

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

DETROIT, Michigan Memorial Meeting at 11am, Eureka Class at 12noon

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

We continue to Skype with Bro. Bob and Sis. Mary Widding in Conway Arkansas each Sunday for our Memorial Meeting. Our sisters take turns playing the Hymns. When Bro. Bob presides, Sis. Mary plays and when I preside, Sis. Ruthie and Sis. Kay play the hymns. We are thankful to be still able to meet together and share our meeting with those in isolation in Worcester.

We are also thankful to be able to meet on Tuesday evenings via Skype for the Boston Bible Eureka class.

We enjoyed the Hye gathering and were spiritually uplifted for being there with those of like precious faith. We have been spiritually comforted by mid-week visits from Bro. Jim Rankin and Bro. Harry Phillips. We welcome visits at any time.

We look forward to Jesus returning soon.
Love in the bonds of the Truth, Fred Higham

GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

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.

Let There Be Light

“The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. And we beheld his glory: the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth.”—John 1:14

‘THE only begotten of the Father’: his glory was his Godlikeness. And note the connection of thought: *“As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God”* (v.12).

‘Power to become the Sons of God’! *That is the power we seek.* What a marvelous thought that there is such a power available to the weak mortal sons of men: power to become Sons of God; power to be ‘filled with His Glory’; power, like Jesus, to be ‘full of Grace and Truth’—FULL: no room for anything else. No room for worldliness, or self-pleasing, or bitterness, or unkindness, or any kind of pettiness: just *Grace and Truth.*

Just conceive of the divine beauty of a society of individuals who are all *full* of Grace and Truth—wholly united in single-hearted mutual love of God and of one another. How dull and empty do the things of the world seem when placed beside the glory of this power to become the eternal, grace-filled Sons of God! Let this be clear: no one can be a Son or Daughter of God who just lives and spends his time in his own interests and concerns and pleasures, like the rest of the world.

Jesus said: *“I am the Light of the world”* (John 8:12).

To his disciples he said: *“Ye are the light of the world”* (Matt. 5:14).

By this saying, he absorbs us into himself, as parts of this divine, golden Lampstand of which he is the central stem and reservoir. The oil of the Lampstand is the pure Spirit-Word (Psalm 119:105)—

“Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a Light unto my path.”

Our minds turn to Zechariah’s Lampstand and Olive-tree vision. But the oil gives no light until it is kindled by the zealous flame of love. The kindling of the flame comes from God—

“We love, because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19).

The Law, or Word, of God is the great record and manifestation of this love, from the moment that God said: *“Let there be light,”* to the time that the True Light said, at the close of his last message—

“I am the bright and Morning Star...Behold, I come quickly” (Rev. 22:16,12).

John says: *“LIFE is light”* (John 1:4); and *“He that LOVETH abideth in Light”* (1 John 2:10). The whole purpose is comprehended in that first fiat of divine omnipotence: *“Let there be LIGHT”* (Gen. 1:3). Let

there be LIFE. Let there be LOVE. Let living Beauty and Grace spring forth from the silent, slumbering Darkness.

The Light is not cold and abstract, but warm and personal, because it is Life and Love. Let us keep the *personal* aspect ever before our minds, for therein lies the power: the glorious ‘Power to become the Sons of God.’

We have doubtless all been deeply impressed, as we do our Daily Readings year by year, with the Glory and Beauty of God’s Word as extolled in Psa. 119. Its theme is summed up in v. 97—

“O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day.”

Not just law as an impersonal thing—ordinances and regulations—but *living* Law: the Living Word. Let us accent the personal aspect: *“O how love I THY law!”* It has often been pointed out that every verse of this Psalm contains some synonym for the Word: statute, judgment, precept, commandment, etc. But have we noticed that it is always prefaced by ‘Thy’: *Thy* statutes, *Thy* judgments, etc.?

We love the Law because it is God’s Law: because it leads us to Him, reveals Him to us, draws us to Him, binds us to Him—teaches us how to dwell in peace within the circle of His love and holiness. It is in this *personal* relationship created by the loving acceptance of the Law that all its power lies. The Truth is an intensely personal affair. God is personal, Jesus is personal, the brethren are personal (1 John 3:14)—

“We know that we have passed from death unto life BECAUSE WE LOVE THE BRETHREN.”

See therefore the vital importance of personal fraternal Love!—intense, expanding, radiating Love. It marks the difference between Life and Death: *“None of us liveth to himself”* (Rom. 14:7). That is, not if we really are Christ’s. Love of the brethren must be a major aspect of our lives—second only to the love of God: for on these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

And loving the brethren is not just a passive, benevolent frame of mind. It must be an active, living force: seeking their welfare, desiring their company, drawing close to them in oneness of mind and heart and purpose—lovingly seeing in them (though perhaps in present feeble measure, as they too may only see it in us) an earnest spiritual striving toward perfection: the potential glorious *Sons of God!*

The whole purpose of God is intensely personal: to surround Himself with an intimate family, a holy multitude of children, all knit inseparably together in the closest bonds of spiritual love: bound together by the knowledge that all in love have totally given their lives for each other, after the command and example of the great Elder Brother—

“Hereby perceive we love, because he laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 John 3:16).

Are we just technically ‘in the Truth,’ or are we really a part of this strange and glorious enterprise going on in the earth today: the true, select, eternal nobility of all the earth’s generations? To lay down our lives for the brethren, as John says we must, does not just mean to be prepared to die for them (though that is necessarily included). But much more it means to wholly *live* for them, as Jesus did: to yield the whole life to the service of Christ and his Body, as the Bride yields her life to the Bridegroom.

“O how love I Thy law!...”

The inspiring beauty of this 119th Psalm of tribute to the glories and life-giving power of the Word of God lies largely in the fact that herein we have a portrayal of the mind of Christ in his hours of meditation and prayer. Here again is the personal, living aspect. He alone has lived and thought these thoughts in their deepest and fullest measure. And to the extent that we follow him into the inner chambers of this marvelous palace of splendor and beauty and light, to that extent—and to that alone—do we enter into his love.

“...it is my meditation ALL THE DAY.”

Can we conceive any less of Jesus? No, we cannot. Only ‘all the day’ fulfills the picture. Love is all or nothing: never satiated, never surfeited.

119:98— *“Thou through Thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.”*

Natural wisdom and intelligence depend upon brain capacity and education. But how happy we should be that the wisdom of the Spirit is on a completely different plane, and depends on love, and character, and the way the heart is turned to the Light of the Word of God!—

“I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; for so it seemed good in Thy sight” (Matt. 11:25-26).

We are impressed—and appalled—by the prodigious mental capacities and ingenuities of the men of the world who have so painstakingly developed such diabolical instruments of misery and desolation as rockets and jets and guided missiles and laser beams and hydrogen bombs. But the humblest saint in Christ has infinitely more true wisdom and knowledge than the wisest of the world, for—

“The fear of the Lord is the BEGINNING of wisdom [nothing is wisdom short of that], and knowledge of the Holy is understanding... THIS is Life Eternal, to know Thee the Only True God” (Prov. 9:20; John 17:3).

All the rest is just perishing, animal, foolish cleverness—but these have found the power to *become Sons of God!* How pitifully insignificant is the puny power of the hydrogen bomb compared to that. An immortalized saint could effortlessly extinguish man’s biggest bomb.

119:99— *“I have more understanding than all my teachers ...”*

‘I am the Light of the world,’ said Jesus. He had instruction and guidance for all the world. Was it of his own natural wisdom or philosophy? His own mental powers? Had he himself conceived the wondrous thoughts and gracious words that he spoke?—

“Never man spake like this man...He hath done all things well” (John 7:46; Mark 7:37).

“...for Thy testimonies are my meditation all the day” (vs. 99).

That was his secret of wisdom, and *it must be ours.* By nature, we are but animal creatures, but the testimonies of God are spirit and divine life. Meditation upon them must be our joy, our hobby, our relaxation, our solace and refuge from the battle and the storm. How much this verse reveals to us of Jesus, and of the inner power that maintained the glorious radiance of the Light of the Word made flesh!

“I understand more than the ancients because I keep thy precepts” (vs. 100).

Here we go a step further and deeper. We find this vital divine principle woven throughout Scripture. We shall often be struck with it, if we are watching for it: the principle that *spiritual understanding depends on the degree of endeavor to walk in holiness before God—*

“The secret of God is WITH THE RIGHTEOUS” (Prov. 3:32).

David says: *“The MEEK will He guide in judgment: and the MEEK will He teach His Way”* (Psa. 25:9).

Daniel’s ‘man clothed in linen’ said: *“None of the wicked shall understand.”*

And Jesus himself gives the same divine rule— *“If any man will DO GOD’S WILL, he shall know of the doctrine”* (John 7:17).

We may be troubled and concerned by conditions in Christadelphia: by the great problem of fellowship—where and when to draw the line, and to make a stand for the standards of the Truth. Here’s the answer—

“THE MEEK WILL HE GUIDE...THE MEEK WILL HE TEACH.”

There is no other answer. Who are we, of ourselves, that we could be able to judge rightly, and others be astray? *“The meek will He guide.”* If He guide us, we cannot go wrong. If He guide us not, we cannot go right. And He *will* guide a certain few, on a consistent, stated basis—

“Ye shall find Me, when ye shall seek for Me with all your heart”
(Jer. 29:13).

The seeking must be in the Word, and in prayer. All guidance is in the Word. The Word is the Light and Lamp: the Word prayerfully studied *and meticulously obeyed* (as we have seen). Prayer is useless if we are not willing and anxious to do our most and our best to totally serve and obey. “The *meek* will He guide”—and outside of that circle of divine guidance, what hope have we of finding our way?

The knowledge and absorption of the Light of the Word is a progressive attainment of faith working and building upon faith: faith upon faith, and love upon love (2 Cor. 3:18)—

“We all, with unveiled face, reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being changed into the same image, FROM GLORY TO GLORY, by the Spirit of the Lord.”

And Paul goes on to say, as he joyfully develops this beautiful theme—

“God, Who commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 4:6).

We see how he goes right back to the first word of divine command, as God dissipated the heavy primeval Darkness with the marvel of Light: *‘Let there be Light.’* And here, at last, in the fullness of times, in the face of Jesus Christ, is the ultimate fruition of the Word of Promise—

“The Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

Not, of course, the ultimate fruition in breadth, for truly—

“ALL THE EARTH shall be filled with the Knowledge of the Glory of God” (Hab. 2:14).

—but the ultimate in height: the apex of the perfected manifestation in the face of Jesus Christ—the Perfect Man, the Image of God.

Paul is particularly comparing the *unveiled* and *eternal* Glory in the face of Christ with the veiled and fading glory of the face of Moses, on which the Israelites feared to look. But there is more in this reference to the face of Jesus than that. The contrast is deep. Israel feared because they did not have love. Love and Fear are opposites.

Herein is bound up all the inspiring and transforming *personal* attraction of Divine Love—the *face of Jesus Christ*—through which shone all the spiritual characteristics of the Beauty of Holiness. And herein lies the secret of the power he gives men to become Sons of God, which is: the maintaining before the eye of faith of *the vision of the Glory* of the face of
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Christ—seeing him looking with love upon us; exchanging glances of inexpressible understanding and affection with him.

Here is the power that overcomes the world. In Peter’s dark hour, when in confused panic he denied his Master, Jesus turned and looked upon him (Luke 22:61). The glance was enough to re-awaken all his fear, forgotten love and loyalty, and he ‘went out and wept bitterly.’ And we hear no more of fear or betrayal from Peter, but, immediately after Jesus’ ascension, a fearless standing up to the authorities, and thereafter a faithful, lifelong service, even unto suffering and death.

But Paul immediately adds, in this marvelous message of Glory—

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us” (2 Cor. 4:7).

The issue must be clear. The utter *earthiness of the vessel* must be fully recognized before the divine transforming Love can be poured into it to fill it with the radiant Glory of the Light of the Word. It must be clear that the Glory is of God alone. There must be no self-glorifying confusion of the vessel with the Glory that fills it.

Furthermore, the vessel must first be *empty*—empty of self—cleared of all other contents, and waiting in patient readiness for the time of the good pleasure of God to fill it with the Spirit-Word-Oil and use it as a Lamp of Glory. Of Jesus we are told that he ‘emptied’ and ‘humbled’ himself, so that he might be a fit vessel for God’s use as the Light of the Word: *“He made himself OF NO REPUTATION* (‘ekenosen’: emptied himself)...and humbled himself” (Phil. 2:7-8).

This is illustrated by the next verse of the Psalm (v.101)—

“I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep Thy Word.”

What is the ‘evil way’? How broad is the definition, and how much does it include? The Scriptures teach us that there are but two ways: the Way of Life and the Way of Death—and that the Way of Life is very narrow, and that all outside it is the Way of Death. Have we not often pondered upon Christ’s words concerning the sheep and the goats at the Judgment Seat: the so sharp line of distinction between eager welcome and violent rejection— *“Come, ye BLESSED...Depart, ye CURSED!”* (Matt. 25).

The lesson is that it is all or nothing, black or white: there are no grays. It is impossible to be just *partly* in Christ: *“Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”* There is no halfway. In the very nature of things, there *could not* be. The issues are too vast. It is no light thing to aspire to be Sons of God to all eternity. We must be prepared to make tremendous adjustments in our lives from the animal world around. *We tread on holy ground.*

We are either completely Christ's brethren, in total heart and soul, or we are not his brethren at all. If we are, our love for, and devotion to, him will dominate our lives and shape our every act, because that is the very nature and power of *true and genuine Love*.

If we find that love for him does not grasp and possess and motivate us in this manner, increasingly filling us with the intense yearning toward the treasures of the Word of God that this Psalm portrays, filling us with divine contentment and peace, lifting us up above the little passing concerns and interests of this brief, vain life, and enabling us to discern and put aside the natural evil motions of the flesh—If this has not happened and is not happening, then *we are not being 'made perfect in love,'* we have not made contact with the divine power, we are not sufficiently exposing ourselves to the—

"Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

We are shivering in the darkness and the cold, deceived by a lifeless *form* of godliness, rather than walking in the glory of the living sunshine of his love.

"I have refrained my feet from EVERY evil way..."

"In my flesh dwelleth no good thing...Now the works of the flesh are these—...Love not the things of world: if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (Rom. 7:18; Gal. 5:19; 1 John 2:15).

What are the 'things of the world' that make up the great, godless Way of Death—the 'evil way'? *We know*. We do not have to be told, if we are honest with ourselves. We know the tests—

Is it redeeming the time?

Is it a victory for the Spirit?

Does it make me more holy?

Can I do it 'as unto the Lord'?

Is it a part of the 'living sacrifice' that the father delights to see in His children who are seeking His face?

Does it help to fill my mind and interests with the eternal things of God?

What am I serving with my free time and interest: the flesh or the Spirit?

We know the final wages of each. *'Whatsoever is not of faith is sin,'* because it is outside the holy circle of the transforming and sanctifying Spirit-power. The *'Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the face*

of Jesus Christ' will give us a clear answer, if we will let it. The Psalmist continues: 119:104—

“Through Thy precepts I get UNDERSTANDING: THEREFORE I hate every false way.”

There is the answer. Meditation on the Law brings *understanding*—and understanding brings hatred of everything of the world and of the flesh. The man who sees the danger and undesirability of something, and hates it, does not need to be persuaded to leave it alone—if he has any intelligence at all.

Our hate for the false way will be in proportion to our love for the true. Jesus says *he* is the True Way, and that anything outside of him is false, for he personifies the Father's perfect Will and Word. If our life is sufficiently filled with a zealous affection for Christ, we shall have no desire for the things of the world in which he has no place, and which take our time and attention from him. That is why there is the clear cut black-and-white division at the Judgment Seat—

“Come, ye blessed...DEPART, YE CURSED!” Your love for me either filled and overflowed every aspect of your life, and crowded out all worldly things—or else you had no true love at all: for that is what the True Love will inevitably do to you.

Jesus, as the Light of the World, has much to say about Light and Darkness. Light is the living reality. Darkness is nothing of itself, but simply the absence or lack of Light, though Darkness *appears* real and substantial (and fearful) where there is no Light to make its non-existent unreality manifest. This is in perfect harmony with the facts which Light and Darkness are scripturally used to symbolize. Jesus said—

“The Light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of Light. But when thine eye is evil, thy body also is FULL of Darkness.” (Luke 11:34)

He is emphasizing the vital importance of the *singleness* of the eye: no split or double vision, no mixture of interests, for what our eye is on is what we are interested in. The body, we note again from this passage, is either *full* of Light, or *full* of Darkness. No half-way. The Divine Light of the Word will not mix or dwell with Darkness. Hereby we know that if part of the Darkness continues to linger in us—part interest in worldly things—then the light we think we have is not the True transforming Light. We are relying on a look-alike makeshift that falls short of the full, life-consuming love of Christ. He continues (v. 35)—

“Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.”

It is clear from this solemn warning that it is quite possible to think we have light when we are actually in darkness. He says indeed—

“If the light that is in thee be darkness, HOW GREAT IS THAT DARKNESS!” (Matt. 6:23)

How then are we to know and *be sure* of the True Light? In the next verse Jesus tells us (Luke 11:36)—

“If thy whole body therefore be FULL of Light, having NO PART DARK, the WHOLE shall be full of Light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.”

This wording is a little obscure. At first glance, it appears to be simply a self-evident repetition: *“If your body is full of light, it will be full of light.”* But as we ponder upon it (as we must on all Scripture), and compare other versions, the meaning becomes clear, and we see it as the *test of the True Light*. We believe what he is saying is this—

“If you have the True Light, it will FILL YOU COMPLETELY. There will be no dark parts. Everything in your life will shine brightly and consistently with the Divine Light, like the shining of a lamp.”

A lamp is *all* bright and radiating light: not an incongruous, inconsistent mixture of Light and Darkness. This seems then to be the key thought: if it is the *True Light* that you have, it will triumphantly drive out *all* Darkness: all worldly interests and works of the flesh. For the True Light is not just cold intellectual illumination, but living divine love and power. Once the True Light takes hold of you, you will never be content until *all* the ways of Darkness are rooted out, and the light increasingly burning brighter and brighter—

“The path of the just is as the SHINING LIGHT, that shineth MORE AND MORE unto the Perfect Day” (Prov. 4:18).

119:103— *“How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth.”*

That is the frame of mind the True Light will bring. How far this is from the drudgery of enforced duty! In the goodness of God, goodness itself is beautiful, and evil is ugly. But the natural mind requires spiritual education to discern the beauty, and reject the natural ugliness—for both are spiritually discerned. Filth and ugliness and corruption and perversion appeal to the ignorant and depraved natural mind of man. This is the present downward course of society.

Does this spiritual ecstasy in the sweetness of the Light of the Word, as expressed here by the Psalmist, seem far beyond the attainment of our drab, earthy, mortal natures? The Psalmist himself felt the need to pray:

“INCLINE my heart unto Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness. TURN AWAY mine eyes from beholding vanity; and REVIVE me in Thy way” (vs. 36-37).

Here is the glorious struggle and perfect victory of Christ—

“In ALL points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15).

Paul said: *“O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”* (Rom. 7:24)

But he also said: *“I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content... I can do ALL THINGS through Christ who strengtheneth me.”* (Phi. 4:11-13).

And: *“We are MORE THAN CONQUERORS through him that loved us... Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?”* (Rom. 8:37, 35)

It is essential that we experience weakness and depression, in order to learn and value the Source of all comfort and power. Thus (v. 73)—

“Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding.”

We are God’s workmanship. But as we first find ourselves, He has not finished His work. He has much more to do in those He will eventually glorify for His eternal use. But He desires us to recognize His handiwork so far, and to urge Him to complete the process. Not that He of Himself needs urging, but He delights in those alone who earnestly desire and seek the operation of His hand. The Psalmist pleads (vs. 125-133)—

“Give me understanding... Order my steps in Thy Word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.”

It is the cry of a faithful man, conscious of weakness, and seeking strength. The operation of God upon the faithful (Phil. 2:13)—

“Working in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”

—is not a passive, effortless transformation from without, but rather a striving and struggling through the night like the striving of Jacob with the angel, agonizing for the Divine blessing and the New Divine Name. It is God’s will and wisdom that it should be that way. But still there is—beyond, and above, and around all the dark struggle—the aspect to which the Psalmist testifies in v. 165—

“Great peace have they which love Thy Law, and nothing shall offend them.”

This is the great beauty and mystery of the Way of Life: peace in the midst of conflict, rest in the midst of strife. The Light of the Word said, on the eve of his last, and greatest, and most terrible ordeal—

“Peace I leave with you: my Peace I give unto you... In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world... Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27; 16:33).

The tribulation of the world is the striving in the night. It is *all* the striving: inward and outward. But, in the strange and glorious working of the Spirit, it cannot detract from the Peace. It only *intensifies* the Peace. Peace is the Master's great parting gift: Peace that triumphs over everything in the world. Paul shows the inter-relationship of the Peace, and the tribulation, and the inworking Spirit-Word-Power—

“We have Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...We rejoice in hope of the Glory of God. And not only so, but we rejoice IN TRIBULATION ALSO: knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience approvedness, and approvedness Hope. And Hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit” (Rom, 5:1-5).

“THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH, AND DWELT AMONG US, FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH...THAT WAS THE TRUE LIGHT...AND TO AS MANY AS RECEIVE HIM, TO THEM HE GIVES POWER TO BECOME THE SONS OF GOD.”—John 1:9-14

—Bro. G.V.Growcott

Old Landmarks & Error & Our Responsibility

Our three daily readings then were found in Ezra, Hosea, and Colossians. And in each of those readings, we are given examples of backsliding, and drifting into error. In the first reading, Ezra was deeply sorrowful that the children of Israel had drifted so far as to marry the daughters of the land and had become influenced by their traditions and customs and mode of worship. His exasperation is made known in the first two verses of chapter nine when he says “Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, the people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the Holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands.”

Also in our second reading in Hosea, we are given another incident of drifting, backsliding and error when he says “My people are bent to backsliding from me: though they called them to the Most High, none at all would exalt Him.”

And again in our third reading in Colossians, we are given another warning about remaining constant, consistent, and firmly entrenched in the truth when he tells us to “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”

Brothers and sisters, our circumstances today are not all that different from the problems encountered by these inspired servants in these three readings. You see, periodically the purity of the truth comes under attack with cunning, craftiness and powerfully flawed persuasiveness. Since the truth was rediscovered by Bro. Thomas, it has come under intense pressure to get away from the truth that was once delivered to the saints.

The expositions and standards of conduct as laid down by the Scriptures and expounded upon by the pioneers are being challenged or removed in some Christadelphian circles.

As one by one, the “Ancient and honorable pillars” fall asleep in Christ, the opportunity is taken to “remove the ancient landmarks” which Proverbs 23 tells us not to do.

You see, the Apostasy originally developed out of minor issues from the strict bounds of the truth, but the further these went, the wider the issues became. The landmarks were removed and the Ecclesia eventually became the church.

Today, we not only need the expositions of the pioneers, but we are in dire need of their attitude, their enthusiasm and most of all their fighting spirit against the teachings and the trends of the world and their firm resistance to the subverting of the standards from within. History clearly shows that it took these qualities to uncover the truth and leave us their vast knowledge of God’s Holy Word. We are the succeeding generations who have received the benefit of their efforts. But do we take advantage of it? Are we satisfied with the knowledge and understanding we currently possess? Do we really believe that we are weak and leaky vessels, or do we think we can exist on the sustenance that we obtained in the past? Do we assume that we are sufficiently filled with the Word of God already? Do we cry for understanding? Do we pray for wisdom?

We have just studied Revelations this morning and when we go back a few chapters we see that John was exceedingly distressed at the fact that no one was able to open the scroll, therefore he wept much. Brother Thomas tells us in Eureka that “He was in tribulation and doubtless wept much both on account of his sufferings, and his inability to say ‘how long to the end of the times’”. You see, the apostle was severely depressed at the thought that he could gain no further knowledge on the matters that he desired so deeply. Without a love of spiritual study and a yearning for greater understanding as John possessed, the truth suffers. We brothers and sisters are the guardians of the truth. The problems in Christadelphia today are rampant. The true meaning of Christ’s offering are being obscured and assaulted by unreasonable claims. But the doctrines of Bible truth taught by brethren Thomas, Roberts and Growcott are clearly in accord with Bible truth. The current misleading arguments presented against the traditional teachings of the atonement are shallow and contrary to

scriptural teaching and in total opposition to the writings of the pioneer brethren. The problem is, when these erroneous ideas are embraced then, eventually other doctrines are challenged. You see, if we are not familiar enough with the Truth, then we can easily be deceived when we are assured that **“this is what has always been taught.”** We cannot afford to place our understanding of the Scriptures in the hands of others. Not only is this unwise, but it is also wrong. For we are plainly told 2nd Timothy 2:15 that each of us are to **“Study** to show yourself approved unto God, **A workman** that needeth not be ashamed, **rightly dividing** the word of truth.” Do we investigate difficult matters or leave that for others. Remember it was the spirit of individual investigation that gave rise to the community of Christadelphians.

Books based upon the truth of Scripture like *Elpis Israel*, *Eureka*, *Nazareth Revisited*, and *Christendom Astray* are landmarks that are in danger of being ignored or removed in order to make way for more modern works that are more palatable to the world and more inclusive.

Indeed the separateness between Christadelphians and Christendom that once was so wide is now slowly narrowing and disappearing.

The writings of the pioneers do not hold the same interest and affections to many that they once did. These brethren say and use their names, but ignore their teachings and insight derived from the Scriptures.

Some in today’s generation say these brothers of the past generation are too straight laced and not inclusive enough and the cry is for some new and modern thing. Like the philosophers of Athens in Paul’s day. They say new literature is what we need, therefore abandoning the “old school” and leaving the work and dissemination of the truth to younger and more modern workers, with newer up to date methods that would attract and appeal to a broader spectrum of people.

Brothers and sisters, if the Truth is to survive, then brethren will have to arise to the occasion. Therefore, a great responsibility rests with us all. Let us fervently pray that God will raise up faithful shepherds that will continue to feed the flock. — Not ambitious for power and notoriety, but like our pioneer brothers who were zealous, courageous, and self-sacrificing brethren who by their ability and consistency, can command respect and whose landmarks are respected.

Because, as Berean Christadelphians, we are often accused by those who call themselves Christians that we are too narrow minded because we do not believe that sincerity is enough for salvation — or that somehow all believers will be saved. Even some Christadelphians of other fellowships fault us for being too strict and not inclusive enough. So in a small way, we can understand how Jesus felt when he saw that his followers went back and followed him no more because of some “Hard sayings” that they could neither understand or accept. Then Jesus asked his apostles “will

you also go away?” And Peter responded with “to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.”

But we know that sometimes “hard sayings” need to be said. And although we are not happy when it may alienate those we love, it is our duty to proclaim the truth as we understand it. But it must be done in a loving, patient and gentle fashion. Because Paul’s advice is very clear that “the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto ALL men, apt to teach, patient, IN MEEKNESS INSTRUCTING THOSE WHO OPPOSE THEMSELVES; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.” And although we do not mention it very often, we are instructed to pray for those with whom we differ. For we are told by Jesus to even pray for our enemies — So this would certainly apply to our friends and relatives with whom we may disagree. Perhaps you will remember in the 14th chapter of Numbers Moses’ enemies were so unhappy with him that they wanted to stone him. God even was ready to destroy them and make a new nation of Moses. Now if I would have been Moses, I would have thought — Man, what a deal this is — I can get rid of my enemies and become exalted as the father of a new nation and it was all God’s idea!! But instead Moses approaches God in prayer and pleads “Pardon I beseech thee the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy.” Now this prayer probably changed the course of history because “the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word.”

Of course, we will never encounter adversity and problems to that degree, but we are promised that it will be through “much tribulation that we will enter the kingdom of God.” But this we do know, that whatever comes to us is allowed by God, otherwise we would not be going through it. We must believe that there is no temptation taken us but such as is common to man, and that God is faithful and will not allow us to be tempted above that which we are able to bear, but will with the temptation make a way of escape that we may be able to bear it.

You see, by studying the faithful of other ages we can get an insight into how we should act and react when faced with trials. For we know they are coming because whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

We will remember that Nehemiah had enemies within and without, yet the work he was doing was blessed by God and he could have killed all Nehemiah’s enemies so he would have clear sailing and build the wall without being hindered. But this is just not the way God prepares us for his future temple of which we all hope to be a part. Jesus promises us that “he that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end will I give power over the nations.”

Brothers and sisters, it is impossible to overcome unless there is something to overcome. We are told concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, that “though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.” So if Jesus learned by suffering, we should willingly accept our trials realizing that “our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worked for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

After all, He knows when we sit down and when we stand up. He is acquainted with all our ways and our thoughts are known to him even before we think them. So if we truly believe that “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” then we can better accept the things that happen to us when we realize that God will not try us beyond that which we can bear and that a loving Father knows what is best for us. I even hope we can get to the position as Paul who said “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.”

Our spiritual progress is an important part of our life of service to God and it is measured by our efforts we put forth during our probation. For we are being shaped, formed and molded just as the children of Israel were when they were told “And thou shall remember all the way which the Lord thy God led in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thy heart, whether thou would keep his commandments or no.”

So if the Judgment was taking place today, and our life was summed up in just one sentence, what would that one sentence say about you? I know you are probably thinking surely what I did during my probation will amount to more than just one sentence!! But I want you to recall the lives of the kings of Israel and Judah and you will find that some 30 to 70 years of service was eventually reduced to just one sentence. “And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father did.” Or “And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.” And in between these two extremes we have “And he did that which was right in the sight of Lord, but not with a perfect heart” and also “He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, but not as the kings of Israel that were before him.”

So, what if our life was condensed to one sentence? What do you think that sentence would say? First I want you to think of all the things we have done. Our hopes, plans, all our activities, all the things we have learned, places to which we have gone, people we knew, stuff we have acquired, money we earned and spent, jobs we have had, homes we have owned, cars we have driven, children we have raised, degrees we have earned, awards we have won, and meals we have cooked. A whole lifetime of activity condensed down to one sentence. It would be good if we paused

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for a second and remember Paul's words of warning – "For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth."

Now I am sure we all know what we would like to say if we were allowed to write that one sentence condensing our whole life into just a few words. But we will not be the one doing the evaluating. It will be Christ who will pronounce that sentence upon us. And although it will be Him who will deliver the verdict, — it will be us that will give him the material upon which judgment upon our life will be made. So when you think about condensing things down to the essential elements, the first thing I think of is gold refined in a fire, then the dross is skimmed off and only pure gold remains. Or what about wheat — when it is winnowed, the chaff blows away and only the good kernel remains. And so it will be with us when God condenses our life — the miscellaneous non-essentials will be gone and only what we did for God, his son Jesus Christ and the truth will be left.

So I thought I would take an inventory of a life of 66 years (since I have now reached that milestone) and see where they go. According to statistics we can take off 22 years for sleeping and another 22 years working for bread that perishes. We will spend almost 6 years eating and 4 to 5 years commuting to and from work.. And most of us spend 3 years on schooling or continuing education classes. That is 57 of the 66 years not counting extra things like vacations and miscellaneous activities.

Let's break it down even simpler. We all have 168 hours in a week (from one Sunday to the next) Now ask yourself, would Christ be able to say that we did that which was right with a perfect heart — or right but not with a perfect heart. Remember only the things we did for God will carry any weight. So how much of the last 168 hours counted?

The good news is if Christ does not return this coming week, we have a brand new 168 hours to spend. And if He does not come until this time next year, we will have 8,736 hours to fill with the things of God or the things of this life. Now I want to leave you with a quote from James 4:14, "*For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.*" So the admonition to us is to choose wisely how we spend the hours we have in this evaporating life. For it is my hope and prayer that when Christ does return that He will be able to tell us "we did that which was right in the sight of the Lord."

—Bro. Jerry Connolly

Signs of the Times

"Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak

say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about.” Joel 3:9-11

Over the past few days Hamas have continually bombed cities and populated areas of Israel, reaching even as far as Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, specifically targeting Ben Gurion Airport, which the Iron Dome anti-missile defense system shot down. In defense the IDF have hit more than 1,000 Hamas and Islamic Jihad positions. According to the Israeli national news 100 Palestinians have now been killed largely as a result of Hamas leaders hiding in populated civilian areas and even encouraging people to use their bodies as human shields to defend their leaders. Additionally, Hamas rocket-launching sites and weapons storage facilities are usually located in residential areas! Even after warning shots are fired to warn that the IDF are about to drop a bomb, the Palestinians line the roofs of the houses in a bid to save their leaders knowing that Israel will not intentionally target civilians. In cases where Israel have no option but to bomb a house that may be housing a terrorist command centre, Israel calls the mobile phones of the house to warn that the house is to be targeted in an air strike! They also drop leaflets warning the residents of a town or city that an air strike is imminent. However, Hamas are calling for genocide in Israel and specifically aim their rockets at the homes of innocent civilians.

As usual, nations such as Turkey and Egypt have sided with the Palestinians, and are calling for Israel to “Stop this oppression”. Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan said, “If not, it is not possible to realize normalization between Turkey and Israel.” As Bible students, we do not ever expect there to be peace in this region until our Lord reigns as king over all the earth. Bro. Roberts wrote the following concerning what was at the end of Gentile times: “The saints are not of those who cry, Peace and safety, except to such as fear God and keep His commandments. For all the rest of mankind war is appointed, especially the war of the great day of God Almighty, which at the coming of the Lord, is destined to sweep away all refuges of lies and lay the foundation for a reign of righteousness and everlasting peace. The day of the Lord will not come upon the saints as a thief. As a snare it will come upon all them that dwell upon the whole earth (Luke 21:35), but upon the called, and chosen, and faithful, it will come as the welcome deliverance which a lifetime’s expectation and preparation will have made them ready to receive with gladness. Seeing the appointed tokens among the nations, they lift up their heads knowing their redemption draweth nigh.”

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Jesus Returning as a Thief

“This Perfect man comes into Babylon the Great as a thief. A thief gets into the house as quietly and noiselessly as possible; and chooses a time when he supposes all the inmates are fast asleep, and consequently off

their guard. Having opened a door, or effected an entrance of some sort, he prepares to carry off the spoil. All his preparations for this are done with great caution and carefulness, so as not to awake the sleepers; from whom, the little light he employs is averted, lest its stimulus should disturb their slumbers. This is as a thief comes, and exactly illustrates the coming of the "One like to a Son of Man". He does not come into Babylon like a descending balloon from the clouds, with all eyes fixed upon him, and wondering where he is going to alight! A thief does not come after this fashion." - Bro Thomas

If we are waiting for a sign of Christ's coming before we are galvanized into action, we are going to be caught unawares. It is a combined presence of awareness of God's word, and an awareness of global events that will have us awake and prepared for the thief-like return. Signs that are obvious to the world at large will come far too late for us to react. We will then be among the virgins whose lamps are empty and can give no light for the way.

—Bro. Sid Jones

Meditations—Deity's Ways No. 60

CHRIST died, was buried, and rose again, according to the Scriptures. This fact, to which Paul called the attention of the Corinthians (1 Cor. 15:4), is an unanswerable argument for Christ's resurrection, and is utterly destructive of the rash and foolish suggestion of unbelievers that Christ merely swooned on the cross, recovering after his interment, to die later on in obscurity. The scriptures themselves are truly a testimony—a witness for the truth—especially for the truth concerning the history of Christ. With these scriptures in hand Christ could say they "testify of me," and which of his contemporaries could gainsay it? The scriptures were not an invention of Christ's day. They were in the hands of his enemies, and had been in existence for generations. Three centuries before, they had been translated into the Greek tongue. The antiquity of the writings of Moses and the prophets was never and could never be questioned. These scriptures, as Christ said, spake of him. They led the Jewish nation to expect him. According to the scriptures, he was born in Bethlehem Ephratah (Mic. 5:2); of the tribe of Judah, in the time of David (Isa. 11:1). Similarly foretold were his anointing by the Spirit, and his proclamation of the gospel (Isa. 61:1–2); his betrayal (Psa. 41:9); his sufferings and crucifixion (Psa. 22.; Zec. 12:10); his death and burial (Isa. 53:8–9); his resurrection and ascension to God's right hand (Psa. 16:10; 110:1). For men to try to escape the conclusion of all this, as bearing on Christ's resurrection, is indeed madness. Their wriggling, when brought face to face with the predictions, is truly pitiable. And yet they go on doing it. Why? Christ will tell us presently.

There is plenty of faith in the world, but little of the right kind. The faith that pleases God is a whole-hearted belief in the things that He has revealed. This virtue has been conspicuous by its absence in all the ages.

God spake through Moses, but was not believed (Heb. 4:2); through the prophets, with the same result (Isa. 53:1; Jer. 6:19); through Christ and the apostles, and it was still: "Lord, who hath believed our report?" (John 12:38; Rom. 10:15–16). But the point which principally concerns us is this, things were not to improve, but to get worse, until, at the time of Christ's advent, faith was to be well-nigh extinguished. "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find (the) faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8). In view of this, let us be very careful. The truth has been providentially revived in the earth by the labours of Dr. Thomas, and our eyes have been opened to it. Let us then refuse to join hands with any who seek to hide or destroy the truth. Our danger in this respect lies not so much with the alien, but with those who, having been in our midst, are using their influence (it may be unwittingly) to take us back to the land of unbelief—there are the upholders of renunciationism, of immortal immergence, of partial inspiration, of no resurrectional responsibility for enlightened rebels, of present possession of the Holy Spirit, etc. We cannot do much for the truth, but this we can do, we can refuse to compromise it by extending the hand of fellowship to men who leave or deny it. But strength to do this will only exist where the Bible is recognised in the light in which Paul puts it—as the inspired and unerring Word of God.

No man will reach the kingdom without prayer, and prayer to be effectual must proceed from lips which are sincere and upright (Ps. 145:18). God will not hear men who keep not His commandments (Prov. 15:29; Psa. 66:18). The prayers of the disobedient are worse than useless—they are an abomination in God's ears (Prov. 28:9). Let us then examine ourselves, and pray simply, fervently, unceasingly. Let us pay no heed to the objections of men who tell us that prayer is beneath the notice of a Great Creator, that it is superfluous, and, if answered, would mean a violation of Nature's laws. Till the Bible is demolished we can afford to let such objections severely alone. The Bible is full of encouragement in the matter of prayer. Hannah prayed for a child, and got one (1 Sam. 1:11, 20) Abraham's servant prayed for a good wife for Isaac, and met with a response (Gen. 24.). Hezekiah asked for longer life, and received it (Is. 38). Moses and David petitioned the destruction of their enemies, and were answered. Therefore there is power in prayer. But someone may say, "I have often prayed, and obtained no reply." What of that? Has not God coupled with His promises an intimation that at times He will refrain from answering prayer? No prayer will be heeded which is opposed to His will (1 John. 5:14). Can we not trust God to pick and choose for us in the things that we would like? Much that is beyond the power of finite man to see and grasp has to be taken into account before his prayer can be answered. We sometimes forget this when things do not go just as we would wish. Let us remember, too, that this is a day for walking by faith, and that all prayer is answered in harmony with this divine arrangement.

Commerce, in itself, is not evil. It is lawful and imperative. Without commerce the world would soon collapse. It is an occupation, however, which is attendant with tremendous moral risks. The temptations of business men are truly legion and very subtle. Shopkeepers and traders need, above most men, to be exceedingly circumspect and watchful. Their only safeguard lies in a determination to keep God's will in reference to their calling well in mind. "Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have" (Lev. 19:36; Deut. 25:13-16). This is our duty, and the brother who is faithful to it is now a delight in the ever and all-seeing eyes of God (Prov. 11:1). The one who is obedient will set his face against exaggeration and misrepresentation (the world's unconquerable failings). He will praise his wares (and use all his eloquence for the purpose), but he will not call brass, gold: nor margarine, butter, nor calico, linen. It may be easier, nay, it is easier, and more lucrative in the short run, to be unconscientious, but it is wise to think of the by-and-bye. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Bro. A.T. Jannaway—1900

A Christadelphian on the Land of Israel

Sixth Visit to the Holy Land

TO CONSTANTINOPLE

Sailing from Smyrna we soon found ourselves among the almost countless islands of the Ægean Sea. We could not help thinking what a training in navigation captains must undergo in order to safely wend their way around these islands: their look-out has to be ceaseless, or terrible disasters would result; for the danger, like sin-in-the-flesh, is always there.

After leaving Smyrna, Mitylene was the first island of importance we met; and in which we were, of course, interested on account of it being mentioned by Luke as being the place where he sailed to from Assos after taking Paul on board (Acts xx. 14).

With the aid of our map we were able to see that we were approaching the whereabouts of the city of Troas, which Paul visited upon more than one occasion. From Acts xvi. we learn, that it was from here Paul was called by God to go "over into Macedonia" and help the brethren there. He did so with effect from what we read later on. He also visited Troas upon a subsequent journey, and stayed there nearly a week. Upon that occasion one of his lectures lasted so long that one of his hearers went off to sleep, and, falling from the third floor window, was picked up dead, enabling the Apostle Paul to prove, beyond all doubt, that he was possessed of the Holy Spirit (Acts xx. 5-12).

Next we entered the Dardanelles—which associated as it is with the terrible tragedy of Gallipoli, reminded us grimly of the Great War of 1914-18. With the aid of our prism glasses we were able to have a good view of the countless monuments erected to the memory of the victims in the gamble of lives so lightly engaged in by a certain class of politicians. The Dardanelles, also known as the Straits of Gallipoli, was formerly termed Hellespont, made famous in history by reason of the exploits of Xerxes, 480 years B.C.; and, later on, by Alexander the Great. The entire length is about forty-five miles, connecting the Ægean Sea with the Sea of Marmora. The width varies from a little less than one mile, to five miles at its greatest width. Opening out into the Sea of Marmora, it affords a delightful cruise before reaching Constantinople—so restful sailing along what has been termed “a glorified lake”, 175 miles long by about fifty miles wide, at the end of which is what one writer and traveller has pronounced, “the loveliest scene on earth, so bright, so varied in outline, so rich in colour, and so gorgeous in architecture”: its name is:

CONSTANTINOPLE

The city is situate at the entrance to the Bosphorus; the strait of which is about eighteen miles long, and one mile wide; dividing Europe from Asia, and connecting the Sea of Marmora, in Turkey, with the Black Sea, in Russia. Until the beginning of the fourth century A.D., the city of Constantinople was known as Byzantium, when the present name was substituted in honour of its founder, the Emperor Constantine. This is the second time of our visiting the Turkish capital; the previous visit being in the year 1902. For things that really matter concerning Constantinople—her peoples and her destiny—we cannot do better than refer our readers to the writings of Dr. Thomas in *Eureka*, to the section dealing with Rev. ix; and *Elpis Israel*, particularly pages 332-348 (Maran-Atha Edition).

To see Constantinople from the deck of the “Sphinx”, and then to land and see her from within—Oh, what a disillusionment! The contrast can be compared to the fascinating and captivating little “fairy” revelling in the limelight on a stage, and the half-starved and consumptive offspring of overworked and underpaid parents—the same damsel, but with its physical defects and deficiencies hidden behind powder, paint, and tinsel.

But what else could we expect? Constantinople is Turkey—Turkey is Ottoman—and Ottoman, according to the Bible is **THE ABOMINATION THAT MAKETH DESOLATE**. In brief she is *The Desolator* (Dan. ix. 27; xii. 11; see also *Book Unsealed*, p. 23 and *Eureka*, Vol. III., p. 545).

There is plenty to interest the visitor in Constantinople, whether in the native quarters, on the southern side of the Golden Horn, and known as *Stamboul* (evidently an abbreviation of Constantinople), or in the *Galata* and *Pera* quarters—the European—on the northern side.

The principal landmark, and one of the first places we visited was the Mosque of St. Sophia, to enter which we (“Christian dogs”!) had to remove our boots, or cover them with Mahomedan “overalls”. The original St. Sophia is said to have been founded by Constantine, and the present one, its successor, by Justinian. The Mosque is 250 feet long and 235 feet wide; and the dome is 179 feet high. When it came into Turkish hands and ceased to be a church, everything in the shape or character of images, or portraits, was transformed, obliterated, or defaced, in keeping with the anti-idolatrous tenets of Mahomet. It became a Mosque in the year 1453, concerning which Dr. Thomas supplies much interesting matter in that section of Eureka dealing with the sounding of the Fifth and Sixth Trumpets. Over the main entrance to the Mosque is a Greek Inscription, the translation of which is, “Jesus said: I am the Door; by me if any man enter in he shall go in and out, and find pasture”.

The Imperial Museum of Antiquities, contains more than one exhibit of interest to those interested in God’s Word and God’s people. There is the square stone-Inscription discovered in Jerusalem, by the French excavator, M. Clement Ganneaux, in May, 1871. It formed part of the middle wall of partition in Herod’s Temple, the Temple of New Testament times. The Inscription is a warning, in Greek, that only Jews were allowed to pass the partition-wall; and, that any Gentile found within the Temple enclosure would be liable to capital punishment. Herod had granted this protection to the “Sanctuary”, and the Greek word *heiron* is not only found in the speech of Titus to the Jews, as recorded by Josephus, in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XV., chap. xi., p. 5; but in Matthew xxi. 12, and Acts xxi. 28 also, where it is translated “Temple”. The wall of partition is interestingly explained by Josephus in his *Wars of the Jews*, Book, V., chap. v., p. 2, as well as in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XV., chap. xi., p. 5. The experiences of Trophimus, the Ephesian, as related by Luke (Acts xxi. 29), would enable him to fully appreciate Paul’s reference to the spiritual middle wall of partition in Ephesians ii. 11-16. We have no doubt that our Lord, as well as his Apostle Paul, often looked upon this very stone we have been surveying in the Museum of Antiquities.

We also inspected the actual Siloam Inscription, of which many brethren and sisters have so often seen the plaster cast in the British Museum. The Inscription was discovered in 1880 by one of the pupils of Mr. Schick, a German architect, when playing with other lads in the so-called Pool of Siloam, which we have visited many a time in our Holy Land visits. The details and importance of the discovery are of the utmost interest to Christadelphians, and those who would like to know more thereof will find such in *The British Museum with Bible in Hand* (2/- of the Maran-Atha Press). The Inscription dates back to the days of Hezekiah, and records the making of a tunnel by that King to supply the Holy City with water.

“The British Museum has also removed its copy of the Siloam Inscription, which used to stand in pride of place in one of the upper galleries. I suppose they feel that with limited space they should give priority to genuine artefacts rather than mere copies, but the inscription is so important that it deserves to be shown rather than a couple of old pots, no matter how genuine.” *Kendall A Down—2010 See below picture from Wikipedia*



Another interesting exhibit in this Museum at Constantinople, is a Tablet with cuneiform writing, found in Palestine in 1881. It belongs to the 14th cent. B.C., and refers to Zimrida, Governor of Lachish. What makes this tablet of additional interest is that a similar one was found at Tel-el-Amarna, on the Banks of the Nile, from this very Zimrida to the then King of Egypt.

For the second time in a quarter of a century we enjoyed an expedition up the Bosphorus to the Black Sea. No; that is not quite the truth, for the enjoyment was but of short duration. We took the journey in a Turkish pleasure (!) steamer, which was literally packed; and, that too, on a July day with a broiling sun. We were thirsty and headachy, and I ventured down below to try and get a cup of tea. I soon wished I had not done so; for the very sight and smell of the Turkish “kitchen” made me ill: it turned my stomach, and for the next ten or twelve meals hot water was all the doctor allowed me to have—”Enuf said”!

We were not sorry to leave Constantinople, and to know that the “Sphinx” was full steam through the Sea of Marmora and the Dardanelles, into the Ægean Sea, and bound for Greece. While doing so, the writer was on his back, trying to become convalescent with the aid of the Ship’s Doctor, who, by the way, knew very little of English, which fact was not without a humorsome side. I objected to the endless diet of hot water, but the French doctor insisted upon obedience if I wanted to get well.

Sister Jannaway helps me in the way of Diary keeping, and among the doctor’s orders which she has verbally recorded, is that he insisted on my

obeying the orders from hindquarters! “Count your many blessings, name them one by one, and it will surprise you, what the Lord has done”. Oh, how true!

Here am I all but well again, while someone (a nonconformist minister), who was taken similarly ill at Constantinople, has been left behind, with his wife suffering with typhoid. It appears he and his wife had been long saving up for this Palestine Visit, and had no surplus! The hearts of many were touched, and out of sheer thankfulness, and pity, a spontaneous collection was made, and a good round sum was handed to them for contingencies.

—Bro. F. G. Jannaway—1926

A Form of Forgiveness

But what else does Jesus here say is essential to effectual prayer?

“And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also may forgive you” (Mark 11:25).

There is a form of forgiveness—cold, patronizing and self-righteous—that is worse than no forgiveness at all. True forgiveness, as Jesus makes clear, is that kind we ourselves hope to get from God. It is not a matter of writing off the offence, and letting the barrier remain—unless we are quite content to be so treated by God.

There is a proud and evil human saying, “I forgive, but I do not forget”—a selfish attitude that seeks the personal gratification of granting forgiveness without assuming any of its humility or burden. Here again—would that type of forgiveness from God satisfy us, when we ask Him to blot out our failures from His memory?

Jesus is always slipping a few words that upset our carefully-framed picture, and make it so hard for the flesh. Speaking of the fate of the unmerciful debtor, he says—

“So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother” (Matt. 18:35).

“From your hearts”—there is the key. We must get resentment and irritation clean out of our hearts, or they will poison us and bring us down to death. *Bro. G. V. Growcott—Be Ye Transformed Vol. 2*

The Vision Hath an End

As for trouble, we have to look for it, though we naturally avoid it as much as possible. Evil is strictly subject to divine regulation in the case of those who *'seek first the Kingdom of God.'* If we are not of those, we are spending our time and strength in vain.

If we are, we need not be dismayed at the clouds and the storms, though it may often be difficult to exclude the fear to which flesh and blood in its present state is naturally liable.

“The Lord reigneth”—even now, in the kingdoms of men, with all their confusion.

“He is not far from everyone of us”—though we cannot discern such tokens of His presence as we may thirst for.

“The vision hath an end.” The pangs of probation cannot last for ever. Though the heart sink and the back break, the work God accomplishes by tribulation cannot be lost, but will be brought forth at the proper time like sparkling streams of metal from the crushed and molten ore: the ‘proper time’ being the happy morning of deliverance in the Lord’s glorious presence.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1889*

There Shall Be Division

THE Christadelphians do not stand off from the general body owning the “Christian” name from any idea that division is better than union. Speaking for ourselves, we mournfully submit to it as a necessity. Union with the great throng would be a present advantage in every sense and way. But it is not a possibility with any man having discernment of what the Spirit teaches and faithfulness to what it requires.

There is such a thing as “THE Truth,” whether the common run of men know it or not. There is such a thing as *“coming out from among”* and *“having no fellowship with”* the indifference and error and evil that prevail, however many may have become insensible to the obligation.

It is the recognition of these that lead to division, and not any insensibility to the advantage of union. The MANY are indifferent: a FEW are faithful. Hence the fermentation. It was Christ’s understanding of men, and his foresight of the working of things among them that led him to say—

“From henceforth there shall be division” (Luke 12:52-3).

The result is inevitable in an evil world, so long as there is any faithfulness left.

It is insinuated that withdrawal from errorists is an evil thing. This is a fashionable sentiment, but it is not in accord with the mind of Christ, as expressed through the apostles.

Love and union are beautiful. They are the most exquisite manifestations of intelligent life possible upon earth, and the earth will yet see their universal triumph when the purpose of God is finished.

But meanwhile, there are other duties. The loving John, says concerning those who *“bring not the doctrine of Christ,”* that the faithful are to (2 John 10)—

“Receive them not into their house.”

And Jesus, in his message through this same John, commends one ecclesia for acting on this discrimination, and condemns another for not acting on it. To Ephesus (Rev. 2:2)—

“Thou canst not bear them that are evil, but have tried them that say they are apostles, and hast found them liars.”

To Thyatira he says (Rev. 2:20)—*“Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, who calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants.”*

Schism is the result of acting out these principles, and is a GOOD thing if intelligently and faithfully done. It is a painful and apparently “unfriendly” process: but there is no choice with those who would be friendly to GOD first.

The Truth has been an obscure and weak thing from the beginning. From its nature it cannot become popular, because it runs counter to human feeling in so many practical ways not seen at first.

Its true friends know this, and they are not working to obtain public success or even public notice. They are simply carrying out orders. Christ calls for exhibition of the Light, and they exhibit it. Their operations in this respect are necessarily misunderstood by the public which judges from its own motives, and cannot judge in any other way.

The Christadelphians cannot fail, because they are not aiming at what is humanly considered “success.” They are simply engaged in doing their duty in the faith of a stupendous, world-stunning success which is impending, and which depends on no human effort.

Christ will shortly show himself on the earth, and put his hand to the work in a way that will startle so-called “Christian” mankind. True Christadelphians plod away with this in view. For this reason, they cannot be quenched by scorn or crushed by failures of any kind.

The very last things they desire is the attention and patronage of the “public,” which looms so large in all ordinary enterprises. Nothing is so dangerous to the Truth as “respectability,” because the Truth is a matter of God's importance, while respectability is an affair of man's importance. The two cannot work together.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1891*

Theatres and Bar-Rooms

THE theatre and public-house (bar-room) are impossible places of resort for the friends of God. We are in the world, and the world is an evil world throughout. But there are some phases of it with which we can have nothing to do.

We may live in the same street; travel in the same train or boat; listen in the same crowd to a lecture on some informing topic—such are extreme forms of innocuousness. None of these have to do with the policy and mode of individual life.

It is here where the law of Christ lays hold of us. We are not to be '*of the world*' in the objects for which we live, or the principles on which we act. Nor are we to expose ourselves to the corrupting influence of men who '*know not God and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.*' Therefore we cannot take part in their ways or their assemblies.

It is not necessary to prove this for earnest servants of Christ. Reason establishes it, even if precept were not so plain—

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful, but his delight is in the law of the Lord” (Ps. 1:1-2).

“I have hated the congregation of evil doers, and will not sit with the wicked ... I am a companion of all them that love Thy righteous precepts” (Ps. 26:5; 119:62-63).

When we talk of public-houses and theatres, we talk of institutions that have to do with every form of ungodliness and congregational sinnership. The man who requires this to be proved shows he does not know what ungodliness is, probably because he is himself ungodly. It is only a godly man that knows ungodliness.

Ungodliness is the life lived with reference as to one's own pleasure merely, and without reference to God's object in having made us, or God's will with us, while we are living. This is the essence of public-house and theatre life, which—at the same time—are worse than many other forms of life having the same essence, for they foster more active forms of corruption than any other, and have a worse reputation even among '*those that are without.*' —*Bro. Roberts, 1891*

Bro. Roberts very rightly puts theatres and bar-rooms in the same category. Wisdom will agree. GVG

The Sabbath

CHRIST'S advice to his disciples to pray that their flight, during the troubles that were to come on the land, should not be on the sabbath day, was on a par with the same advice about the winter. Flight during winter would be a much more rigorous experience than flight during the summer. And so would flight on the sabbath day than flight on the week day; for it

is on record that the invader redoubled his activity on that day because the Jews abstained from fighting.

It has nothing to do with the question of sabbath keeping. It was always a doctrine of Christ's that it was lawful to do well on the sabbath day. This sabbath question is a hurtful crotchet when the sabbath-keepers would impose their practice as a law on their neighbors. That they keep the sabbath themselves is permissible, on the principle laid down by Paul (Rm. 14:6). But they must not put a yoke on the necks of their brethren.

It is especially intolerable, as they are wrong in their constructions. Co1. 2:16 sets the believer free from sabbath observance. To say that this verse means the 'ceremonial sabbaths and not the 7th day' is an assertion for which no ground can be shown. If it apply to the ceremonial sabbaths, it must apply to the other as well, for they both stood on the same foundation: the Mosaic '*handwriting of ordinances which was against us*' (Col. 2:14).

Besides, 2 Cor. 3:7-11 specifically includes what was '*written and engraven on stones*' (and therefore the 7th day) as among the things '*done away in Christ.*' The 7th day in Eden was a day of rest by divine example. There's no evidence to show that Adam was commanded to keep it in the Mosaic sense.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1890*

The Right of Brotherly Love

I write to you as those whom the Lord loves, and who will be banded together in a joyous company when the Lord comes. I write to you, as one of you, having the same experience and the same need. The scorner may mockingly enquire what right I have to write to such. I answer, the right of brotherly love, which belongs to every man who can rise to his privileges in Christ. Brotherly love leads to brotherly concern in all things, but particularly in those that relate to our standing in God, our position in the present probation, and our hope concerning the purpose of God which will surely be accomplished. Your present lot is grievous in many respects; and at times you are greatly cast down, and nigh despairing altogether of the Lord's promised kindness in Christ. I write to remind you of the cause you also have for encouragement and joy.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1885*

Spirit Inspiration

A correspondent says—"Arrival at the truth in our reading is due to the invisible inspiration of the Spirit who is the source of the Word."

WE are sorrowfully compelled to object to this. If he means it as a mere description of the enlightenment that results from the study of the Word, it is an unhappy, misleading, dangerous description; for a man is then liable to claim inspiration for his interpretations. And if one man, why

not another? And why not all? And where should we be then, with the jangle of interpretation that fills the air?

If it is not a mere description of scriptural enlightenment, but meant to be an accurate statement of fact, then objection must be more strenuous still. Inspiration is not an extant phenomenon at present. Experience and prophecy are both conclusive as to this. It is better to recognize our poverty than to play with false assumptions of wealth.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1887*

Slander

No prudent man would circulate such an evil report without at least asking the person affected for his version of the facts, which, in this case, are as good as they are represented bad. No doubt the offender thinks he is retailing truth. As a matter of fact, he is committing a great offense which would be punishable in law, if we were at liberty to resort to that vindication. We forgive him, believing he sins ignorantly. We have borne many slanders in silence, but are never unwilling to furnish explanation when applied to. When not applied to, but sinned against in this way, our only part is to bear it with as much patience and charity as possible in this state of weakness, which will shortly end. God's vindications are complete, and worth waiting for. —*Bro. Roberts, 1891*

Our Duty Toward Error and Errorists

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

—Bro. Roberts, 1890

Kindness and Fellowship

PAUL recommends patience with adversaries, exhorting that in meekness we should instruct those who oppose themselves. Jesus commands kindness to all, even the undeserving. He counsels submission to evil, and compliance with request even to the double of what is asked.

There is a place for the operation of all these precepts: but they are misapplied when they are allowed to interfere with the attitude of wisdom that says—

“Go from the presence of a foolish man when thou perceiveth not in him the words of knowledge” (Prov. 14: 7).

“Speak not in the ears of a fool; for he will despise the wisdom of thy words” (23:9).

“Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out. Yea, strife and reproach shall cease” (Prov. 22:10).

Christ and the apostles are themselves on the side of these counsels. While exhorting us to patience, forbearance, love, kindness, etc., Christ says—

“Give not that which is holy to the dogs. Cast not your pearls before swine” (Mt. 7:6).

“Beware of false prophets: ye shall know their fruits” (Mt. 7:15).

“Let him (a man refusing to reason) be to thee as a heathen and a publican” (Mt. 18:17).

So also Paul: *“Beware of dogs: beware of evil workers”* (Phil. 3:2).

“Withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly” (2 Thess. 3:6).

“False brethren ... to whom we gave subjection, no, not for an hour” (Gal. 2:5).

And Jude: *“Of some have compassion, making a difference. Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted with the flesh”* (v. 2).

On the same principle, we are commanded to *‘contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the saints’* (Jude 3); and to *‘have no fellowship’* (Eph. 5:11; 2 Cr. 6:14-17; Tit. 3:10, etc.) with any who subvert the doctrine of the apostles in faith or practice.

The two sets of precepts are not inconsistent. Our kindness may abound with a plenteousness that goes beyond the requests of those who ask us, and we may exercise a patience as nearly unwearied as may be, and a magnanimity that shall be godlike toward the evil and erring—without taking fools into our bosom, or suffering the highest interests of ourselves and others to be endangered by a weak friendship for those whose ways decline to death.

—*Bro. Roberts, 1876*

Dr. Thomas and Divisions

SOME brethren make a great boast of their strict adherence to Dr. Thomas and brother Roberts; as much as to say that those who have not subscribed to their judgment *do not*. Now in which camp are we to suppose Dr. Thomas would be found to-day if he had been in the land of the living?

Certainly not among the latter-day troublers of Israel, with their “gnat-straining and camel swallowing” dispositions.

Here are some remarks of his written in 1866 and recorded in the *Ambassador* of that year. He opens his epistle with the words of the Apostle Paul, “I beseech you brethren by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that ye all speak the same things and that there be no divisions among you; and that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”

After addressing them as brethren of Christ and alluding to their position as his faithful witnesses, the doctor goes on to say, “Is it so then that after so many years’ study of the enlightening word ye are yet carnal? For whereas there is said to be among you strife and divisions are ye not carnal and walk as men? Know ye not that ye are the Temple of the Deity, if He have any temple in your locality? and ‘that the Spirit which is the Truth’ dwelleth, or ought to dwell, in you? Now, if any man defile the temple by divisions and unnecessary contentions and strifes, him will the Deity destroy; for His Temple is holy, which Temple I trust ye are. If then ye be this Temple ye are Christ’s House, ‘the Ecclesia of Deity,’ and therefore if faithful to Him who hath invited you out of darkness into His marvellous light ‘ye are the pillar and support of the Truth’ in the place of your sojourning, hence you are collectively stewards of the mysteries of the Deity which are ‘foolishness to the wise and prudent’ of this generation. Now it is required of stewards that they be found faithful, and that they keep their accounts correctly so that when the Lord comes they may not be put to shame in his presence. But, as stewards, *are you* fulfilling this necessity, while contending and striving to the disruption of the congregation and the abolition of the Table in your midst? It is good and wholesome to ‘contend for the Faith once for all delivered to the saints, as in past years you have against the Laodiceans.’ Such a contention as this will never divide a healthy body. It will cause it to grow with the increase of the Deity; but to contend for anything short of this, or irrelevant to it, develops only confusion and every evil work.”

The doctor then draws the attention of the brethren to their future destiny as the rulers, judges and peacemakers of the age to come, and then he adds: “Is it indeed so, that the Truth hath not power in your midst to preserve you from divisions and confusion? If you cannot maintain peace and unanimity among yourselves, how will you ever become morally fit to command the peace of the world and to maintain it? Is not this to your

shame? Is it so, ‘that there is not a wise man among you’? No, not one that can straighten out any difficulty that may arise among you? Now, therefore, there is utterly a fault among you!

“What is it? *Are* any of your number possessed of the old demon of Puritanism, that would not permit a woman to kiss her child on the Sabbath day because it broke the Sabbath and savoured of the flesh? or that would not allow a man to work a ferry boat unless he were a member of the church or ‘in the Lord’? or a demon that burned witches and hanged Quakers because they did not pronounce Shibboleth aright. Beloved brethren, human nature is always tending to extremes and transcending what is written. As the saying is, it will strain at gnats and swallow camels by the herd. It set up the Inquisition and is incessantly prying into matters beyond its jurisdiction. It is very fond of playing the judge and of executing its own decrees. It has a zeal but not according to knowledge, and therefore its zeal is intemperate and not the zeal of wisdom or knowledge rightly used. It professes great zeal for the *purity* of the Church, and would purge out everything that offends its sensitive imagination.

“But is it not a good thing to have a church without tares, black sheep, or spotted heifer? Yea, verily, it is an excellent thing. But then it is a thing the Holy Spirit has never yet developed, and cannot be developed by any human judiciary in the administration of spiritual affairs. There are certain things that must be left to the Lord’s own adjudication when he comes; as it is written ‘He that judgeth is the Lord, therefore judge nothing before the time until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will manifest the counsels of the hearts,’ ‘and then shall every man have praise of the Deity’ (1 Cor. 4:5: Rev. 2:18); ‘every man’ whose hidden things and heart-counsels when brought to light will be accounted worthy of much praise. Does not this teach us how more important it is that brethren be more diligent in *examining themselves* than in examining other brethren; and that the Lord expects them to leave something for Him to do in the way of judging, condemning, excommunicating, cutting-off, and casting out ‘in the time of the dead that they should be judged.’ ‘Brethren’ be not children in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be perfect’ (1 Cor. 14:20).”

In giving a word of admonition further on in his letter the doctor says “Do not act as wayward children, and because you cannot have your own way shy off at a tangent and turn your backs pettishly on one another.”

There is much of this in the disrupted ecclesia in our day. Christ is at the door, what will he say?

[The foregoing was copied from *The Ambassador* for 1866, pages 91–93, some considerable time ago by bro. F. H. W. Rhodes. It is still in season.—ED.]

Hints For Bible Markers

The Psalms

Psalm 3:2

There is no help for him in God.

“And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.” (Luke 23:35)

Selah

This is a musical sign denoting the moment to the instrumentalists when they had to give the greatest volume of sound.

The object was not merely for musical effect however, but to draw attention to the words then sung. Hence the theme of the song was made expressive, for the child of God must sing “with the understanding” as well as with the tongue.

The word wherever it appears in the Psalms is associated with one of two things. Either it expresses the vanity of human life when lived without obedience to God, or on the other hand the blessedness now and henceforth of those who put their trust in the Holy One of Israel.

So as we read the Psalms if we translate the word, as we may quite properly do, into “Pause and think of that”, wherever it occurs, we can enrich our meditations. Take its first occurrence in Psalm iii. The fleshly mind says, “There is no help for him in God”, speaking of those who reviled Jesus (Luke xxiii. 35). Well, we “think of that” and then we turn to the 4th and 8th verses of the same Psalm and the reply of the Righteous One is “The Lord heard me out of His holy hill”. Think of that! and finally, “Salvation belongeth unto the Lord, Thy blessing is upon thy people”.

Well might the music peal forth!

Well may we always take that as the one great thought to pause and take in during our pilgrimage and in its hours of sorrow.

As Habakkuk declares: “Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people even for salvation with thine Anointed”. SELAH.

G.H.D. *The Berean Christadelphian*, Volume 21, 1933, page 153

Bro. Beryl V. Snyder

Continued next month should the Lord will.