

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

Southeastern Berean Christadelphians, Ecclesia

On behalf of the Southeastern Berean Christadelphians, I am happy to announce the baptism of **Jordan Rinard**, the son of Bro. Bill and Sis. Jennifer Rinard, on July 2, 2014 after having given a good confession of his faith the previous night. Our prayer is that Yahweh will bless his walk and that his probation will be short as we anticipate our Master's soon return in light of current events. Our new brother can be reached at:
email: jordanbrinard@gmail.com

Phone: 561-214-5707

address: 2950 Crump Rd

Winter Haven, FL 33881

Southeastern Berean Christadelphians

Brother Dale Lee

GOLDTHWAITE, Texas

Dear brethren and sisters,

The Goldthwaite Berean ecclesia is happy to announce that subsequent to a good confession of faith and establishing that we were of the same mind, we witnessed the baptism of **Andrew Naglieri** and welcomed him into the Berean fellowship this past weekend.

An interview was held on the morning of Saturday, June 28 and Bro. Andrew was baptized that afternoon in the presence of brethren and sisters. He was extended the right hand of fellowship Sunday morning, June 29 and welcomed by all.

We wish Bro. Andrew strength as he begins his journey Zionward and are encouraged by his act of obedience to the divine command.

Those wishing to contact Bro. Andrew may do so by the following:

Andrew Naglieri

2575 Highway 3381

Comanche, TX 76442

Phone: (325) 203-3888

Email: anaglieri11@gmail.com

Love in the hope we share,

Bro. Len Naglieri

BOSTON, Mass.

Dear brethren and sisters,

Greetings in the One Hope,

We in the Boston area have just completed a very uplifting and profitable weekend. Our annual Sunday school picnic was scheduled to be held at the home of brother and sister King and sister Kelly in Carver Massachusetts on Saturday. However, Friday night I received a request

from **Katie Sommerville** to be baptized. We held the examination interview Saturday morning and then proceeded with our picnic cookout at noon time. In place of having our Sunday school address we had the privilege of witnessing the baptism of Sister Katie followed by the comments of welcome and encouragement by all of the brethren present. The afternoon continued with organized games for the Sunday school scholars as well as swimming and a volleyball game. The day concluded with the final supper before departing.

On Sunday morning sister Katie was welcomed into our fellowship at the breaking of bread Memorial service after which everyone in the ecclesia was invited to the home of brother and sister Joshua and Maria Garvey. We enjoyed another meal together and got to see their house which they purchased last month. The meal was followed by a wedding shower for brother Andrew and sister Alicia Garvey. We pray that their marriage will be a true reflection of Christ and his bride. The remainder of the day was enjoyed together with more fellowship, visiting and games for the young folks.

It is encouraging and uplifting to us all when we witness another dedicating their life to Christ through immersion. We welcome our new sister and wish her God speed in her new life in the truth.

On behalf of the Boston ecclesia your brother in Christ,
Brother James Sommerville

GOLDTHWAITE, Texas

I have the pleasure to announce that we have another sister in Christ. **Alexis Marie House** was baptized into the one and only hope this Saturday, July 12, after a good confession of her faith. The baptism took place a little after noon at the home of Brother Justin and Sister Amanda Patterson after she passed her examination on Friday night. Brother Lenny gave a short address after her immersion. Tomorrow we plan Lord willing to extend the right hand of fellowship to her at the Goldthwaite memorial meeting. It was very uplifting and joyful to see Alexis make the decision to dedicate her life to the service of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In the bonds of the Truth,
Brother Curtis Hurst

It is with great joy that the Goldthwaite ecclesia announces the baptism of another of Adam's race into the saving name of Jesus Christ. On Sunday afternoon, July 27, **James Clubb** was baptised in the Pedernales River in front of the Hye campgrounds. Bro. James is the son of Bro. Jason and Sis. Sandra Clubb. It was a fitting end to an inspiring week at the Hye fraternal gathering.

His contact information is:
phone: 325-451-0800
email jamesclubb8@gmail.com
address:

James Clubb c/o Glenn Rhoades
PO Box 986
Goldthwaite, TX 76844
With much love in the hope of Israel,
Bro. Curtis Hurst

LLAN Y BRI ECCLESIA, Southwest Wales

From Brother Stephen Ford.

It was on the 14th May this year that my wife Sister Vivien Ford sent out the attached EW. Since that time she has sadly fallen asleep in Christ, all mortal opportunity ended for her and now she awaits the return of the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven. Maybe her EW will be a timely reminder to all of the fragility of our mortal existence and spur us on towards being ready and prepared; so here it is again:—

Hello Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus and to those who are wondering about getting baptised.

If you are at all undecided about the baptism commitment, what else can you do but to do what Christ asked and gave as an example because I know only too well my time on this earth if the Lord remains away is very limited because of illness, but who knows if anything could happen to you like a motor accident and it's too late? Life isn't meant to be full of fun. Yes we have pleasure with others of likeminded faith but we wait for the kingdom in all its beauty when the Lord will come to call us away which is to be very soon, it could be in a few minutes of time.

Dr. Thomas defined a Bible Christian. "He is one who understandingly believes the things concerning the kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ with the humble, affectionate and obedient disposition of a little child; is immersed into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and henceforth walks in denial of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, in hope of the gift to be brought to him at the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ in His Kingdom."

Your Loving Sister Vivien Ford from Llan Y Bri Ecclesia, Southwest Wales, UK

What a timely EW to be followed by the above listed baptisms in the following months.

GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

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.

The Way of Peace They Know Not

“In the day when I cried, Thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul”—Psa. 138:3

THERE are many sordid and unlovely chapters of Israel's history recorded for our guidance, and as illustrations of the depths of which unlicensed human nature is capable, but there are few more miserable and uselessly evil than the career of Jehoram recorded in 2 Ch. 21.

His first act was the murder of his own brothers in order to remove any possible rivals for his throne. He then set himself purposely to work evil, after the example of Ahab whose daughter he had married.

Soon Edom revolted against him and broke away, and then Libnah. He compelled Judah to practice the abominations of idolatry, and brought thereby a great plague upon the people. The Philistines and Arabians broke in upon him and took away his wives and his sons and all his treasures.

Before he was 40, God smote him with a loathsome and incurable disease which 2 years later brought him to a miserable death. The customary memorial rites of respect were pointedly omitted in his burial, and the final words recorded of him are that he *“departed without being desired.”*

An eloquent commentary upon the hopelessness and purposelessness of fighting against God and of laying out a course in opposition to Him.

Such a career can lead to nothing but final unhappiness and frustration. This is so well illustrated by this short life-sketch of Jehoram. A picture without a single bright or wholesome ray. A dismal, meaningless life, and nothing to mark his departure but relief.

Much of his wickedness is attributed to the influence of his wife. This woman, Athaliah, was the daughter of Jezebel, who exercised such malignant control over the weak Ahab—Jezebel, the symbol of wickedness and ungodliness. V. 6—

“And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab; for he had Ahab's daughter to wife.”

The influence of a woman over a man may be tremendous, either for

good or evil. It is a power that is unique. Applied in the right direction it can work wonders of transformation, and the quiet, patient operation of this power for good may be many a woman's crown of salvation. But it is a 2-edged sword, and Athaliah portrays the other edge. How important, then, is marriage *"in the Lord!"*

They were a well-matched pair--miserable, vicious and inhuman. Athaliah comes into unsavory prominence after her husband Jehoram's death--

"42 years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Athaliah the daughter of Omri. He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly" (2 Ch. 22:2-3).

The miserable and untimely end of Jehoram had no sobering effect upon Athaliah. She had gone too far.

Again she appears in the story when Ahaziah is slain by Jehu whom God raised up to execute judgment upon the wicked rulers of both Israel and Judah. Ahab, her father, has already been slain in battle at Ramoth-Gilead, but the avenging hand of Jehu falls upon her son Ahaziah, her brother Jehoram the king of Israel, and her mother Jezebel. Then (22:10)--

"When Athaliah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal of the house of Judah."

These would be her own children and grandchildren. There are no limits to a course of evil, once the restraints of justice and wisdom have been cast away.

For 6 years she ruled alone over the house of Judah, the sole survivor, with one exception, of her house and family. Then she comes before us for the last time.

One infant son of Ahaziah had been hidden from her murderous designs by Jehoiada the high priest. Feeling that the time is ripe to end Athaliah's wicked usurpation of David's throne, Jehoiada brings the child Joash out of concealment and crowns him king.

Athaliah, taken by surprise, rends her clothes and cries, *"Treason!"* But the uprising had been well-planned, and she finds herself betrayed. "Then":

"Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains of hundreds that were set over the host, and said, Have her forth of the ranges: and whoso followeth her, let him be slain. So they laid hands on her, and when she was come to the entering of the horse gate by the king's house, they slew her there" (2Ch. 23:14-15).

Jehoram and Athaliah—unhappy, lamentable failures, had tragic ends. What would lead them to such a course of life, bringing neither happiness nor peace to themselves or others?

Isaiah says (59:7-8)--

“Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: Their thoughts are iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace they know not.”

The answer lies in the last phrase, *“The way of peace they know not.”* Apart from the knowledge and application of the way of peace, such is all human kind. These extreme examples of viciousness and depravity confront us vividly with the statement of the Spirit through Jeremiah (17:9)—

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”

This pronouncement may seem rather harsh as we casually view the life of an orderly, *“civilized”* community. But in such a community there are many restraints that preserve a misleading surface appearance of tranquility.

Remove the artificial restraints of law, custom and the fear of consequences, and irritate the passions a little, and the animal that is in all human beings is immediately apparent, and once it has tasted blood it will go on to incredible excesses of violence and viciousness.

Human nature is basically selfish and vile: until this is realized and confessed, it cannot be combatted or controlled. As long as it is glorified, defended or excused, or its evil effects minimized, there's little hope.

Paul fully realized the vital importance of an unreserved acceptance of this basic truth, and the first 3 chapters of his principal epistle, Romans, are devoted to relentlessly driving this point home, both to Jew and Gentile. His analysis of the flesh is piercing and unvarnished (Rom. 7:18)--

“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing.”

This is the Deceiver of whom he constantly warns us to beware. Of himself he said (1 Cor. 9:27)—

“I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest I should be a castaway.”

If he hadn't kept it under, he would have been a castaway. The promise is always *“To him that overcometh,”* and him only.

Paul did not plead weakness as an excuse for failure. He knew he was weak, and could of himself do nothing, but he knew too that adequate strength had been promised if his faith would reach out and take hold of it (Phil. 4:13)—

“I can do ALL things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

That was his secret, and that has always been the secret. The faithful men whom Paul lists in his epistle to the Hebrews were not supermen, but they knew the secret of **POWER THROUGH FAITH**. And so—

“Out of weakness they were made strong” (Heb. 11:34).

Isaiah records (40:29)—

“He giveth power to the faint; to them that have no might he increaseth strength.”

David says (Ps. 105:4)—

“Seek the Lord, and HIS strength.”

“Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee” (Psa. 84:5).

“The God of Israel is He that giveth strength unto His people” (Psa. 68:35).

“In the day when I cried Thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul” (Psa. 138:3).

This task of subduing the flesh by the power of God is the principal task of life.

Preaching to others must rest upon the foundation of evidence within ourselves. Our primary witness for God is action, not proclamation. It is notable that Jesus chose a light rather than a trumpet as the symbol of our witnessing to the world --

“Ye are the light of the world” (Matt. 5:14).

“Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father in heaven” (v. 16).

He is concerned, we notice, that men should see our good works, rather than that they should hear our good works. The latter is necessary, but its whole power for good depends upon the former.

These characters, Jehoram and Athaliah, are not recorded because they are exceptional, but because they are typical. They are ordinary human nature operating without restraint and in positions of power. They illustrate the results of the reactions of the flesh if allowed to dominate the life.

Little sins logically demand bigger ones. If the course of life is in the direction of the flesh, then the degree of evil is but a matter of opportunity and circumstance. If we deceive, we might just as well murder, and we would if we were not afraid of the consequences.

Unkindness, selfishness, inconsiderateness, ill-temper, irritableness are merely undeveloped buds on the selfsame tree that brings forth murders and adulteries and all manner of violence. The one points logically to the other, and only fear draws the line. Paul says:

“Look diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person as Esau who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

“For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears” (Heb. 12:15-17).

That is the point. If any “root of bitterness” be permitted to spring up and grow unchecked, we may, like Esau, come to a time when it is found to be too late to change, though we seek it carefully with tears.

We have several examples of God stepping in at a certain point and hardening a man's heart in a course of evil so that he can no longer return, and chastening him with a whip fabricated out of his own sins. Very often it is those forbidden morsels of meat which men toy with which are found, strangely but quite logically, to be made the very means of punishment.

Israel tempted God and murmured for meat, and they were surfeited with meat until it nauseated them and created a plague that slew them. And the name of the place was called, The Graves of Lust.

In all this, 2 lessons are clear. The 1st, that we are free agents, and masters of our own destiny—up to a point. And it is God Who determines that point. He sets the time when it is decreed: Too Late.

And the 2nd lesson: Sin is not a matter of degree but of principle. That is why God demands all or nothing. Not of course that He requires perfection, but He requires an uncompromising hostility and distrust of the flesh throughout.

If the principle is sacrificed in even the smallest matters, the whole position is given away. As James reminds us, He that gave the commandment against murder gave also the commandment against respect of persons. To condone any offense is to condone all.

Absolute perfection can never be humanly attained but must always be aimed at. To make the standard any less is to destroy the standard altogether. To plead weakness is to give the lie to God, Who said, through Christ—

“My Strength Is Sufficient For Thee.”

—Bro. G.V.Growcott

Comforts of the Truth

Several years ago I spoke on what makes up the perfect ecclesia. The basic conclusion was that there is no perfect ecclesia this side of the kingdom age.

These are our Comforts of the Truth. The thought of comfort was derived from the Study Class this week from the prophecy of Nahum meaning a comforter.

But reading the prophecies of Nahum, one is left with wonderment as to where his comfort was from. On the surface reading through the prophecy, we find these few words of comfort.

Nahum 1:7 *“The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.”*

Nahum 1:15 *“Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off.”*

We daily seek the comfort from Yahweh's Word. We value the Psalms more and more as we grow older. We see their reason and purpose. We recognize our need for what they supply.

Bro. Growcott said that "The Psalms are deep spiritual food—divine nourishment—bread from heaven. If we do not regularly feed upon these things, then we are sick, weak, undernourished, carnal and fleshly.

Failure to fully draw on this transforming nutrition is the cause of most of the fleshly weakness, and poor spiritual memory, and lack of faith and spiritual cheerfulness that we bemoan and profess to deplore."

The comforting words of Psalm 105 are a constant reminder of our blessings and the praise we give to our provider. There are 9 items in this Psalm that we should think about as we go through each day. They are:

1. Give thanks to God.
2. Call upon His Name.
3. Make known His deeds.
4. Sing unto Him.
5. Talk about His Works.
6. Glory in His Name.
7. Rejoice.
8. Seek the Lord, and--
9. REMEMBER!

These 9 items we usually fulfill each Sunday when we meet together. But it is the other 6 days we need to concentrate on them that would change our lives. Bro. Growcott wrote a wonderful exhortation on Psalm 105 which Ruthie and I often read together when we need a spiritual pick-me-up from Be Ye Transformed.

About 17 years ago, Ruthie and I embarked on a journey to Australia and New Zealand, one that we probably wouldn't be able to make anymore, but one that we had always looked forward to seeing our Brothers and Sisters, who had been visiting us over many of the years.

We were struck by many interesting facets on our journey half way around the world. Some of the lessons that we learned from this journey were very interesting, in how on one day of the week, on a Sunday, there are 24 hours of Christadelphian praise to our Heavenly Father.

We often don't think of it that way, we think of our other brothers and sisters having breaking of bread at or around the same time as we are, but when we follow what is happening on any given Sunday, our Christadelphian worship begins with New Zealand.

This actually begins on the Saturday afternoon for those in North America. Then over a thousand miles to the West comes those in Brisbane and Sydney and Papua New Guinea.

Followed next on the east coast of Kenya with our brothers and sisters in the Mombasa area. Then those on the western side of Kenya, followed

next by brethren and sisters in Nigeria, England and Wales, and then in the eastern U.S., in the mid U.S. and the central U.S. and Canada. We come across then into western Canada and Oregon/Washington State, finishing out just about 24 hours of praise to our Heavenly Father. These are comforts in the Truth that make it one day in the week, the first day of the week in which universal praise is continually ascending to our Heavenly Father; Hopefully in the way in which we would want it to be for our salvation.

We think of our various brothers and sisters throughout the World and we realize that we are all bound to each other by the Truth. The Truth is what binds us together. The Truth has been around for over the last 165 years and has been a binding force all through these years; there have been brethren and sisters in almost all these areas of the world. In the earliest days of the Truth it was carried to India, South Africa, Kenya and Australia, New Zealand by those moving from Britain and North America.

It used to be said that the sun never sets on the British Empire, because there was always daylight in one of their countries.

On the return from Australia, we see the aspect that we gained another day when we crossed the midline in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. It was very interesting, something that puzzled Brother Roberts at first when he went on that journey and found he had lost a Sunday.

When he thought they were going to have Memorial Meeting in their cabins together, they were already into Monday. In our case, we came back on New Year's Eve and the announcement on the airline was telling us the New Year had just begun and we were somewhere off the coast of Australia, and then when we went to Los Angeles and to Chicago we experienced another New Year's Day as celebrations just broke out.

Let us put some perspective on it. What's in the eyes of God beholding His creation? This brought my mind back to the hymn 173 that we just sung, where it talks about in the days of the tribulation, they fled to Pella. The area of Pella was a remote area in what is known as Jordan. It was an area where many of the believers in Jerusalem at the time of the Roman invasion were able to flee to. That is the time that the Apostle to the Jews, the Apostle Peter, wrote his epistle of comfort to those in these last days of Judah's commonwealth.

Isaiah brings words of comfort for those that were to be taken captive. *"COMFORT ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God."*

This beautiful message prefaces the prophecy of a voice which would cry, *"Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."*

When the Jews demanded of John the Baptist, "Who art thou?" he quoted this passage from Isaiah and showed that he was "the voice" crying in the wilderness preparing the way of the Lord.

God working with John in signs and miracles, proved the truth of this claim and “sent forth His Son” after baptism to be “*the Way, the Truth and the Life,*” the Shepherd of Israel.

The voice of the Father, speaking in Christ, was a voice of comfort: “*Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.*”

God is not the terrible being pictured in the dark traditions of apostate Christianity, whose wrath needed the sacrifice of Christ to avert everlasting torment from sin-stricken humanity.

Far from this, the whole work in Christ was a work of divine love and pity. “*In his love and in his pity he redeemed them*”. “*God was in Christ by his indwelling spirit reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation*”.

The comfort is not for those who perversely refuse the invitation to “come,” “to repent,” and to “work out their salvation.” For of such there is no rest, “the way of peace they have not known” through their own refusal or neglect.

Of the “foundation laid” there is a beautiful analogy in Noah and his work. Noah means rest or comfort. Commanded of God, he built an ark for the saving of his house, of which Peter says, “*the like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us . . . by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*”

Peter did not teach that a man was saved if he merely believed the Gospel and was baptised. He makes plain in the first chapter of this epistle that there must be an adding to this. We must add the fruits of obedience which culminates in godliness and brotherly love.

He says, “*if these things be in you and abound so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is BLIND and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.*”

If he cannot “see afar off”, he is not likely to see the day, or think about it, when he will stand fruitless before the judgment seat. If the lessons of baptism for the remission of sins is forgotten, he is likely to “continue in sin”, and in his blindness reap corruption.

But God requires us to remember. “*Ye are saved if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you,*” says Paul, “*unless ye have believed in vain.*”

What was preached? First of all “*how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.*”

As the result of this we have a refuge when we are “in Christ” by baptism. If we “abide in him” we shall be “passed over” by the destroying angel as was Israel beneath the blood-sprinkled door posts and lintels in

Egypt: *“Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us” and raised again to be the “Resurrection and the Life.”*

To assist our recollection of this, the breaking of bread was appointed by the Lord before he suffered. It is commanded, it is not left to our inclination, and well for us that it is not so left.

We need the weekly exercise and reminder and comfort which comes of “assembling together” on the first day of the week as the apostles did and the ecclesias under their guidance who “continued steadfastly in the breaking of bread”. Wilfully to “forsake this assembly” is a terrible slight upon the Son of God, and will bring terrible consequences if persisted in.

There is, however, a possibility of coming together not for the better but “for the worse” as related in 1 Cor. 11, where certain were rebuked for not “discerning the Lord’s body” and for turning the memorial feast into an ordinary meal. They did not think of “the righteousness that God declared” and the “condemnation of sin” which was effected once for all in the breaking of the body of the Son of God whose character was *“holy, harmless and undefiled.”*

“This is my body broken for you, do this in remembrance of ME,” said Jesus as he blessed the bread and brake it and gave it to his disciples.

Rightly discerned there is a “communion” with him and the members of his body in the act, and blessing and comfort.

“The bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread. The cup of blessing which we bless is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?”

Remembrance of these underlying principles of the sacrifice and of the love which he laid down his life for us, both comforts us and warns, and has a love-begetting influence as Paul said, *“the love of Christ constrains or causes me to obey.”*

“The cup of blessing” is a phrase full of sweet significance. *“This cup is the new covenant in my blood,”* said Jesus, *“shed for many for the remission of sins.”*

We contrast it with the Sinaitic covenant and the blood of animals. Baptism by a figure buries us with Christ and the sprinkled blood purges away our old pre-baptismal sins.

Some perceiving this fail to receive the comfort of the Scripture which shows the after-baptismal bearing of the sacrifice, as when a distressed brother, realizing, like Paul, “the law of sin still working in his members,” said “I wish I could be baptized again that all my sins might be washed away.”

This would be of no avail. But yet the promise is available. *“If we walk in the light, as he is in the light and strive to obey the word, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin”.*

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”.

The unseen intercession of Christ is as real as the visible water of baptism and the benefit must be discerned “by faith” in both cases.

Where there is effort towards righteousness, Christ will intercede. Let not “hands hang down and knees be feeble”—persevere, press forward and hope on.

The Great Shepherd watches and sympathises and waits at the end of the journey with “the cup of blessing” even “the cup of salvation”

As this prophetic Psalm testifies, He will “come forth and serve” the victors in “the good fight of faith,” those who have been “redeemed with his precious blood”.

“I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine till I drink it new with you in the Kingdom of God.” This he promised on that sad night in which he was betrayed.

And now we see the day approaching. Let us therefore keep the feast in sincerity and in truth until he come, that then we may be privileged to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of God and celebrate Yahweh’s love through “the ages to come,” when we shall be “shown the exceeding riches of God’s grace in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus”.

While we still wait for him and prepare, let us make full use of the comfort and guidance of the Word. *“I will not leave you comfortless,” “I will send you the Comforter,” “the Spirit of Truth, he will guide you into all truth”.*

According to the Lord’s promise, the Spirit-comforter came upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost. It showed the apostles the Truth and its fullness which they had but imperfectly understood concerning the sacrifice and resurrection of the Lord.

Under the spirit guidance they wrote the things communicated, and much of this is suitable comment at the breaking of bread. Let us “comfort ourselves together” and “one another” with all the Spirit’s words, *“written for our learning that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope”.*

Partake of the comfort in the following words of the Spirit by Paul: *“When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”*

We need all the comfort we can get, for as Jesus forewarned us, “the narrow way” leads through “much tribulation” to the Kingdom of God.

When the mother of James and John made request for her sons to sit one on the right and the other on the left of the Christ in his glory, he asked

them, “Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of and be baptized with the baptism wherewith I am baptised?”

They thought they could, and afterwards they did so, finding it very bitter. Even the Master prayed in Gethsemane that “if it were possible this cup might pass from him.” But in the purpose of God it could not be, so “he drank the dreadful cup of pain, then rose to life and joy again.”

Brethren and sisters, let us strive with all our might to keep these promises of God ever before our minds. We each have to confess much imperfection and many failures within ourselves, and we shall have to forgive one another many trespasses. As Paul said:

“Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

BUT REMEMBER that God, in His mercy for Christ's sake will forgive us and bless us beyond comprehension, for this was of such importance that after the Lord's prayer, Jesus emphasized it 2 more times.

“For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

“But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

Do we feel there are sins which we cannot forgive in our lifetime and therefore must be left to the righteous judge at the resurrection? That would be a very dangerous time to fully realize that we did not do our part that was commanded. The Truth is about redemption – ours and our brothers and sisters.

Most sins we commit are known to us at the time we do them – some more so than others. In traffic we often have to make an instantaneous choice on whether to obey a law or not. If we speed and break the law it is a wilful sin. If we knowingly do something that is wrong it is a premeditated sin on our part.

We must recognize that we are all weak, failing, sinful creatures and we need to be so cognizant of our own failings and not to be looking at who we can condemn as being less righteous than ourselves.

As we judge – so shall we be judged. Let us carefully examine the faithful in Hebrews chapter 11. Do we dare presume to be more righteous than any of these that are listed? Bro. Growcott said that we are saying this by our actions.

The only sin I am Scripturally aware of that has an exclusion, is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things God hath prepared for them that love Him.”

If, then, we are to share in these things, we must be watchful, and continually restore our first love of God, and of the Truth, and of one another. As one brother has said—

“Let us try to revive the old Christadelphian spirit of enquiry and discussion of the Scriptures, before we fall asleep. Let us be more enthusiastic about it: we shall find that enthusiasm is infectious.”

Let us try to catch the spirit of the Psalmist—

“Behold, I have longed for Thy precepts! . . . How love I Thy law: it is my meditation all the day.

“My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.”

Let us also try to be more enthusiastic about all our work in the Truth, and make ourselves a living testimony of our love for the Truth.

There is no use talking about “keeping our fellowship pure,” — unless we ourselves, by our walk and conduct, manifest to the Body and to the world that we walk even as the Lord Jesus walked.

Individually we need to hold ourselves to a high standard and separate ourselves from the world. But we should not compare ourselves with each other, because we do not know the trials that each of us have to bear – we all have the same exact sinful flesh through this life.

We either uphold the Truth as brought to us by The Scriptures, Bro. Thomas, Bro. Roberts and Bro. Growcott or we do not. Do we pick and choose what we like to follow from these pioneers? This is to water down the Truth as it has been entrusted to us.

We must seek to enter into the minds of these pioneers and realize the great empathy they had for the weak and failing among us.

I have been struck with the great burden these pioneers had in upholding the Truth in their day and age. We often do not realize what they endured. The published books we read often do not go into the depth and wisdom of their decisions pertaining to the Truth. By reading the older publications, that are now available to us, we can see the day to day items which effected the brotherhood and grieved them as they tried to guide those in their midst.

And when we come together, as we have this morning, let it be done with the spirit of deepest, most solemn reverence, our minds freed of other things and keenly alert to the greatness of our privileges and responsibilities, realizing that we are here to worship the Creator of heaven and earth, in the beauty of holiness. And in the words of Hymn 179 —

“O, Let our minds be centred on His Word, upon His love, and upon our absent Lord.”

Because of the sorrows which compass us on every hand, and the severe trials many of us encounter, let us close the eyes of imperfection and look, for a few moments, through the eye of faith to the time when the Master is established as King over all the earth. It is a portion of a word-picture drawn by the pen of Bro. Roberts in *The Final Consolation*, found in the book, *Letters to the Elect in Time of Trouble*:

”What do we see? Ah, what beauty! The curse has been removed from the earth. Thorns have been replaced by fir trees, and briars have given way to myrtle trees.

“Rivers have been opened in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys, and the desert blossoms as the rose. The hills are clothed with pleasant woods, and the valleys rejoice with glorious vegetation.

“No smoke obscures the landscape—the sun shines in all its grandeur. Men no longer eat bread in the sweat of their faces. Each has his own peaceful home standing in a well-kept plot. Joy and gladness is found everywhere, also thanksgiving and the voice of melody, for the Lord has comforted His people.

“As we come to a turn in the road, a strange and unusual sight meets the eye, a little child romps through a field, and following close behind we see a wolf, a lamb, a leopard, a kid, a calf, and a young lion. Strange, yes, but do we not remember the words of the prophet: 'They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain.'

“After a long walk, we are not tired. Then another reminds us of the prophet's words: 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint' (Isa. 40:31).

“What wonderful changes have taken place! The people no longer groan under misrule, for the Law goes forth from Zion into the whole earth, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Implements of war have been changed into implements of agriculture, and peace has come upon the earth, and good will to all mankind.

“Death has been swallowed up in victory. There is no more sorrow, no pain or crying. All these things have passed away, for the ransomed of the Lord have returned to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. God has given them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

“We go on to Jerusalem. What a magnificent city! Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is mount Zion on the sides of the north—the City of the Great King.”

What a beautiful picture! WE ARE NOT DREAMING! It is not a fancy or fable, not some vision of impossible joy and perfection and release, mocking us in our weakness with its unattainability, for God has given it to us and revealed it in His infallible Word of Truth. Peter refers to these things, and we come within the scope of his words when he says, *“Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,*

“According as His divine power hath given us ALL THINGS that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue,

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these we might be PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE, having escaped the corruption that is in the world thru lust.”

Looking to the end when he will say to the victor, “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” The long “night of sorrow” is nearly gone; the dawn is breaking.

“COMFORT ye, comfort ye my people, saith Yahweh.”

—Bro. Fred Higham

Talebearers – No. 314

ONCE more we find ourselves in the profitable company of those who, though they be dead, yet speak, that is, the servants of God who were authorised to make known God’s mind. It is a very good thing for us that what they did make known has been preserved; for if that word had been destroyed, we should have found ourselves in a very different state of things from that in which we are placed this morning. Our being what we are is in great measure due to the influence of the Bible operating through a long line of ancestry. The superiority of our civilization is entirely owing to the circumstances that the word of God, at an early time, was allowed free course in this country. The moral ideas radiating from the Bible have circulated freely in the minds of the people, and in the long run, have tended to the development of a higher type than natively belongs to Britons.

The ideas in a man’s mind have much to do in determining the bent of his growth. People who are ignorant of the high principles of the word of God, speedily degenerate from a naturally high type, and their children present an exaggeration of their own inferiority, and where the process is uninterrupted, it ends in barbarism. This is illustrated in the cases of nations that have gone down to the very bottom of the scale until they are just on the verge of equality with the brutes. Our forefathers were men who painted their bodies, and performed bloody religious rites. In the present stage of the world’s history, the English nation stands in the van of civilization. She owes her position to the unconscious impregnation of Jewish ideas through many centuries. Now, what the Bible has done in a general way for our nation as a nation, it has done, in particular, for us as individuals. It has diverted our career from objectless existence into the channel of intelligent, and noble, and elevating purpose. It has arrested moral degeneracy, and given an upward bent to our growth. It has opened a way out of darkness, and sin, and wretchedness, and death, into a pathway that guides to light and life, and joy for ever. It has rescued us from the vanity of mistaken, and fruitless, and disappointing schemes, and given us, in Christ, a purpose of life that adequately engages every energy,

and bears the glorious fruit of an undimmed and exhaustless future of life and love.

Yet its highest result to us is still a problem. Success in the destiny to which it invites us is contingent on success in this preliminary stage of moral probation. It must conquer us now before it will glorify us then. It entirely depends upon the extent to which we submit ourselves to it, as to how thoroughly it will do this. It can take us up to God, but we must climb. Those who submit themselves much to the Bible's influence will, gradually and insensibly, approach nearer and nearer the end to which it leads. Progress either upwards or downwards is, for the time being, an unconscious process. You do not feel which way you are going. But after a lapse of time, if you stand and look back, you can see which way you have gone, whether you have become more worldly-minded, more selfish, more insensible to divine things, or more and more awake to the higher relations of being disclosed in the Bible. It is a very pleasant experience to feel that you are making progress, but you cannot make progress unless you submit yourself to that which will induce your progress; and the only way to make certain of our progress in relation to the truth is to be continual readers of the Word—to continually submit our minds to the action of those ideas that have been evolved by the spirit through the prophets and apostles.

But, of course, there is a limit of wisdom to this, which must be observed. A man might shut himself off entirely from intercourse with other people, and become a private student in the sense of seclusion, but this would not be a favourable or a legitimate method of study. Such a man would certainly derive benefit, and become spiritually minded in certain directions, but the benefit would only be partial. Only one side of his mind would be trained, and the result would be defective, both to himself and others. God does not intend us to be monks or hermits. He never intended that man should be alone;—the very opposite—His intention is to develop a family—a multitude whom no man can number. He therefore calls upon us to submit ourselves to those circumstances which have reference to His ultimate purpose. He asks us to mingle with the brethren and sisters, as well as study. The fact is conspicuously exemplified in the table; the very object of its institutions is to bring us together to unite us in a collective act of remembrance.

This remembrance has many sides. The faith that we profess has not exclusive reference to Jesus. It has preponderating reference to him, but it also refers to ourselves. There are two things in the perfect law of God—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself; on these

two commandments hang all the law and the prophets;” these are the two crowning features of the divine will; therefore we must grow up to the two, and we should not be doing this if we shut ourselves up in a convent. It would be an agreeable thing to retire from the bustle of life, and settle in the quiet enjoyment of those consolations which are begotten by the word, but it would be an ignoble and cowardly thing to do, because although there is much in the present state of things to check, to chill, and to blight, discourage and destroy; and much that we instinctively might desire to get away from, yet in escaping them, we should be running away from our duties.

We must never expect in the present order of things, that society will or can be perfect; in fact, it is part of God’s arrangement that it shall not be so. The predominance of evil is the universal law of human affairs in the sin state. Those who are God’s must not shrink away and refuse the battle, but must contend. This contention extends to every aspect of life. Evil reigns; weakness of nature besets us at every step in ourselves, and those with whom we are surrounded, and there is in all society a preponderating dead weight of indifference to divine things. Association in the truth is the aspect which more immediately affects us. It is here where we may be most damaged. We look for nothing in this world. We are apt to have too high ideas of what is attainable in the ecclesia.

Christ gives a parable which has a bearing on this question. He likens the kingdom to a net cast into the sea, which draws all manner of fishes, both good and bad. Therefore, we must not come into the community drawn together by the preaching of the kingdom, with the idea that it is a perfect thing, that each person in it is really the son of God. There could be no more blissful state than that in which every man and woman should have a supreme sense of God, and with whom His law should be paramount. But such a state of things might not be good for us at present. We might, perhaps, get too much in love with mere persons and associations, and forget our present position in relation to eternal law. Yet we must take care not to be disheartened in relation to the truth, because we find all things are not to our mind. What we must do is to pluck up a good courage, and move neither to the right hand nor to the left, but be steadfast, always doing what we ought to be doing, whatever others may be saying, thinking, or doing.

Never mind other people. Wherever their influence is calculated to dishearten and discourage—forbear—endure; mix kindness with resolution: this is God’s will. We ought not to take notice of everything; we ought not to speak of every weakness we see, because the flesh is a weak thing at best. Let things slide, unless there is a

breach compromising the authority of Christ, or dishonouring and weakening to the truth. Where a man openly disobeys Christ, or corrupts the faith, that would be a thing to take notice of; a thing that we could not countenance, and be guiltless. But even then we are not to act as judges; and say “You are a miserable sinner, not fit for our company.” What we have to do is this: for our own sakes, and as a matter of individual duty, we say, “You must step aside from us, please, because we consider that we should be doing wrong if we were to continue our connection with you, in your present condition.”

That would be all we could do; but then there are a thousand little weaknesses and faults that do not amount to deliberate or intended violation of Christ’s law—the mere ebullition of weakness, which the individual is himself sorry for. If you take him to task, you destroy his sorrow and enkindle resentment, and evil is done. The best thing is to forbear: this is the lesson of the apostle: “Forbear one another in love, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” This view of the matter is always brought out by Paul in his letters—that if we ourselves were to be measured by the standard we may be disposed to apply to others, we should be found greatly wanting. We have to be forgiven much and must forgive. There are many derelictions of duty—oversights, faults, offences, it may be—that God is pleased to pass by, at our request through Christ; and we have to cultivate a similar disposition toward those who err through weakness.

Be kindly and forbearing to everybody but yourself. Be very merciless with yourself. Judge yourself by the highest standard. Allow no excuse for your own deficiency. Ever afflict your soul and press higher. If everyone did this,—but that is coming back to that which I said could not be,—we should have a very delightful community. Let us judge ourselves; others we must greatly leave alone, except under the special circumstances already hinted at. We are not to be indifferent about the truth. Some people say that because Christ says “Judge not,” therefore, we are not to trouble ourselves as to who is in the truth, and who is not. This is a misapplication of his word. The position of a man in relation to the truth, is just what we are to judge. We are not to judge who of those having the truth are really God’s, but we are to try the spirits whether they be of God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. We are “to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints.” We are not, for one moment, to give way to those who would corrupt the truth. Here we are to withstand delinquency. This is quite another thing.

The principles laid down in the apostolic exhortation apply only to those who receive the faith, who believe the truth, and reject the fables.

With those who reject the truth, we are not in association; but as to those who receive it, we are not to say that such and such are not of God's; this is the place for our charity. Where there is a profession of obedience, and an external consistency; we are to throw a broad mantle over all. Think the best and act the kindest; take no notice of all weaknesses you see—forget things. This is our duty. It is a misfortune to our own selves if we have that feverish tendency to be critical which some exhibit—that unhappy nervousness about other people's failings. It destroys happiness. No man can grow spiritually who is in a continual state of acrimony. He cannot evince that kindness of deportment which ought to characterise the intercourse of brethren and sisters, certainly not to the individual against whom the bitterness is harboured. The latter sees the coldness and is repelled, and made cold in return. He mentions it to another; the other is involved in the heat, and thus the evil spreads.

If there is a grievous departure from the way of truth, we must speak to a brother about it, but let us speak about it privately. Don't report the matter. If there is no departure from the way of truth, but merely the exhibition of constitutional weakness, be patient; take no notice. Instead of this, you go to another, and say "Why So and So has been behaving shamefully, hasn't he?" "How," says the other, "what is it?" and then you let off your story, which, if ever so trifling in its origin in your mind, makes a deep impression upon the mind of the other—an impression, it may be, not warranted by the original facts, but inevitably created by your representation. If you feel a thing strongly, you express it strongly, and the other having only your strong expressions to go by, naturally conceives a vivid and overdrawn picture of the matter. The result is that when he is thrown in contact with the man against whom you have been speaking, there is a coldness. Others hear of it and catch the cold, and there is a general brewing of bad feeling, all through next to nothing at all. "*A little matter kindleth a great fire;*" "*A tale-bearer separateth friends.*"

Tale-bearers ought to be kept down. They ought not to be listened to. It is their duty to go to the person themselves. This is Christ's rule, and there are a lot of little rules, which, if they were observed, would cause a much better state of things to prevail. If brethren are trying to do their best, encourage them. Do not repeat things. Let us do our duty. All these things are hinted at in what Peter says in the chapter read: "Wherefore, laying aside all malice and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies and all evil speaking, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby." Now, this is very beautiful. When a person is full of unfriendly gossip—under the dominion of

cantankerous feelings, which burn in his own bosom, and spread wherever he goes, how can the Word have a place in his heart? It is impossible. There is no more fatal thing than the fermentation of roots of bitterness.

Paul puts brethren on their guard. But such spring up, and many are hurt by them. Peter says “Put these things away, and let your mind, as a new-born babe, desire the milk of the word.” We shall have a strong relish for spiritual things indeed, if this is the case. A new-born babe has an unquenchable affinity for its mother’s breast; nothing short of what it gets from its mother will make it grow. Peter says this is how we ought to be in relation to the Word. If this is our state, we cannot be permanently hurt. The mind will soon get back to its tranquility and purity. A man who is under the control of the Word gets quickly over little disturbances; they are quite transient and accidental, and soon go off; but if the mind is not under the control of the Word, it is the other way. The serenity is accidental; the malignity and unhappiness of the fleshly mind is chronic. True liberty and happiness that will not grow old are only to be found in connection with the things that are of God. They are a well spring of everlasting life from which we are invited now to drink deeply.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1868 and Seasons of Comfort No. 314*

Signs of the Times – Wake Up Call

If you are hiding from reality here's a wake up call. Russia has declared it's intention to intervene in the Iraq crisis. Israel has declared its intention to intervene in the Iraq crisis. Israel and the US are sworn to defend the Jordanian crown. ISIS have sworn to attack the Jordanian crown next. Israel launched 30 airstrikes against Gaza overnight. Turkey has blocked and dried up the Euphrates...

—*A Watchful Christadelphian*

Meditations—Deity’s Ways No. 59

SHOP assistants are to be pitied—their trials are great. Their employers, as a rule, are not God-fearers, nor are their colleagues. Righteousness behind the counter is oftentimes a very inconvenient commodity with employers, and with fellow-servants it is a subject of scornful and bitter comment. To please employers, and to escape unpleasant remarks, men are frequently tempted to let go their integrity. But let not brethren do so—let them pluck up courage, and remember that every victory means additional worth in the Deity’s sight. It is galling to see the wicked by wickedness prosper—to see others make headway by methods that to us are forbidden. But this is the trial of the

man of God. Apart from such experiences how could faith be tested and character developed? Still the position is hard and oftentimes heart-breaking. Let those who have the opportunity, cheer, strengthen, and encourage those in the shop assistant's position. Especially let their wives and sweet-hearts do so, not by creating and fostering bitterness towards those who cause the trials, but by suggesting patience (1 Pet. 2:18), giving sterling common-sense counsel, and offering, if needs be, to willingly share whatever consequences the action of right-doing might entail.

Some shop assistants fear that righteousness means the loss of employment—the workhouse. Let no brother take so gloomy a view. Let them not meet troubles half way. It is seldom that things work out so. An honest, faithful servant is at all times a gem. A good Christadelphian, one who is such, not in name only, but in word and deed, is a treasure, and, speaking from observation, employers know it. To the man of the world an upright Christadelphian servant has many attractions. If he cannot compete with other servants in lying, cheating, and other wrongness, he can beat them in thoroughness, industry, punctuality, respectfulness. Where Christadelphians fail—where “the sack” is a frequent experience, is it not usually the result of the absence of these qualities? If servants are lazy, tricky, unscrupulous, presumptuous, and not interested in their work, what alien employer could be expected to retain them?

According to the Scriptures a wife has to come first (after God) in a man's affections. Her needs, physical and spiritual, claim the primary place in all his arrangements. “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church” (Ephes 5:25; Col. 3:19; 1 Pet. 3:7). How did Christ love the Church? His love was shown in his tender regard, his eagerness to comfort and enlighten, in his ever-readiness to make sacrifices for the advancement of its well-being. These are the qualities that should be exhibited by husbands in their treatment of their wives. It is not weak for a man thus to love his wife. Where a husband is faithful to God's will, the wife is not treated as a servant. She is not unnecessarily stinted in money or food. Her authority is not lowered in the presence of her children, nor her position in the eyes of strangers. The husband will not be found here and there on pleasure, whilst the wife is solitary and miserable at home. He will not be careful concerning his own salvation and indifferent concerning hers. God's mind respecting a husband's obligations are interestingly shown in Deut. 24:5; Lev. 18:18; Prov. 5:18–19; Eccles. 9:9; Mal. 2:14.

The sin of Adam and the righteousness of Christ are subjects upon which Christendom is altogether astray. God neither imputes the one

nor the other to men. The attribution of one man's *act* to another is neither rational nor just. To uphold the truth upon these subjects has been brother Roberts' constant effort, especially during the last few years. So far as Adam's offence is concerned, his descendants are not in any way guilty; they simply suffer the consequences of his sin, so in the case of Christ's righteousness. Men are privileged to reap the benefits of Christ's moral perfection, but that perfection is not theirs, nor can it be. The saints are pardoned sinners, and such they will ever remain. They are forgiven for Christ's sake, and are enjoined to remember it. To regard ourselves, by any kind of mental manœuvring, as being perfect, as Christ was, is dishonouring to Christ and injurious to ourselves. If brethren want the truth upon these subjects, let them read, not orthodox literature, but truth-ringing expositions, such as those found in the *Christadelphian*, vol xxxi., p. 23; xxxiii., p. 475 (last par.); xxxv., p. 342. In these expositions is the truth in a nutshell, unclouded by indefinite and meaningless technicalities.

Count the cost (Luke 14:28–29). Christ's words have recently been sadly misapplied. It has been said that by them Christ taught that men could and should weigh the responsibilities which obedience to the truth entails, and if the sacrifices be considered too great, or the requirements too difficult to be kept, the truth could be ignored. This is utterly wrong. No such option exists. To despise God's goodness and commands in the gospel invitation is a sin of no mean order. Christ meant nothing more nor less than that a man on apprehending God's will should prepare for, and consider, with the view to successfully battling with, the ups and downs of a godly life. And how wise is Christ's counsel. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. To unexpectedly experience difficulties and hardships is very unnerving, but to know beforehand that these will arise, and to realise the necessity for overcoming them is helpful, and enables us to brace ourselves to encounter them.

Our discovery of the way of salvation was not accidental. It may seem so when we merely look at the apparently natural means which led to our knowledge and reception of the truth—the *Christadelphian* leaflet picked up by the wayside, the *Twelve Lectures* bought at the second-hand book-stall, the lecture quite casually attended—but appearances are altogether misleading in this matter. Our standing in the truth is due to the kind but unseen intervention of God on our behalf. God is not uninterested in man's salvation—He is no cold looker-on at the truth-lover's learning and embracing of the Gospel. His hand may not be seen, but He is ever intelligently working for the well-being of God-fearers. In the first century men and women who were able to receive and prize the truth were remembered and cared for (Acts 277—Berean 2014

2:47: 13:48). Will not like-minded men and women be similarly treated now? If God has “much people” in any place He will soon create and develop the means to enlighten them.

“I don’t feel good enough.” This is a reason that is sometimes given by alien friends for refusing to be immersed, and to enter the fellowship of the brethren. This excuse may sound modest, but it borders on wickedness. The only unworthiness which God has made the ground of non-acceptance is rebellion. Although our friends will not admit it, their excuse in reality is tantamount to a refusal to surrender to the will of God. God has said, “Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely” (Rev. 22:17). He has also said that those who come, He will help and sustain (Phil. 2:12–13: 1:5: 4:19). Concerning short-comings, He has abundantly promised to forgive these—if they are committed through the weakness of our nature (1 Jno. 1–9). Let a man have an obedient mind, not a rebellious one, and he need not fear to surrender himself to God. Where there is ability to comprehend and believe the truth, there also is ability, if a man choose to use it, to render all the obedience that God requires for salvation.

Bro. A.T. Jannaway—1900

A Christadelphian on the Land of Israel

Sixth Visit to the Holy Land

SMYRNA

On our way to Smyrna, which was to be our next place of call, we passed quite a number of islands—known and unknown to us. Two we were particularly interested in because mentioned in the travels of Paul: Samos and Chios. Both these islands are mentioned in Acts xx. 15, where Luke says, “We sailed thence (that is from Mitylene) and came the next day over against Chios; and the next day we arrived in Samos and tarried at Trogyllium, and the next day we came to Miletus”.

But we were sailing in the reverse way, therefore Samos came first. Beyond forming one of the Isles of the Gentiles, and being mentioned in the text already quoted, there is very little of interest about the place. Its port is Vathy which we shall not easily forget by reason of the noise made during the discharging of cargo, and taking in same. The same can be said of Chios. Like other of the islands in this part of the Mediterranean, it has suffered by reason of earthquakes—the last was in 1881, when 4,000 of its inhabitants were swallowed up.

Leaving Chios, and after sailing for a while we turned due east into the Gulf of Smyrna, and after passing small islands and two Turkish Forts, one

of which appeared to be quite a modern battery, judging by its guns, we were faced by the city of Smyrna, spread out before us with an excellent sea front, the city sloping upwards with Mount Pagus in the background. It is a charming picture from the sea. As with Constantinople and Naples, the view, as one approaches it on board a vessel, is one ever to be remembered, as is the awakening to the real facts when one lands and sees below the surface.

The Quay is about two miles in extent from left to right, and occupies the whole of the sea front, along which are tramway lines—the trams themselves contemptible vehicles. The city itself may be roughly divided into five quarters: Moslem, Armenian, Jewish, European, and Greek, although I am not sure that one can now say correctly there is a Greek quarter. When we visited the city in 1902, the Greek element formed no small portion of Smyrna, but the terrible anti-Greek uprising and doings in the year 1922, effected a complete change. It was on the 22nd of July of that year that a fire broke out on the border of the Turkish and Greek quarters which practically wiped out the latter: the Turks arose in mass, and, apparently, according to a preconcerted programme, engaged in a wholesale massacre of the Greek population. Flight was the only means of saving themselves—thousands of Greeks poured forth to the Quay and were taken on board the British and other boats in the harbour. The refugees were conveyed to one or other of the many islands found in the Ægean Sea, and there, for the most part they still remain. As to the reason for, or cause of the fire, it is not for the writer to say. The Greeks allege that the Turks, occupying the southern part of the city, carried out a long-arranged plan to rid Smyrna of all Greeks by every possible means. The Turks on the other hand, put all the blame on the Greeks. They declare that the latter, on the night of the day named (July, 1922), kindled fires all along the line of the city from west to east, which divided their quarters from those of the Turks, hopeful that the wind then blowing and for which they had long waited, would destroy the Turkish portion of the city, but that Allah (the Moslem name for God) in his goodness, thwarted the plan of the Greeks by reversing the wind, and practically wiped their would-be destroyers out of existence, so far as Smyrna was concerned. We now remember how full the London daily papers were at the time of the terrible affair, but like most other things, time had effaced it from our memory; hence, we could not understand the picture we beheld, with the aid of our prisms, from the deck of the “Sphinx” as we looked at the city from the distance. Whereas the southern slope of the city, that to our right, was a charming sight, good buildings on the Quay, pleasant-looking residences on the whole of the hill on which the city was built, well laid out gardens, fertile in every respect, right away up to the top of Mount Pagus, with the old castle thereon. On the left hand (the northern part of the city) what a

contrast! Judging by the buildings along the Quay, one would think a bombardment had recently taken place. As we have said, this is the European part of the city. Here are what once formed the Asiatic headquarters of leading British and other European firms: Banks, Insurance Offices, Wholesale Merchants, Shipping Companies and such like; but now, mere shells, carcasses, flank walls (no roofs!), mere debris. And the same all over the slopes reaching up to Mount Pagus. What it all meant we soon discovered, as we have already stated.

Immediately on landing, without wasting a moment of time, we—Sis. Jannaway, another passenger and myself—took possession of a carriage with the request to the driver that we wanted to see Smyrna! From the point where we started—the centre of the Quayside—that is, about a mile from each of the ends thereof—to the extreme left, it was nothing but an exhibition of derelict buildings; then turning to the right, we had on our left hand what was at one time the terminus of the Constantinople-Smyrna Railway. There it was just as it appeared in 1922, the morning after the terrible night already referred to. Among the debris was a complete passenger train and engine, or rather the iron-work portion thereof, in the midst of weeds and bushes that had been accumulating during the following three years. It may be asked: Why has the damage not been made good? For the simple reason that the fire-claims were disputed by the various insurance companies under the terms and conditions of the policies. Most, if not all the companies were British, and their policies contained conditions exonerating them from making good in certain events, which they contended obtained in the present case. At the time of our visit the matter was still in the hands of the Law Courts.

As our driver continued his journey through derelict districts, we expostulated with him, protesting we wanted to see Smyrna and not played-out neighbourhoods (we remembered nothing of the 1922 trouble, etc.); but our driver knew not a word of English. Our fellow passenger—a well-to-do silk merchant—even got into such a state of frenzy as to forget he was a gentleman and used “bad” language. I pointed out that such was not only not gentlemanly and unfit for a lady to hear; but, it was waste of breath and energy, seeing that good language or bad was each alike to one who was not only a Turk, but who knew no other language! And so, our driver continued to show us Smyrna! Hence we saw Smyrna as we should not have seen it had we what was at the time our own way. He also had Mount Pagus in his programme. This mount meant an uphill drag, after leaving the ruins already described. It is about 500 feet up. On the summit are what remains of the Acropolis. Here are the ruins also of a Mosque, formerly a Church, in which it is alleged that Polycarp preached. It was the association of Polycarp with Smyrna that added an additional, if not the primary reason for the interest we had in this visit. Dr. Thomas has much

to say about Polycarp in Eureka. The Doctor reminds his readers that “Polycarp was contemporary with the Apostle John”; and, in the chapters dealing with the letter to the Church at Smyrna, and the ten years’ Diocletian persecution, he recites how when brought before the pro-consul, the latter pleaded with poor old Polycarp, exhorting him thus “Have pity on thine own great age, and the like. Swear by the fortune of Caesar; repent, and say, ‘Take away the atheists’. ‘Swear and I will release thee’—reproach Christ”. To which Polycarp replied and said: “Eighty and six years have I served him, and he hath never wronged me, and how can I blaspheme my King who hath saved me”? Polycarp was an elder of the ecclesia of the Smyrneans when Ignatius visited him in A.D. 107, on his way to suffer death in Rome. The Doctor adds, “Both Ignatius and Polycarp were acquainted with the Apostle John, and the latter is highly spoken of by Ignatius, who says of him and others, “they live as in the presence of the glory of God”. Polycarp was put to death sixty years after Ignatius, A.D. 167”. And says the Doctor, “his mind was fixed upon the resurrection”. The site “where Polycarp was martyred” is pointed out, as well as the position of his supposed grave, which is marked by a cypress tree.

The view of the city and environs, and of the Gulf, is really splendid from the top of Mount Pagus. The panorama extends to Chios and Mitylene, and is unanimously pronounced, “one of the most beautiful in the Levant”.

Having “done Mount Pagus” we made a detour of the city—a perfect labyrinth of streets—that busy portion generally known as the Bazaars—as full of life and animation as can be imagined. The scene was all the more lively and attractive by reason of all the shops and houses being adorned with Turkish flags, it being the anniversary—the third—of the circumvention of the Greek plot, as the Turks described what took place in July, 1922. In fact it would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that flags were displayed wherever there was the possibility of sporting them—and they were of all sizes—from that of an inch or two, to those yards long. Every child took part in the exhibition. The wares too, of the Bazaars, were consistent with the Eastern love of colour, as was the raiment of the people—the most picturesque attire imaginable. We heard that Smyrna can boast of nearly fifty Mosques, but we did not trouble to enter one of them.

The effects of the 1922 troubles are especially to be seen in the roadstead off Smyrna. When we visited the place twenty-five years ago, the waterway was crowded with ships from all parts of the world: it was one of the chief ports of call for ships sailing from Beyrout to Constantinople, and was a veritable hive of maritime life—but now, one could count the ships on one’s fingers—nothing doing! The population

was then said to be nearly half a million, whereas now it is only about eighty or ninety thousand. Again we boarded the “Sphinx”, and were soon steaming away for Constantinople.

—*Bro. F. G. Jannaway—1926*

A Workman That Needeth Not To Be Ashamed

(2 Tim. 2:15)

There is no retirement age in the Truth. This is a fatal folly. “Retirement” is such an obsession in this indulgent and decadent age that it can infect our thinking in the Truth. We do not mention names very often, but we feel we must here. Bro. Gibson has never retired, though he is now ninety years old. He still carries on his ecclesial duties each week, and his considerable correspondence, and his work in the magazine to the best of his ability. He finds he can do frustratingly less now than in former years, and the effort is harder, and the joy of vigorous activity has gone, but other and deeper joys take its place. “Occupy (pragmateuomai: work, keep busy -- from pragma, work) until I come” ... “He that endureth to the end shall be saved.” Don't be trapped and deceived into the lazy, selfish, worldly “retirement” complex. The Truth needs faithful workers unto the end. Let us be among them. ”Search Me Oh God” by GVG.

Answer to Prayer

“May I ask your experience in the matter of answer of prayer? Has God vouchsafed you of His mercy and faithfulness UNDOUBTED responses to supplication presented through Christ our Lord and Great High Priest?”

SOME things asked for we have received, and some we have not. But we should not feel discouraged if God were apparently to turn a deaf ear to all our requests. We should consider that His wisdom required the denial of all our desires, as in the case of Job (6:8-11; 13:24-26; 19:7-11). David had to say sometimes (Psa. 22:2)—

“O, my God, I cry in the day time, but Thou hearest not!”

Man is small, and life is short; and the issues of futurity are immeasurable, and can only be truly judged by unerring Wisdom. For this reason, all our petitions should be qualified with the recognition of the will of God as the supreme regulator. We should *'in everything give*

thanks' (1 Thess. 5:18; Philippians 4:6), and in all our petitions subordinate our own ideas and wishes to the perfect will of God. Christ has given us an example in his own prayer to the Father in Gethsemane (Mark14:36)—

“Take away this cup from me: nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou wilt.”

This qualification makes us certain of an answer to all our prayers, even if we do not get the answer in the very form we may ask it. This is John's reasoning— *“This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us. And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petition we desired of Him.”* 1 John 5:14-15

That is, true children of God would desire nothing that God sees not fit to give. What He sees fit, that He gives. And this being what we ask, we know that we always have what we ask. And here we rest, even in the midst of the most direful experiences, knowing experience of evil is part of the instrumentality by which God is preparing children for Himself, during this transitory age of evil, against the perfect and endless ages beyond.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1892*

The greatest proof of God's love can be not getting our petitions, even those we wanted most.

Authority or Service?

The serving brethren of the ecclesia do not exercise the authority conferred by the Spirit of God on the elders of the apostolic age. They are what their designation implies: the servants of the ecclesia in love and zeal. As for priority of immersion, we are ignorant of any ground upon which a claim to authority could be founded on it. The man immersed today might prove unfaithful: one immersed five years hence might prove a shining servant. Why should the latter be subject to the former because his immersion was later? No brother who has caught the true spirit of the Truth will want to exercise authority at all. There can be none till Christ confer it. He will do this on the humble, and not on the domineering.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1889*

None Hath Seen God

“Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God: he hath seen the Father”—John 6:46.

THE meaning of this is determinable by the context. Jesus had quoted the prophetic statement that the chosen should be *'all taught of God,'* and argued that *'therefore'* everyone having learnt of the Father would come to him (the Son).

The statement and the argument taken together might seem to imply that those of whom he was speaking must have converse with God before coming to Christ. It was to fence off this misconception that he added—*"Not that any man hath seen the Father."*

On this point he was frequently emphatic—

"No man hath seen God at any time ... save (or except) he which is of God (that is, himself, Jesus): he hath seen the Father"—John 1:18; 6:46.

This exception was usually associated with the negative statement, as in the case just quoted: *"No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared Him"*—John 1:18.

We readily recognize the meaning of the statement that no man hath seen God at any time. We may not so readily enter into the relation subsisting between Jesus and the Father. But when we know that the Spirit tabernacled in him *'not by measure,'* and that the Father thus dwelt in him, and that he and the Father in this intimate connection were *'one,'* we may understand that the Father was not at all times to Jesus the invisible object He is to deserted mortal man.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1890*

Not Taste Death

THE saying of Christ on a certain occasion that some were standing by which *'should not taste of death'* till they should see him coming in his Kingdom (Matt. 16:28; Mk. 9:1; Lk. 9:27) refers to the illustration of that event vouchsafed six days afterwards [immediately following in all three gospels] to Peter, James and John, in the brilliant manifestation of his glory on the Mt. of Transfiguration. This is manifest from Peter's allusion to it afterwards (2 Pet. 1:16-18)—

"We have not followed cunningly-devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, for we were eyewitnesses of his majesty when we were with him on the holy mount."

If any demur to this, we remind them that Christ's words contemplate a *'tasting of death'* after the event referred to—after the analogy of Simeon, to whom—” ... *it was revealed that he should not see death before he saw the Lord's Christ.*”

And who, when he had seen him, said: “*Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace.*” Will any affirm Christ supposed it possible his disciples should die after entering into the Kingdom of God?

—*Bro. Roberts, 1879*

Weights To Be Laid Aside

Companions who know not God, and have consequently no sympathy with divine objects, motives, and prospects of life; pleasures that excite a narrow-minded emulation, or bring us into friendly relation with godless people—

Pursuits in politics or science that would give us an interest in the property of the present order of things, or in other directions—

Pursuits that have an ill-savour, or exact too much of our time and energy—

Habits that identify us with the unholy, debase the mental powers, defile nature, or make holiness a dim idea—

Objects which, in the process of their attainment, would require us to sacrifice all opportunities of the service of Christ, or in their realization would expose us to a dangerous fellowship with the world (such as aiming to be wealthy)—

All these are things to be avoided, and that **WILL BE AVOIDED**, by those who have earnestly set their faces for the kingdom of God. Such are not to be scared away from the path of wisdom by outcries which have their origin elsewhere.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1878*

Unkindness

WHEN unkind things are said of you, stories invented or exaggerated to your discredit, it is often better to leave the matter alone. “That with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.”

—*Christadelphian, 1900*

13. The Bridles of the Horses

The winepress of Divine wrath is trodden “without the City.” That is, the fearful judgments to be manifested will not be confined to the Ten-Streeted Babylon, which is geographically bounded by the Rhine, the Danube, and the Euphrates, the English Channel, and the Atlantic. There are extensive regions beyond, or “without,” these limits, equally obnoxious to the “fierceness and wrath of Almighty God”. “Without the City” there is Germany, in its largest sense, styled by Ezekiel “*Magog*”, upon which, saith Adonai Yahweh, “I will send a fire”. This *Magog*, or land of *Gog*, will include Prussia, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Russia, and Poland. “Without the City” also are “them that dwell carelessly in the isles”, among whom the fire is to be sent also. These isles will include the dominions of Great Britain, that may not obey the proclamation in midheaven commanding obedience to the King of Israel. “Without the City” also there are Canada and its sister provinces the United States, Mexico, all South America, the Chinese Empire, Central Asia, Persia, Arabia, Abyssinia, and Egypt. All these countries, which include what Daniel styles, “the Rest of the Beasts,” in ch. 7:12, the Lion, the Bear, and the Leopard, are all to be visited with “the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God;” which results in “taking away their dominion,” though not in extinguishing their political existence, which continues “for a season and a time,” or 1000 years. All these are “cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God,” when, having destroyed the Great City of Ten Kingdoms, in its threefold dominion of the Seventh Vial, they are trodden in the judgments of the winepress “without the City”.

The reader may easily conceive what an immense shedding of blood is implied by such a vintage as this. It is “the supper of the great God” prepared for the fowls of the heaven, who fill themselves with “the flesh of horses, and of them that sit upon them”. The phrase “oceans of blood,” as expressive of the quantity shed in these extensive warlike operations of the Saints, or Angel of the Sickel, would hardly be an exaggeration. The blood which flows from the down-trodden armies of the nations, is represented as ascending to “*the bridles of the horses for a thousand six hundred furlongs*”. This taken literally, would be about five feet deep, and two hundred miles long; but how broad we are left to imagine. But, as the literal is only symbolical of the real in this most ingeniously-devised prophecy, we need only inquire, what is signified by the phrase “came out of the winepress even unto the bridles of their

horses”. The winepress judgments being identical with “the Supper of the Great God,” which consummates the binding of the Dragon in the abyss, the terms of the one are expletive of the terms of the other. Hence, the more concise phrase, “the bridles of the horses,” is interpreted by the words in ch. 19:18, “the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them” — of them that hold the bridle. Thus the word bridle comes to represent the rider of the horse. Blood does not flow from the horses only; but the fierceness of the wrath falls also upon the *bridlemen*, or “bridles,” who govern and manoeuvre them in battle; it comes even unto them.

The armies within and “without the city” have large cavalry contingents, in which the kings and mighty of the nations pride themselves greatly. The governments, however, “without the city” can bring more cavalry into the field than those within it. In the constitution of the Asiatic armies it so preponderates as to be a characteristic. This is illustrated in ch. 9:16. But “a horse is a vain thing for safety; neither shall he deliver any by his great strength” (Psa. 33:17). This will be found to be true in the time of this terrible vintage. When Judah and Israel, as the Angel's Sickle, shall tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle, because Yahweh is with them, the riders on horses, the bridles, shall be ashamed (Zech. 10:5). “In that day, saith Yahweh, I will smite every horse with terror, *and his rider with madness*,...and every horse of the peoples with blindness” (ch. 12:4). “With thee, O Israel, I will break in pieces the horse *and his rider*” (Jer. 51:21): *and the horses and their riders* shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother” (Hag. 2:22). What a terrible visitation will this be upon a cavalry force — the horses all terror-stricken, and therefore wild and utterly unmanageable; rushing against and kicking each other in fury and blindness! This alone would be fearful; but the horror is increased by the multitude of mounted and dismounted *bridlemen* in the *melee*, being all smitten with madness; so that “the bridles of the horses” are useless in their hands. In this way, the fierceness and wrath of the Deity comes out even to the bridles of the horses. What is not consummated by this mutually destructive mass of infuriate flesh, Israel will be on hand to finish. As the fowls of the heaven, they will devour them; and their sword will be filled with their flesh.

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

Hints For Bible Markers

The Psalms

Psalm 3:1

Giving consideration to what has been written about Jesus, including the first verse of this Psalm, one becomes deeply impressed. Although David was a type of Christ, in Jesus we have a great personage who could lay claim the kingdoms of this world. He was the son of the living God. The manifestation of God, by Spirit, in or through flesh. Who by the authority of the Deity had a position which no son of Adam could lay claim to. Who yielded his position, becoming poor for our sakes (2 Corinthians 8:9), so that mercy, and through mercy life, could be offered to a worthless race.

“The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas. (22) Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. (23) And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. (24) When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. (25) Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.” (Matthew 27:21-25)

When we consider these horrid circumstances and treatment, we certainly can understand the lamentations described in this Psalm.

Psalm 3:2

Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.

In the beginning the Scribes and Pharisees would have gladly supported him if he would have been respectful of them and their position with the people. Jesus did not tolerate those who corrupted the word of God. Therefore they spread lies about him. Claiming his power came from a heathen deity, Beelzebub. They denied his connection with God, saying he was a faker, attributing the miracles to necromancy.

Bro. Beryl V. Snyder

Continued next month should the Lord will.