–29). Thus is it, says Paul, with Christ and the church. As we think upon this revealed mystery we feel that we miserably fail in our appreciation of Christ’s love, of his deep-down fondness for us, and of the joy which little acts done in his name, and for his sake, yield to him. But he doubtless bears with us. He knows well the deadening influences of sin which press so heavily upon all of us. Our deficiencies are not to last for ever. Exaltation to spirit nature will right matters. The Kingdom of God will see a perfect (multitudinous) woman as we now behold in Christ a perfect man. Then will come the time for a complete antitype of human marriage,

only in the antitype the excellencies will exceed the type as the light of the sun exceeds that of the moon.

Tribulation is multifarious in its cause and effect. It may come through our own folly, or through someone else's. Let us never rage or fret because of tribulation. It is an essential feature in the divine method of preparing the sinful and mortal sons of Adam for a sinless and immortal existence. It is, as Paul declares, the path to the Kingdom of God (Acts 14:22). David's comment upon the matter is exceedingly valuable and instructive—"Before I was afflicted I went astray" (Ps. 119:67, 71). As children are benefited, yea, in many instances, saved from absolute ruin by parental chastisement, so by God's chastisement are men and women saved who are called to eternal life. People who have it all their own way in regard to this life are failures—they are useless alike to themselves and others. But it requires faith to discern God's hand in our affliction, and this comes wholly and solely through continual acquaintance with the divine writings. If this sounds strange to any it is a sign of unbelief and alienation from God, and the outward sign of this unbelief is perpetual grumbling and resentment at tribulation. Let us take the right view, and we shall be, as Paul was, patient and even cheerful under tribulation. If friends are likely to lead us astray, is it not better that God should remove them? If money is likely to drown us in perdition, is it not desirable for God to give it wings to fly away? "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

Bro. A.T. Jannaway—1900

A Christadelphian on the Land of Israel

Sixth Visit to the Holy Land

GOOD BYE, JERUSALEM!

Again—and for the sixth time—the hour arrived for us to bid good-bye to Jerusalem, and that too, with many regrets. We wonder "How Long?" before the seventh. Possibly, shall we say probably, under the pouring out of the "Seventh Vial", under the sounding of the "Seventh Trumpet", of the time of the "Seventh Seal"? Who can tell? Oh, what heart searchings and fears the question sets in motion.

Those of us leaving today form a very small party—only five all told. Over a hundred left last week to rush through the Land in three days, "doing" Samaria and Galilee, as well as paying visits to Damascus and Baalbec! Forty, or more, were clergymen and ministers visiting Palestine for the first time; and who, more likely than not, will

pose as authorities on the topography of the Holy Land, and be ready to answer any and every question thereupon!

Motoring to the Railway Station we took train for Ludd, the junction at which we had to change from the Jerusalem-Jaffa train into the train going north to Haifa, to which port we were bound in order to embark on the S.S. Sphinx—our “Home from Home”, and in which, saving land calls and excursions, we were to spend the remainder of our time.

The railway journey from Ludd to Haifa proved a delightful one, it was all the more interesting for the fact that it was the first time, we had travelled the route by rail. Of course, had it been our one and only visit to the Land, we should choose the road route, so as to stop when, and where, and for how long we pleased. The rail route covers the entire plain of Sharon; on our left we have the Mediterranean Sea in view the whole way, sometimes quite close, and on our right many evidences of the fulfilment of what we read in Ezekiel xxxviii :11-13, for there is no mistaking which are Jewish Colonies and which are Arab villages, as the train passes from the hills of Judea through Samaria. There are also many sites which call to mind the exploits of the Crusaders. The dinner en route was enjoyed in the dining saloon of the world-renowned “Wagon Lit and Restaurant Company”.

What a debt to gratitude the travelling public owe to this Company, although on such a journey as that from Jaffa to Haifa there is a considerable drawback. It was that which a lecturing brother gave expression to when on visiting London; I took him to a well-known restaurant, and where while dinner was being served, a really good string band was retailing good and suitable music. During an interval between the courses, I remarked, “Isn’t it enjoyable?” To my astonishment my guest was not responsive as I expected him to be; and he slowly and feelingly exclaimed, “I—am—not—quite—so—sure—brother Jannaway”. On enquiring why? and what he meant? he said, “Well the music is really captivating, and so is the dinner, so much so that it seems a positive shame to have the one while the other is on; each deserves all the time to itself”. My guest was right, and I had the same thoughts as dinner was in progress as we wended our way through such historical and captivating places.

Here we are within reach of so many places of interest to the Bible Student, but we are rushing past them all, not only because we have visited them all on previous occasions, but also because time forbids—we have so many places to visit we have never visited before. If our readers would like to know what we think of the Bible towns of Judea and Samaria, and Galilee, as well as Damascus, and Baalbec, and

Beyrouth, then he (or she) cannot do better than send a postal order for 4/6 to the

Maranatha Press, Bramleigh House, Langdon Hills, Essex, for Bible Student in Bible Lands (The price at Booksellers is 7/6). It is full of photographic pictures, taken by the writer. (No, Mr. Cynic; not a penny reaches the writer; he has never written for monetary profit yet, and hopes he never will. The goodness of God has enabled him, in every publication, to write solely as a labour of love. So much, not as a boast, but in the spirit of gratitude.)

HAIFA AND MOUNT CARMEL

In due course we skirted Mount Carmel and arrived at Haifa Station. It is eleven long years since we ascended Mount Carmel although we were in the district two or three years since. Mount Carmel is not as is generally supposed, a single mount like Snowdon, or Tabor, but a range about twelve miles long. Its rich vegetation includes oak trees, as well as pears, almonds, etc., and on account of its favourable climate, heavy dew, etc., Mount Carmel retains its verdure throughout the whole year; something, we think, cannot be said of anywhere else in Palestine. The view from the top of the Carmel spur nearest Haifa is surpassingly beautiful—over 1,800 feet up. We are reminded of the place every time we read Isaiah xxxv, in verse 2 of which we read of the Kingdom of God: “The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon shall see the glory of the Lord, they shall see the excellency of the Lord, and the excellency of our God”. Carmel has been referred to as the Mount of God from very early times, and the Elijah and Baal incident recorded in 1 Kings xviii has made the place especially interesting to Bible Students. The view from the summit includes the Mediterranean coast from Caesarea in the South to Tyre on the North, taking in Acre, and the mountains of Hermon and Lebanon; and at our feet, as it were, is to be seen Haifa, in the midst of groves of olives and palms. The world renowned Monastery is about a third of the way up, and there we were hospitably treated by the monks with refreshment, both for smell and taste, although it was impossible not to notice that the hospitality was with an eye to reciprocate favours!

Ere we arrived in Haifa it was dark, and not without difficulty and unpleasant experiences we wended our way over railway tracks to the landing stage where, with forty or fifty other people we were jammed into a little boat and rowed out to our S.S. Sphinx, lying at anchor a considerable distance out in the bay.

Oh, how delightful it was to find ourselves again landed (or sea-ed) in our delightful cabin, No. 23—or “State Room on Promenade Deck” as it is termed by the owners of the Sphinx. We found everything just

as we had left it a week before. The ship is also invaded by more than a hundred “Pilgrims” who have been touring Nazareth, Tiberias, Damascus and Baalbec. They claim to have “done” all these places in less than four days. Apparently it would be more correct to say the “trip” has “done them”, judging by the looks of them!

As for ourselves we were not long getting into our beds to enjoy a good night’s rest. My beloved, however, was not in for any such good fortune, for she was so bitten by mosquitoes that she had no rest for the next two or three days. No doubt the parasites were brought on board by the people who had been down to Nazareth and Tiberias, for it appears that not only has the latter place been long known as the royal residence of the “King of Fleas”, but the mosquitoes have also invaded the district, at any rate at this time of year (July). The existence of such nuisances suggests a problem: Why does the Giver of every good and perfect gift permit the existence of such things? That question takes my memory back quite a life-time, to the summer of 1883, when my wife and self were spending a week or two at the “hotel” set up by brother Roberts and brother (the ex-Rev.) Ashcroft: the ex-Rev, and brother Chamberlain was also staying there. The subject of vermin and its “wherefore” was discussed.

Brother Chamberlain mentioned a book he had seen entitled (I think) Bushnell’s Explanation of Dark Things. Many years afterwards, I came across the book: it was excellent, its only drawback was its bulk, and its being written above the head of the man in the street. I submitted it to a brother who had a reputation in that line of things, and asked him to condense and simplify the contents, and I would get brother Roberts to use such in the Christadelphian, for I was sure it would prove very helpful to the brotherhood. He took the book away with that understanding: but I have never seen it since. Perhaps, if this paragraph catches his eye, he will return the book—(Thanks! in advance). I will then hand it to do what he promised to do; maybe sis. Jannaway and myself will then discover why these plaguing little mosquitoes exist.

* * *

That problem set me thinking about another problem which I have never been able to entirely or satisfactorily solve: the difficulty of reconciling the prevalence of cruelty with the love of an allwise, all-good and all-powerful Creator and Sustainer. I have propounded the difficulty to our fellow traveller, “the Venerable Archdeacon”, but not with much success. He remained silent for a while, knitted his brow, and then deliberately remarked, “That reminds me, Sir, of a certain American Divine, who in one of the University lectures, said that the

reason why Almighty God permitted poor dogs to be infested with fleas, was to cause them to forget they were dogs!”

That was all I could get from the Archdeacon! As to any of the other “Reverends” we have not succeeded in “drawing out” any of them. Any of our references to the Scriptures have been received either in silence, or met with monosyllables.

These “divines” hail from all parts of the world—from New York, Toronto, Michigan, Indianapolis, Massachusetts, Philadelphia, Scotland, Birmingham, and all parts of London, even so near to Clapham as New Cross. Am convinced some of them know more about us than they care to say. More than once we have had it asked: “Do you know Mr. So-and-So?” referring to a Christadelphian in their neighbourhood. The question is not without a lesson, for it shows we are being watched, and how careful we should be to avoid even the appearance of evil lest an action or word of ours should cause the adversary to speak reproachfully of our profession.

* * *

Have just been treading on somewhat delicate ground with one of the “divines”. We were constrained to express our conviction on the subject of “Christians” engaging in Military Service, and we did so without reservation. Although he listened patiently, if not interestedly, he would not freely express his mind. He did however say that during the Great War, when acting as a Chaplain in the Forces, he was consulted by a Commander with regard to some conscientious objectors who had been sent to the Front, but absolutely refused to fight; and he (the Commander) was perplexed as to what course to adopt with them. There were, he said, three courses open to him: 1. —To bring them to Trial (which would be an advertisement for them). 2. —To have them shot straight away: and 3. —Put them in gaol and “forget” all about them while the war lasted. And, said the Chaplain, we decided No. 3 course was the best, and acted upon it.

We often wonder how the brethren will fare in the next war should the Lord delay his coming. We should not be surprised if the Government decides that every “Christadelphian” shall take his chance with members of other religions; if so, the brotherhood will have the Temperance Hall to thank, seeing that no Petition for Exemption was ever presented by that Ecclesia on account of its “bereft” editors. We still have the official War Office Registers with their nearly 3,500 eligibles, and will do our best for such when the time arrives.

* * *

Our next break in this Mediterranean Cruise was at the Island of Cyprus, of which we shall speak next month, God willing.

—*Bro. F. G. Jannaway—1926*

Name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

AS you say, Jesus commanded baptism into the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Mt. 28:19); and his apostles, in executing the command, baptized into one Name, the Name of the Lord Jesus (Ac. 8:16; Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27).

There is no difficulty about this when we realize that ‘Jesus’ is *‘the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.’* Peter says (Acts 4:12)—

“There is none other NAME given under heaven whereby we must be saved.”

What made the Name of Jesus the Name of salvation? The answer to this reveals the identity between Christ and the triple Name under consideration. We have the answer in the fact that he is the manifestation of the Father in a Son by the Holy Spirit. To be baptized into him is to be baptized into all three.

—Bro. Roberts, 1892

* * *

IT is not wrong to use the Name of *‘the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit’* in the ceremony of baptism, notwithstanding that baptism is baptism into Christ, because Christ is the form of the three, as the Father manifested in the Son by the Holy Spirit. Where this is understood, the Name of Christ might be all-sufficient. But there would be a liability for the understanding to grow dim if the formula prescribed by Christ himself were dropped out of use.

—Bro. Roberts, 1892

Mortal Kings at Christ’s Return

“Ps. 72:10 and Rv. 21:24 read as if mortal kings were in the Kingdom, and contemporary with the reign of the Holy City. Will you kindly explain?”

AT the manifestation of Christ in the earth, there are those among contemporary rulers who submit to him, and there are those who oppose him to their destruction. This follows from the summons to submission being promulgated—

“Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come” (Rev.14).

“Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear: rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the earth when his wrath is kindled but a little” (Psa. 2).

This requirement would not be issued if there were no scope for compliance. That the mass of mankind refuse compliance, we learn. The confederated governments of Europe (the Ten Horns) *'make war with the Lamb'* and are destroyed (Rev.17:14; 19:19).

But Psa.72 shows *'the kings of Tarshish and of the isles, the kings of Sheba and Seba'* (the rulers of the kingdom and empire of Great Britain)* submissive and tributary. This does not ensure the continuance of the royal house, for it is revealed that the Kingdom under the whole heaven is to be given to the saints (Dan. 7:22, 27).

But it will probably lead to a merciful settlement of the affairs of these kings of Tarshish and of the isles, after the analogy of the lenity shown to cities submitting to Joshua outside the limits of the doomed seven nations of Canaan. Rome is doomed, but *'the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift'* (Psa.45:12).

As for the apocalyptic *'Kings of the earth'* who bring their glory and honor into the New Jerusalem, we must recognize them as defined in the apocalyptic title of Jesus as *'Prince of the Kings of the earth'* (Rv. 1:5). Jesus does not sustain this relation to the present order of kings, but to those who say to him in that day—

"Thou hast made us Kings and Priests, and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:10).

When these reign on the earth, they will be *'the Kings of the earth,'* and they will bring their glory and honor unto the Mother City of the Age to Come. That is, unlike the rulers of the present order, whose ambitions lead them to use their positions for personal aggrandizement, they will in every individual of them be characterized by a humble and zealous fidelity to the central government, that will lead them with loving and modest alacrity to lay the glad homage of their exalted positions (at such times as will be appointed) at the feet of the Prince who reigns as the glorious and beloved majesty of the New Jerusalem. This, though spread over the whole earth in its jurisdiction and constituents, will always have the nucleus and concentrated essence of its glory in the Chosen Land and camp of the saints.

It may be, however, that as in the organization of the Priesthood, a mortal grade is utilized, so in the officials of the government, mortal men submissive and acceptable may be used in the lower offices of the service, and be permitted to cooperate with the true Kings of the earth in the exaltation of the King of kings and Lord of lords—who shall reign forever.

—Bro. Roberts, 1891

***Whatever form it may take at the time.**

For *'Kings of the earth,'* see Eur.III:694.

Husbands, Love Your Wives

Reason would help the obligation if loving husbands remembered always that their wives were not as a rule so robustly constituted as themselves; and that love is the wife's special right from the subject position she occupies by the law of God. A sense of duty to God in the matter is the best help and only safeguard in the matrimonial relation.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1890*

Is Clause 35 Wise?

Bro. MacDougall makes the following remarks on the advisability of canceling Sec. 35 of the Constitution, which relates to the case of two ecclesias dealing with a person or persons out of the fellowship of one of them.

The clause proposes that ecclesia B will respect the withdrawal of ecclesia A from an alleged offender until the cause has been investigated. It proposes both A and B take part in the investigation, both having equal voting power, and voting together as one ecclesia, and the decision of the majority shall stand.

“To this (says bro. MacDougall) I think no reasonable person could object, as it leaves clear ground for procedure either in maintaining or disannulling the withdrawal. But the introduction of Clause 35, giving liberty of one ecclesia to disregard this decision, is in our mind most unfortunate. We consider it a provision of an unwarranted character, making of none effect the laws of fellowship.

“Why should one of the ecclesias disannul a withdrawal which had been investigated and made valid by both? The clause says, ‘We shall be content in that case to maintain our own withdrawal.’ Why maintain your withdrawal, and then fellowship those who would not?

“If you would fellowship another ecclesia who fellowships said brother or sister, why not fellowship the brother or sister? It gives us the absurd idea of fellowshipping a brother at another ecclesia which you would not do at home.

“You say there ought to be provision for difference of judgment. But here you would make provision to join hand in hand with the ecclesia who is of the same mind as the withdrawn-from person, and yet do not give the person the benefit of such provision, but ‘maintain your withdrawal.’ Surely this is not as it should be. To say the very least, the clause admits of confusion and looseness.

“The basis of our fellowship is not only principles admitted, but principles acted upon. To you it seems that ‘square enough’ is a good rule. To my mind, it is not a safe rule. It is good for us in our dealings with one another to exercise mutual forbearance where it can be admitted. But it is another thing to frame a rule which deteriorates from the divine standard. In this we may encroach upon the divine prerogative, and say ‘square enough’ to that which would not be sanctioned by the Judge.

“Let us contend for a perfect law, though we should have to confess our weakness in keeping it. It would have been more to my mind if no such article as 35 were in your constitution.”

* * *

There is much force in bro. MacDougall’s contention. We have already admitted a want of perfect squareness in the arrangement objected to; and we feel this strongly enough not to insist upon it. We proposed it in the interests of peace, but we would not object to the joint decision of the two ecclesias being mutually binding in the case supposed.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1887*

Interval between Application and Baptism

THE rule requiring some interval between the application of a candidate for immersion and the administration of the ordinance is not a rule for which chapter and verse can be quoted. It is a rule required by various apostolic exhortations, and by the lesson of experience. We are commanded to—

“Follow after the things that make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another” (Romans 14:19).

And to—*“Do all things decently and in order”* (1 Cor. 14:40).

No greater cause of dispute could be introduced into any ecclesia than a rule leaving it open to any brother or sister to baptize any candidate at any time, and bring the candidate for reception at the hands of the brethren. Strife would necessarily result from such a practice; because there are those who are unqualified to judge of the conditions upon which the validity of baptism depends.

If we appoint a brother or brethren who are qualified to judge of the fitness of candidates, we guard against this cause of dispeace. But even to them, the ecclesia does not surrender individual rights. The way is open for anyone to object, if ground

for objection is known. This is secured by an interval for announcement.

In such matters, we make the best arrangement we can in carrying out general principles laid down. The Lord will doubtless recognize all arrangements sincerely made with this object, as in the case of the 70 elders to assist Moses, recommended by Jethro and divinely ratified.

The great thing is to secure order, peace, and edification—without which the work of the Truth is a nullity, and liable to become an abomination. —*Bro. Roberts, 1898*

God's Love, and the Cruelties of Probation

“I have a difficulty amounting to distress in reconciling the agonies which God has permitted to be inflicted upon His children (by Pagan and Papal Rome, for example, in past centuries) with the declaration that He feels love and pity for them, even *‘like as a father pitieth his children.’* What explanation do you suggest?”

THE force of any explanation must be lost if we confine our thoughts to the present limited lifetime of the saints, which, as Paul says, is—in relation to God's great work with them—*‘but for a moment’* (2 Cor. 4:17). There must be an enlarging of the mind to take in the whole view.

This will show us a brief story, commencing in the cradle, lasting a few fitful years, and ending in the grave. And after the grave, the endless ages. In the endless ages (on which the saints will seem to enter immediately when they die, because there is no conscious interval between death and resurrection), there will be no trouble. There will be the perfection of well-being.

Now, let it be granted that suffering in mortal days is contributive to fitness for the ages to come, and to capacity for the enjoyment of their blessedness, and there can be no difficulty in the tribulation that God permits.

He has permitted evil during the whole history of sin upon the earth. Not only so: He has contrived it. He contrived it in the case of Christ—

“It pleased the Lord to bruise him” (Isa. 53:10).

He contrives it in the case of all His children—

“Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son He receiveth” (Heb.12).

“Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of His correction.”

“If we receive not chastisement whereof all are partakers, then are we not sons.”

It is part of the plan. We see the wisdom of it when we thoroughly know human nature. And we shall see the perfect glory of it when we taste its unutterable sequel (if God permit) with the multitude that have ‘*come out of great tribulation*’ (Rv.7:14). The suffering is but for a short season. When it ends, it ends forever. When joy comes, it comes to stay. And it will be 10-fold the sweeter for the affliction that precedes, and qualifies.

We shall then see God’s love and pity in the very afflictions which the distress of blind mortal nature may now cause us to doubt.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1892*

Stating The Truth

A writer assails the Christadelphians—

“I charge them with not exhibiting the Spirit of Christ. They pronounce the world at the present time to be ‘in a state of complete and universal apostasy.’ With the exception of the few who belong to their own communion, they regard all other professors of religion to be deceived and deceivers. They declare the faith of Christendom to be ‘made up of fables,’ and to be ‘entirely subversive of the Faith once for all delivered to the saints.’ They slander the evangelical churches. According to Christadelphianism, there can be but few who are ultimately saved, for unless we embrace the faith of which they are the defenders, we must suffer the fate of apostates, and become at last annihilated.”

This is intended to be very severe, but is, from a scriptural point of view, truly complimentary. The Scriptures commend a faithful witness to the Truth. If it be true that the world is in a state of apostasy, it must be a meritorious thing to proclaim the fact. If it be true that the reception of the Truth is the first step in the process of salvation, and that the popular religious bodies reject that Truth, it must be true kindness to insist upon these truths.

It cannot be slander to state the truth. It is the truth or untruth of the statements that should be considered, and not the unpleasant bearing of the statements. But, says the writer, “By all the records of Christ’s life, such is not the spirit of the Savior.”

He must have a very superficial knowledge of the records of Christ's life. The most prominent feature in those records is his declaration of disagreeable truth. And he himself said, '*THE world hateth me because I testify of it that the works thereof are evil*' (Jn. 7:7).

The writer says: "Did not Jesus lovingly welcome all who came to him?" The answer is No. It all depended on who came. He rebuffed the Scribes and Pharisees, while he was prepared to receive all who humbled themselves to the reception and obedience of the Truth, If the writer would make himself more familiar with the records of Christ's life, and less with elegant and popular glosses of that life, he would see that there is much more analogy between the attitude of the Christadelphians and the attitude of Christ than he dreams.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1888*

1. He is Coming

"Behold he is coming with the clouds, and every eye shall see him, and whosoever pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall wail before him. Yea, verily; so let it be" —*Apoc. 1: 7.*

In these words is an exclamation which is designed to direct the reader's attention to Jesus and the Saints, as the *ὁ ἐρχόμενος*, *ho Erchomenos*, the One Yahweh who is coming as the anointed with the Seven Spirits—"Behold, he is coming with the clouds."

The Apocalypse begins immediately after the salutation with the announcement of the coming of Deity in Spirit, and concludes with the declaration, that "He who testifies these things (written in the Apocalypse) says, Verily, I come quickly;" and it points us also to *the time when* that coming may be expected, and in what sense "*quickly*" is to be understood in the warning recorded in ch. 16:15, beginning, "Behold, I come *as a thief!* Blessed is he that watcheth," and so forth.

No event is more prominently set forth in the apostolic writings than the coming of the Lord Jesus in power and great glory. The prediction is not peculiar to the Apocalypse, though it is made one of its most glorious themes, or rather the most glorious of all.

Thus, when Jesus was preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, he said, "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father *with his messengers*; and THEN he shall reward every man according to his works"—Matt. 16:27. And again, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy messengers with him, *then* shall he sit upon the throne of his glory"—ch. 25:31. And referring to this time, he also

said, “I, Amen, say to you, that ye (my apostles) who followed me, *in the Regeneration when the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of his glory*, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, ruling the Twelve Tribes of Israel; * * * ye shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit Life Aionian”—ch. 19:28. In these three testimonies, Jesus plainly teaches,

1. That the Son will come in glory and power;
2. That He will come with Holy Ones;
3. That He comes to ascend and sit upon the throne of His glory;
4. That the Regeneration shall be at this epoch;
5. That the time for rewarding men according to their works is in this Regeneration Era; and,
6. That in this Regeneration Era the thrones of the house of Israel will exist again, and be occupied by the Twelve Apostles, then possessed of the life pertaining to the Aion of the Son.

Such are the points inculcated in the teaching of the Seven Spirits, or Logos, with which the Son of David’s daughter was anointed without measure. It is in strict accordance also with the teaching of the same Spirit in the prophets. Thus, Jude testifies that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, Yahweh cometh in his holy myriads (*en muriasin hagian autou*) to execute judgment upon all”—ver. 14. This is precisely what Jesus taught. Yahweh, the Eternal Spirit, in Holy Myriads, *in clouds of Holy Ones*, constituting “One Yahweh and One Name,” cometh to execute judgment upon all; and in so doing, to reward every man according to his works. *Yahweh in his Holy Myriads* is the Son of man—Daniel’s *אֱלֹהֵי מְנַחֵם ish-echad*, MAN OF ONE—ch. 10:5, referred to by Jesus in the remarkable testimonies already adduced.

Moses, also, referring to the apocalypse of Yahweh,, says, in Deut. 33:26: “There is none like the AIL of Yeshurun, riding heavens in thy help, and in his Majesty of Clouds. Mighty Ones of the East is the refuge, even beneath the Powers of Olahm: and he shall drive out the enemy from before thy faces, and shall say, Destroy. Israel then shall dwell safely: the fountain of Jacob (shall be) alone upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall distil dew. Thy blessings, O Israel (are these:) who is like thee, O people saved by Yahweh, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy splendor? And thine enemies shall waste away because of thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.”

This testimony of Moses is symbolized in the Apocalypse. Hence the apocalyptic coming of Eternal Power manifested in Spirit-flesh, is the AIL of *Yeshurun* riding heavens in his clouds of majesty to help Daniel's people scattered among all nations. His clouds are the Mighty Ones of the East, the Powers of the Millennium, or Age to Come, styled in Rev. 16:12, "the Kings from a Sun's risings." These are Israel's refuge, who shall expel the enemy from the covenant land, and cause them to dwell in it safely. They are the shield and sword of Israel, who shall make them a glorious nation, and subject all the nations to the majesty of Jacob.

I do not propose to adduce all that might be quoted from the prophets concerning the coming of Messiah in his glory and power, but simply a specimen, to show upon what the sayings of the Apocalypse are founded. I shall therefore only add one or two more.

Thus, in Isaiah 28:16, it is written, "Behold, saith *Adonai Yahweh*, I lay in Zion for a foundation a Stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation." Now this stone has been tried, but it has not yet been laid in Zion; for when laid, it is a foundation that will not be removed. Jesus is the stone; but hitherto he has proved only "a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offence" to Israel, as the same prophet predicted in ch. 8:14. It is necessary, therefore, that he return to Jerusalem, as he himself predicted in Matt. 23:39, that his power may be established there, and not be plucked up; and that it may be proclaimed to the cities of Judah, saying, "Behold your Elohim." Hence, because of this necessity, the same prophet has said, in ch. 40:10, "Behold, *Adonai YAHWEH* will come in might, and his power (shall be) a ruler for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him;" or, as Jesus taught, "when he comes, *then* he shall reward every man according to his work." His work has to be performed after he comes. Hitherto, he has only been making preparation; when this is complete, then "Behold, he comes with the clouds!" And having accomplished the work he comes to do, then, as Jesus taught, "the Son of man will sit upon the throne of his glory;" or, as Isaiah expresses it in ch. 24:23, "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when YAHWEH of armies shall reign on Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem; and in the presence of his Ancients (there shall be) glory." "And in this mountain, YAHWEH of armies shall make unto all the peoples a feast of fat things. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all the peoples, and the veil that is spread over all the nations. And he will swallow up death in victory; and

Adonai YAHWEH will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth”—25:6–8.

Such is the work to be accomplished when he comes with the clouds; a work which will constitute Zion a saved city, and the worker her salvation; hence the prophet speaks on this wise: “Say ye to the Daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him”—ch. 62:11.

But, not only did Enoch, Moses, Isaiah, and indeed all the prophets, predict the coming of Messiah in power and great glory, according to the teaching also of Jesus himself before his ascension; but the apostles also, after that remarkable event, dwelt often and fondly upon it, as the great theme of hope and expectation. Thus, after they had been assured by angelic personages that “the same Jesus who had been taken up from them into the heaven should so come in like manner as they had seen him go into the heaven” (Acts 1:11), they went forth and proclaimed it in all the habitable. On the day of Pentecost, Peter declared that he who had ascended, even Jesus whom they had crucified, had been raised from the dead, for the future purpose of sitting upon the throne of David his ancestor, which every Jew present knew could only be fulfilled by Jesus coming back to Jerusalem in power; for to no other locality did the throne, or seat, of David’s kingdom belong—Acts 2:30. And not long after this, he told the Israelites in the temple, that the absence of Jesus from Palestine was only temporary. “The Lord,” said he, “shall send the Anointed Jesus (who was before preached) unto you, whom heaven indeed must retain *until* times of restoration of all things, of which the Deity hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, *ap’ aionos*, from the Aion’s beginning.” In other words, when “the times and seasons” apocalypted shall arrive, the era of Israel’s national regeneration will have come. It will then be time to restore the kingdom again to Israel, which implies the ingathering of all the tribes of that race, from the outlying countries of the earth; the conquest of the Holy Land from “the powers that be,” and the moral purification of the nation, upon the principle of faith in Jesus as Son of Deity, and King of the Jews, and obedience to whatever form of truth he may be pleased to prescribe.

Afterwards Paul announced to the learned and polite Athenians, that the Deity purposed to rule the inhabited earth by the Anointed Jesus, whom he had raised from the dead for this intent; and in all the cities he visited, he proclaimed Jesus as the future king of all nations, by which he turned the habitable upside down—Acts 17:7, 31. This was in effect

preaching the coming of the Lord in power; for unless he returned, and that with power, he could not do the things declared.

This being the tenor of Paul's teaching, when he wrote letters to the ecclesias he had gathered, he addressed them as "waiting for the Apocalypse (or revelation) of our Lord Jesus Anointed;" and concerning certain things affecting himself, he exhorted them to "judge nothing before the time, *until the Lord come* * * * when every man shall have recompence from the Deity"—1 Cor. 1:7; 4:5: and in ch. 15:22, 23, he told them, that "they which are Christ's, shall be made alive *at his coming*."

In writing to the saints of Philippi, he is very explicit. "Our *politeuma*, or commonwealth," says he, "subsists in heavens; out of which we look for the deliverer, the Lord Jesus Anointed, who shall transform the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of this glory"—ch. 3:20: and to the Colossian believers, he says, "Your life is hid with the Anointed One in the Deity. When the Anointed, our life, shall appear, then shall ye also be manifested with him in glory"—ch. 3:3, 4. The citizenship of the saints "subsists in heavens"—in the holy, and most holy states. They put on Christ in the obedience of faith, and are then "in him;" and through him have access to the Divine Father. In putting him on, their names are engraven on his breastplate, and their citizenship begins. Their names are with him within the veil, while they are in the heavenly state, the ecclesia, upon the earth, where, as members of his body, having their hearts sprinkled with the blood of sprinkling from an evil conscience, and the body washed with pure water (Heb. 10:22), they are waiting for his Apocalypse; and "by them who are looking for him," says Paul, "He shall be seen of a second time without sin for salvation"—Heb. 9:28.

Of this manifestation upon earth "a second time," he writes copiously in his letters to the saints in Thessalonica. He mentions it five times in his first epistle; and three times in his second. "You turned from the idols to the Deity, to serve the living and true Deity, and to wait for his Son from the heavens, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath which is coming." And in relation to them, he says, "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye before our Lord Jesus Anointed in his presence?" "The Lord stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before the Deity and our Father, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Anointed, with all his holy ones."

And when some of them were sorrowing for the loss of brethren who had died, he exhorted them not to grieve as the heathen who have no hope. “For,” says he, “if we (the saints) believe that Jesus died and rose again, so also them who have been sleeping, the Deity through that Jesus, will lead out with him. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we, the living, who are surviving unto the presence of the Lord, shall not precede them who have been sleeping. For the Lord himself in command, with a voice of an archangel, and with a trumpet of Deity, shall descend from heaven, and the dead in the Anointed shall arise first; afterwards, we, the living, who are surviving, together with them, shall be hurried off in clouds unto a meeting of the Lord in air; and thus we shall be at all times with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words”—1 Thess. 1:9, 10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:14–17.

Such is the manifestation of the Lord to his saints. But while he appears thus to their joy and glorification, he is apocalysped as a consuming flame upon the enemy. “For you who are being afflicted,” says he, (there shall be) “rest with us in the apocalypse of the Lord Jesus from heaven with angels of his power, in a fire of flame, inflicting vengeance upon them who know not Deity, and who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Anointed; who shall pay justice, *Aion*-destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his might when he shall come to be glorified with his holy ones, and to be admired with all who believe in that day.” Those who know not Deity, and obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus Anointed, are of the Apostasy; whose Prince is the Lawless One, called by Paul “the Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition,” “whom,” says he, “the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and annihilate in the manifestation of his presence”—2 Epist. 1:7–10; 2:8.

Lastly, upon this point, we remark, that Paul instructed his contemporaries who looked for the presence of the Lord Jesus Anointed, and their gathering together around him, that the day of that apocalypse should be preceded by an apostasy from the truth, which should attain great and powerful development. This Apostasy exists in what is called “*Christendom*,” in all its “*Names and Denominations*;” and is largely treated of in the Apocalypse. It will shortly attain that maturity which precedes annihilation. The coming is for this purpose, that when abolished, “the knowledge of the glory of *YAHWEH* may cover the earth as the waters cover the sea”—Numb. 14:21; Isaiah 11:9; Hab. 2:14; Rev. 18:1. The Day of Christ is now at hand, the signs of his coming are abroad in the earth; and blessed will they be who are watching and prepared.

—*Bro. John Thomas Eureka Vol. 1 Pg. 134 Logos Edition*

Hints For Bible Markers

The Psalms

Psalm 2

Psalm 2:11

Continued from last month.

“The Kings and princes of this earth” do not have understanding and will not believe. Especially those immersed in the dogma of the world’s religions. The gospel of the kingdom will be announced to the world. The rich and powerful will reject this proclamation. But the poor and needy, who seek the world to come, who have been keeping the Commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ will be blessed. The world will be told to serve Yahweh while the righteous will rejoice with trembling.

“Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”

(Revelation 14:7)

Psalm 2:12

“Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.”

Kiss the Son simply means to submit to him. That this verse has a present and future application is easily apparent. It is easily understood that we must submit to the Commandments of Christ now lest he be angry when we stand before him at the judgment seat and we perish.

When Jesus is enthroned in Jerusalem the nations, including Kings and religious leaders, will be called upon to submit to him. This summons will be heartily declined and preparations for war will be increased. The law shall go forth from Mount Zion. All those who do not submit to the Son, shall *“perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.”*

“And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”

(Revelation 14:8)

Bro. Beryl V. Snyder

Continued next month should the Lord will.