

With loving fraternal regards,
for many kindnesses received -

H. P. MANSFIELD.





An Immortal Record of Loveliness, Charm and Doctrinal Significance



Foreword

Two books of the Bible are named after women (Ruth and Esther) and present interesting points of contrast. One is a record of faithful submission to duty, in the humblest circumstances; the other is set in an atmosphere of political intrigue, in the court of the greatest monarch of history. One is a servant, the other a queen. One tells of the experience of a Gentile among Jews; the other tells of a Jewess among Gentiles. One shows how a Gentile married a Jew; the other how a Jewess married a Gentile. Both are historical narratives, selected by the Spirit, to typify the future purpose of Yahweh in Christ. Therefore, both have a significance beyond that of the story itself.

The Story of Ruth universally appeals because in it virtue triumphs, and loving service is adequately rewarded.

But there is much more in the book than that. In type it sets forth principles of redemption: principles that are the very foundation of the work of Yahweh in Christ. As we come to admire the strong, courteous, wealthy Boaz who was not above humbling himself as a servant, and condescending to assist and uplift the poor Gentile girl who gleaned in his fields, we see shadowed forth the character and mission of the Lord Jesus. In the virtues of the sweet Ruth, we have a glimpse of those appealing qualities that should be cultivated by those Gentile believers who desire to form a part of the multitudinous Bride of Christ. In the faithful and lovable Naomi, who patiently bore with distress and adversity to reap a great joy, and who, in common with Ruth, benefited from



Ruth decides to accompany Naomi to Bethlehem in the land of Judah.

the redemptive work effected by Boaz, there is typified the qualities of the Jewish Ecclesia, whose hope Gentiles now embrace.

The Book is history as well as parable. The incidents were selected and recorded by the Spirit to illustrate the Truth. Boaz, Ruth and Naomi were characters so moved by the teaching of Yahweh as to manifest Christ (either individual or multitudinous) in some way, so that the drama of their lives exhibits the drama of the Divine purpose.

The position of the Book of Ruth in the Bible is appropriate to the story it unfolds. Set between Judges and Samuel, it is like a bridge leading from the anarchy of the times of the Judges to the events that finally led to the order of the Kingdom. It thus forms a supplement to the Book of Judges, though the story it tells is in sharp contrast to the evils of those times. In Judges we have national history. It

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is a picture of the disorders and dangers of a republic without an effective magistracy, and a theocracy where Yahweh was forgotten, and "everyone did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17: 6). It is a record of unbridled savagery, national misery, widespread apostasy, and, during which Divine worship had deteriorated to a mere legal approach that denied the spirit of Yahweh's teaching, and rested on self-justification.

Upon this dark and terrible background, the story of Ruth is projected as a glorious light, as though as to remind us that whilst the national history was one of chaos and evil, there were those in Israel who still remained faithful to the pure principles of the Truth. In spite of the prevailing environment of violence and apostasy, there were faithful men like Boaz, selfless women like Ruth, and establishments in the land where master and servants were welded together in the "one faith" as in the fields of Boaz.

That is comforting; not only for those times, but for the present also. There is much in Ecclesial life that is reminiscent

of the times of Judges. Incidents frequently remind us of the times of Judges: "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes." The antitype of the chaos and violence of those times, abounds today in a spiritual sense. It is the environment in which we find ourselves. And the challenge is whether we can exhibit the example of faith and courage revealed by the main characters in the Book of Ruth.

The Story of Ruth must have been cheering for those who lived in those days, and who were oppressed with the evils of their day. As they pondered its meaning, and came to an understanding of its significance, they would be buoyed up with the realisation that they were not without a Redeemer to help. With Job they would be able to say: "I know that my Redeemer liveth. . . ." (Job 19: 14, 25).

Reading the Book of Ruth forms part of the Jewish celebration of Pentecost which, in itself, commemorates the goodness of Yahweh in the land. The incidents recorded in the book occurred about the time when faithful Israelites were about to celebrate that feast (cp. Ch. 2: 23).

Thus, year after year, Israel has been impressed with the fact that the great-grandmother of their most illustrious King (David) was a Moabitess (Ruth 4: 18), concerning which race, the Law spake in scathing terms (see Deut. 23: 3). When the jealous exclusiveness of the Jews is considered, this fact argues the truth and the Divine inspiration of the record. Only the authority of Yahweh could find such unstinting portrayal of a foreigner as the focus of admiration. If the book were a mere human production, Ruth would undoubtedly have been represented as a Jewess.

It is part of the remarkable drama of the Divine purpose, that from out of the humble service of a poverty-ridden Gentile maiden of a despised race, came the future Redeemer and King of mankind.

It is impossible to completely exhaust the significance of this book. Its full value will be appreciated, if the reader is prepared to personally meditate upon it, and extract for himself the wonderful lessons to be derived therefrom, and which appear almost endless. In our treatment of the subject, we have provided notes on the verses, rather than writing up the matter in the form of an essay. By this means we hope to draw the reader to the Scripture itself, for therein the richest rewards of study will be found. Let him prayerfully read with earnest attention this delightful Book, and he will find himself blessed indeed in the treasures of wisdom it will unfold.

AN OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

A man of Bethlehem named Elimelech, with his wife Naomi, and his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, left his own country in the time of famine, and went to sojourn in the land of Moab. There he died; and Naomi married her



two sons to two Moabitish women: Mahlon married Ruth, and Chilion married Orpah. In about ten years both these brethren died; and Naomi, accompanied by her two daughters-in-law, set out to return to the land of Judah, she having heard that plenty was again restored to her country.

On the way she besought her daughters to return to their own country and kindred. Orpah took her advice, and, after an affectionate parting returned; but Ruth insisted on accompanying her mother-in-law. They arrived in Bethlehem about the time of harvest; and Ruth went into the fields to glean for their support. The ground on which she was accidentally employed belonged to Boaz, one of the relatives of Elimelech. Finding who she was, Boaz ordered her to be kindly treated, and saw that she received special care. Learning that she was by marriage his kinswoman, he purposed to take her to wife, if a nearer kinsman who was then living should refuse. Application was made to the latter, who refused to take Ruth, and surrendered his right to Boaz, according to the custom of those times, at the gate of Bethlehem before the elders of the city.

Boaz then took Ruth to wife. She gave birth to Obed, who was the father of Jesse, the father of David. Thus from this Moabitess eventually came the Redeemer of mankind.

I desire to express my appreciation of the assistance rendered me in the preparation of this issue of "Logos," by Brother J. Berry, of Adelaide, South Australia.

—H. P. Mansfield

The Book of Ruth

Chapter 1: LOVE'S RESOLVE

Ruth's Noble Choice — She Cleaves to Naomi in Her Sorrow



- 1 Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem-Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.
2. And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehem-Judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.

VERSE BY VERSE EXPOSITION

Verses 1-2: FAMINE DRIVES ELIMELECH INTO EXILE

Apart from the statement that "there was a famine," we are not told why Elimelech chose to leave the land of Israel. The context would suggest lack of faith. The names of his two sons imply that they were not robust in health, and perhaps he feared that they would succumb under the rigours of want that threatened the land.

But whatever the cause, here commences the drama that the Spirit has been able to use to illustrate the work of redemption. The whole book types the work of Yahweh in Christ, and unless that is discerned in the story, it loses much of its meaning.

Let us first identify the incidents and the characters in the light of the type they represent.

The "famine in the days of the judges," points forward to that famine referred to by the prophet Amos: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord Yahweh, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of Yahweh: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of Yahweh, and shall not find it. In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst" (Amos 8: 11-13).

In consequence of this famine, referred to by Amos, the Kingdom of God (i.e., the Nation of Israel), was driven into exile. Its subjects sought everywhere but the right place for the word of Yahweh. They "ran to and fro to seek it," but were not able to find it, because of spiritual blindness.

But the Kingdom of God did not go into exile as a united nation. Civil war had divided it into two parts: Judah and

3. And Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons.

Israel. In the terms of our parable, these are represented by the two sons of Elimelech. Their respective names tell the story of the spiritual condition of divided Israel when firstly Assyria, and then Babylon, took them into captivity. They were the sons of a father whose name suggests the Theocracy which Israel constitutes, for Elimelech signifies, "My King is God" (El) — see Judges 8: 23.

This Kingdom was wedded to one whom the Apostle styles, "Jerusalem, the mother of us all" (Gal. 4: 26). Naomi represents the people of favour, who though taken into captivity with the rest of the family, still constituted the "holy seed," the "Covenant people."

The family of Elimelech left Bethlehem-Judah (The House of Bread and Praise), and sojourned in the land of Moab (the Land of Sin and Death).



VERSE 1

"Now it came to pass in the days" — This statement is represented by only two words in the Hebrew, "vayehi bemeyi." The phrase occurs six times in Scripture—Gen. 14: 1; Ruth 1: 1; Isa. 7: 1; Jer. 1: 3; Esther 1: 1; 2 Sam. 21: 1, and denotes a time of trouble which ends in blessing and deliverance.

"When" — This shows that the writer of Ruth was not contemporary with the events recorded. The book was written after the birth of David (Ruth 4: 22), and some have suggested that Samuel may have been the author.

"The judges" — Therefore, the events recorded, took place in a time of anarchy and evil. It indicates the background upon which the life of Ruth was projected. Hidden behind the awful history of the times of the Judges are the records of some who did not succumb to the evil environment of their day. They lived quiet lives of faith and service, unnoticed by the official history, but known and seen by Yahweh in heaven.

"Ruled"—Heb. "shaphan," to "judge," "discern," "regulate," "direct." The judges were not kings, dictators, or politicians, but rulers appointed by Yahweh to their high office, either over all Israel, or some portion, or tribe. They were neither hereditary governors, nor chosen by the people. They were the vice-regents of Yahweh, His deputies, acting

4. And they took them wives of the women of Moab; and the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth; and they dwelled there about ten years.

on His behalf. He was the real King in Israel (Jud. 8: 23), though the people often revolted against His rule, so that the record states: "There was no king in Israel" (Jud. 18: 1). We are not told at what precise time the events of the Book of Ruth took place.

"A famine"—Heb. "ra'ab" from "raeb" to hunger. There was a great hunger throughout the land. By this means, Yahweh punished His people because of sin (Ps. 105: 16; Lev. 26: 18-20). By famine also, Yahweh repaid Israel's parsimonious attitude towards His service (see Mal. 3: 8-11; Amos 4: 6-10; Prov. 3: 9-10). The worst famine, however, is a famine of the Word (Amos 8: 11), of which the famine in the days of Ruth was a type.

"Bethlehem-Judah" — So named to discriminate from another Bethlehem in the land of Zebulun (Josh. 19: 15; Jud. 12: 8). "Bethlehem is about 5 miles south of Jerusalem, and 2,350 ft. above sea level. Its appearance is striking. It is situated on a narrow ridge, which projects eastward from the central mountain range, and breaks down in abrupt terraced slopes to the deep valleys on the north, east and south. The terraces, admirably kept, and covered with rows of olives, intermixed with the fig and vine, sweep in graceful curves round the ridge, regular as stairs. The valleys below are exceptionally fertile" (from "Syria and Palestine"). Bethlehem has been called, "the most attractive and significant of all the world's birthplaces," and even under present conditions is a fertile place of olives, pomegranates, almonds, figs and vines.

Bethlehem is the birthplace of three significant men: Benjamin, David and the Lord Jesus. Benjamin's name means, "the Son of the Right Hand," and as such points forward to the Lord Jesus (Ps. 110: 1). Rachel died in giving birth to Benjamin, and before her death called him Ben-oni, or "The Son of my sorrow." But his father changed his name to Benjamin. In like manner, there was sorrow in Israel at the birth of the Lord, the weeping voice of Rachel was again heard (see Mat. 2: 16-18). To Israel, the Lord was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," but his Father called him to the heavens, and constituted him the "Son of His Right Hand."

Bethlehem-Judah signifies "The House of Bread and Praise." It is also called "Ephrath" (Gen. 35: 18-20), signi-

5. And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.

fyng "A Place of Fruit," doubtless because of its well-known fertility. A lovely green ridge overshadows a small plain in which grain was sown, and Ruth gleaned in the fields of Boaz. The traditional field is still shown, and close to it, about one mile east of Bethlehem, is the Shepherds' Field, where, it is suggested, the angels announced the birth of Messiah. Bethlehem was but a village, so small as not to be mentioned among the cities of Judah (Josh. 15). It is styled by Micah as "little among the thousands of Judah" (Mic. 5: 2), yet out of this insignificant place, Yahweh has destined great things: "out of thee shall he come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel." In like manner, "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty" (1 Cor. 1: 27) in that He selects humble men and women for a glorious destiny yet to be revealed.

This was the place that Elimelech deserted. He left the "House of Bread and Praise" for the Land of Sin and Death because to his fleshly vision, the latter looked so attractive.

"To sojourn"—Lit. "To dwell as a foreigner or stranger," from a root "to turn aside from the way," i.e., of the inhabitants of the land. The original intention of Elimelech was doubtless to remain separate from the people of Moab, but gradually the influence of the country made its mark upon the family. In similar manner, Israel in dispersion, gradually absorbed the culture and teaching of the countries where the people were driven, and finally adopted their manner of life. Contrast the "sojourning" of v. 1, with the "continuing" of v. 2, and the "dwelling" of v. 4. Three steps of deterioration.

"The country of Moab"—It is on the east and south-east of the Dead Sea, about 50 miles long by 30 miles wide. It consists of high tablelands 2,300 to 3,300 feet above sea level, and can be clearly seen from Bethlehem. The soil is extremely fertile and produces large crops of wheat. It is known as the "green plateau," because of the rich, luxuriant growth of pasture and crops, especially in the well-watered canyons and hollows. Strictly the area was south of the River Arnon (Num. 21: 13, 26; Jud. 11: 18).

Elimelech was swayed in his choice by the attractiveness of Moab which was, however, the country of one of Israel's most inveterate enemies.

"Moab" signifies "one derived from a father," that is,

6. Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that Yahweh had visited His people in giving them bread.

one born of the flesh. He was the son of Lot's eldest daughter, and was conceived in sin, through incest (Gen. 19: 37). The Moabites were known for their hostility towards Israel. It was a king of Moab that hired the Babylonish prophet, Balaam, to curse Israel (Num. 22: 7), and the daughters of Moab that caused the people to commit whoredom and bow down to pagan gods (Num. 25: 1-3). Because of the unceasing hostility of the nation towards Israel, a Moabite was prohibited entrance into the congregation of Yahweh (Deut. 23: 3). To the Hebrews, therefore, Moab was as the land of sin and death. The Jews of Christ's day were spiritual Moabites, being "derived from a father," even the flesh. "Ye are of your father the devil," he told them (John 8: 44). Elimelech, therefore, deserted the House of Bread and Praise, for the Land of Sin and Death. He enacted the course that the nation was destined to adopt when it was taken into captivity.

VERSE 2

"Elimelech"—His name means, "My King is God" (El—Strength). In the type he represents Israel as a Theocracy—the Kingdom of God.

"Naomi"—Signifies: "Pleasantness," "Favour," "Sweetness." In the type, Naomi represents the Covenant-people, wedded to the Kingdom of God. "Thy Maker is thine husband," declared Isaiah to such (Isa. 54: 5).

"Mahlon"—His name signifies: "Sickly." It comes from a root meaning "to rub, to wear away," hence "weak" or "sick." In the type he represents one of the two divisions into which the nation was divided, and his name expresses the spiritual weakness of the nation.

"Chilion"—Signifies "pining" or "wasting," from a root indicating "to be spent, or consumed." Hence Chilion indicates "consumption to an end." In the type he represents the other division of Israel which likewise was taken into captivity, which deserted the House of Bread for the Land of Sin and Death.

"Ephrathites"—See note on Bethlehem. Signifies "A Place of Fruit." Israel constituted the vine of Yahweh's planting (Isa. 5: 1-7), but brought forth no fruit.

7. Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

Verses 3-5: DEATH STRIKES THREE TIMES

The family found no relief from their troubles in Moab. In fact, having deserted the House of Bread, and gone into exile, their troubles increase. First Elimelech, and then Mahlon and Chilion, die, and Naomi finds herself a widow bereaved of her children.

In the terms of the parable, the Kingdom of God (Elimelech) came to an end (Ezek. 21: 27), and the two divisions of the Kingdom were likewise brought to political extinction. Thus was brought to pass the prophecy of Isaiah to the Covenant people: "These two things shall come to thee in a moment, in one day, the loss of children and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection. . . ." (Isa. 47: 9). Jeremiah lived contemporary with the event, and spake of it in these terms: "How is she become as a widow! she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces. . . . She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks: among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her . . ." (Lam. 1: 1-2).

Poor Naomi experienced this as disaster struck three times to destroy her family. But she lived to ultimately experience a great joy, foreshadowing that of which the prophet speaks: "Fear not; for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more" (Isa. 54: 4 — compare the subsequent verses where the prophet speaks of Yahweh as the Redeemer of the widowed mother of Zion).

The desolate state of Naomi in exile, fittingly foreshadowed the state of the Covenant people in dispersion.



VERSE 4

"They took them wives"—This was a further backward step. Marriage with Canaanites was strictly forbidden (Deut. 7: 1-3), and marriage with other races only tolerated if the woman concerned forsook her pagan worship, and embraced the hope of Israel. The indication is that these Moabtish wives did not do this at the time of their marriage, for it is later that Ruth declared her intention of forsaking the gods of Moab (v. 16). Note the extreme action adopted by Nehemiah in relation to intermarriage with Moab (Neh. 13: 1-3, 23-27).

8. And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law, Go, return each to her mother's house: Yahweh deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.

This action on the part of Mahlon and Chilion foreshadowed the manner in which Israel in dispersion absorbed the culture and teaching of the peoples among whom they were forced to dwell.

"Orpah"—Her name means: "The back of the neck" (Dr. Strong). The root "oreph" is rendered "back" 8 times, and "neck" 17 times in Scripture. From it is derived the phrase "to turn the back of the neck," which is constantly used in relation to Israel in apostasy. Israel is described as having "turned the neck" in 2 Chron. 29: 6; Jer. 2: 27; 19: 15, etc., to have "hardened the neck" (2 Kings 17: 14), to have "made the neck stiff" so as to have refused to hear instruction (Jer. 17: 23). The analogy is to those who refuse to turn the neck, so as to present the ear of the speaker. Thus Israel is described as "stiffnecked" (Deut. 31: 27; Isa. 48: 4), and in return, Yahweh also has "shown them the neck" (Jer. 18: 17). He has turned His back on them, refusing to bend His ear to their cries of help. Their stubbornness has been met with stubbornness. They have received what they have deserved by their own attitude.

In the type, Orpah represents those who having heard the call refuse to obey it, or having obeyed it, turn from it to follow the sight of their eyes. Their ears are not turned to the Word of Yahweh.

"Ruth"—Her name signifies: "Tender," "Friendly," "Comely." It is similar to the Hebrew word "reu"—a friend. Hence "Ruth" is a female friend or companion. "Reu" is found in Exod. 33: 11, where Yahweh speaks to Moses as to a friend, and also in Song 5: 16, where Christ is referred to as the friend of the Bride. It is found frequently in other places in Scripture.

The feminine form of "reu" is "rayah." This word appears several times in the Song of Solomon in the mouth of the Bridegroom when speaking to his Bride. In the A.V. it is translated "my love," but in the Revised it appears as "friend" (Song 1: 9, 15; 2: 2, 10, etc.).

All these words—Ruth, reu, and rayah, are derived from the same Hebrew root "ra'ah," signifying "to care for," "to pasture" a flock; "to nourish." As a metaphor, it signifies to feed, feast, or delight in any person or thing; hence to be a close friend or companion. All this is expressive of Ruth.

9. Yahweh grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept.

In the type she represents the Gentile Ecclesia, drawn by the hope of Israel to embrace Naomi as her own.

"They dwelled there"—Lit. "Sat there." They settled there like Lot (Gen. 19: 29).

VERSE 5

"Mahlon and Chilion died"—Their names indicate their physical and spiritual weakness. They were "sickly," they "wasted and died," whilst still young men.

"The woman was left"—Naomi was now completely destitute. She was not only a widow bereaved of her children, but was a foreigner in a hostile land. To a Hebrew, such was equivalent to departing from the presence of Yahweh (see 2 Kings 13: 23; 17: 20; Jonah 1: 3). The "eyes of Yahweh" were ever fixed upon that land in a special sense (Deut. 11: 12). It was considered the Land of the Upright (Ps. 140: 13).

Verses 6-7: NAOMI DECIDES TO RETURN

The attractions of the Land of Sin and Death, the prospects of prosperity and plenty in Moab, had proved both futile and fatal. Lonely and destitute in the country of Exile, Naomi now realised there was more true happiness, more hope of relief in Israel, in spite of all the difficulties. The famine had been broken, and she desired to return. Nothing but disaster had followed in the footsteps of Elimelech's house since leaving Bethlehem. The lesson had been learnt though the discipline had been hard.

The analogy is not hard to see. The scattering of Israel was for the destruction of some, and for the good of others. Concerning the latter, the prophet declared: "I will acknowledge them that are carried away . . . for their good. For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land; . . . and I will give them an heart to know Me, that I am Yahweh; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto Me with their whole heart" (Jer. 24: 6-7). Israel as a nation is to return unto the Land, and to Yahweh, in spirit and in truth. From the graves of the centuries, "true Israelites" like Abraham, Moses, David, are to arise and to receive the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Heb. 9: 15). There is to be a national salvation for Israel at the return of Christ, and an individual salvation for those Israelites who were true to their calling in past ages.

10. And they said unto her, "Surely we will return with thee unto thy people."

VERSE 6

"She arose with her daughters-in-law"—She must have discussed the problem with them at length, explained the benefits to be derived in the House of Bread and Praise (Bethlehem), made her decision, and commenced preparations for her return.

"Return from"—Lit. "turn back." The house of Elimelech had apostatised, or "turned away" and perished. The affliction helped Naomi in a decision to "turn back" in faith. See the exhortation of Isaiah 55: 7.

"Visited His people"—Notice the language by which the breaking of the drought is described. Men would call it the "laws of nature," but the Truth sees these things in a different light. As Yahweh was responsible for the famine (2 Kings 8: 1; Lev. 26: 18-21, 26), so He, alone, is able to bring it to an end. The Truth puts all these things in correct perspective, and teaches men to appreciate the good gifts of He who is the Giver of all.

The Hebrew word "paqad" (visited) signifies "to go to see, to visit in order to examine, to look after, to visit with the object of correcting or blessing." Yahweh has visited His people in that sense (see Ps. 8: 4). In Hebrews 2: 6 Paul quotes from this passage, and uses a word which signifies that Yhaweh "has looked upon in order to help or to benefit, to look after, to have a care for" (see Ps. 80: 14; Luke 1: 68). Young's Literal Translation renders Ruth 1: 6: "hath looked after His people." Yahweh promised Israel good harvests if they turned to Him (Lev. 26: 3-5; Deut. 11: 13-15), but they did not appreciate His action in so doing (Hos. 2: 8-9).

"Giving them bread"—The Lord declared that he is the "bread of life" which came down from heaven (Jhn. 6: 33).

Verses 8-10: HER DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW DESIRE TO RETURN

Naomi and her two daughters-in-law, a little group comprising one old woman and two young ones, commence the difficult and hazardous journey of at least 50 miles, back to Bethlehem. The Dead Sea cuts off the direct route between Moab and Bethlehem, so they would have to travel either north or south around this inland ocean. They reach a certain stage on their journey, probably the border of Moab, and

11. And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?

Naomi warns her companions of the difficulties that face them if they continue, and invites them to return.

She puts them to a test, as all will be put to a test who would seek to embrace the Hope of Israel.



VERSE 8

"Go return"—They probably reached the borders of Moab, and at that stage, Naomi invited her daughters-in-law to return each to her mother's house.

"Mother's house"—Ruth's father was alive (Ch. 2: 11), but the natural place for the female members of a family was in their mother's house or tent (Gen. 24: 28, 67; Song 3: 4). In a typical sense, all who would follow Christ must leave the house of their "father and mother," and be joined unto his (Christ's) wife (see Eph. 5: 31-32).

"Yahweh deal kindly"—Heb. "chesed"—"kindness, goodness, mercy." Yahweh's Kindness permeates this book (see Ruth 2: 20; 3: 10). It is one of the eleven attributes of the Yahweh Name (Exod. 34: 6-7—translated "goodness"), and we are Apostolically exhorted to "behold the goodness and severity of God" (Rom. 11: 22). The record of Scripture shows that the goodness of Yahweh outweighs His severity, and teaches that His true sons must manifest His characteristics (see Mat. 5: 44-48). With the merciful, Yahweh will show Himself merciful (Ps. 18: 25), and thus the prophets constantly taught that He requires this characteristic in His people (Hos. 6: 6; Zech. 7: 8-14).

As Yahweh broke the drought in the days of Ruth, so the time will come when the spiritual drought experienced by Israel down the ages, will be broken (Isa. 54: 8), and the "reproach" of widowhood will cease (v. 4).

"As ye have dealt with the dead, and with me"—This is an indication of the character of the two girls. They had administered kindly service to their sickly husbands, and had not deserted Naomi in her extremity.

VERSE 9

"Ye may find rest"—The Hebrew "menuchah" is used in Scripture in various ways. Fundamentally it signifies a place of rest where one may settle down. Thus the Psalmist invited Yahweh to find permanent rest for Himself, and the

12. Turn again, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should have an husband also to night, and should also bear sons;

Ark, in Zion (Ps. 132: 8). The word signifies "a safe shelter, security." This was something Naomi could not offer, and so she suggested with delicacy and tact, the possibility of a second marriage for the girls. "Menuchah" is the word used by Hebrews to describe a husband's house. Therein the bride found shelter as well as protection from servitude, neglect or licence. The R.S.V. renders Naomi's words: "may find a home." The same word is used in Chapter 3: 1, where Naomi is obviously referring to a husband for Ruth.

VERSE 10

"Surely we will return with thee"—It is a compliment to Naomi's character that the two girls were prepared to leave the comforts of Moab, the protection of their own people, and share the uncertainties and the poverty that faced Naomi in order to be with her. She must have developed in them a great love for her. In the type, these words of Orpah and Ruth have been echoed by many who have come to a knowledge of the Truth. When the full implications of what is required are realised, however, some turn back like Orpah, others go ahead in confidence of faith like Ruth.

Verses 11-13: NAOMI WARNS OF DIFFICULTIES

The two girls express to Naomi their desire to share the risks and discomforts of the journey that lay ahead. They have developed a great love for their mother-in-law, and are ready to forsake their own houses to accompany her. But Naomi warns them of the extreme difficulties that will face them, and reminding them that they are at liberty to return to the security of Moab, invites them to do so.



VERSE 11

"Turn again"—Lit. "turn back." She tests them in love.

"Why will ye go with me?"—Naomi asks a searching question. I can offer you assurance of nothing but problems and difficulties.

"More sons in my womb?"—The Law made provision for a Levirate (from Latin, "lever"—brother) marriage, i.e., with a brother-in-law, in which the nearest of kin provided seed on behalf of childless, deceased brethren. The children are

13. Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of Yahweh is gone out against me.

accounted as of the deceased brother (see Lev. 25: 5-10; cp. Matt. 22: 24; Luke 20: 28). Naomi could have claimed this right on her own behalf, but she was beyond the age of bearing children, and thus was "without hope" (v. 12). She could have claimed it for her daughters-in-law, but perhaps felt that she might have difficulty in finding one who would be prepared to act as redeemer because of the Moabitish nationality of the two girls. This, indeed, proved to be the case (see Ch. 4: 5-6). Though Moabitish wives are not specifically forbidden by the Law, it did specify that no Moabite was to be permitted in the congregation of Yahweh (Deut. 23: 3). The statement of Deut. 23: 3 is in the masculine gender, and relates to men, not women, so that it does not exclude Ruth.

VERSE 12

"I am too old"—for bearing children. The Vulgate renders: "For I am spent with age, and not fit for wedlock."

"Would ye tarry?"—See Gen. 38: 11, 14, 26. A son, though not of marriageable age, is bound by divine will to marry the childless widow of his brother, and she must remain till he has grown up. The object of the Law is to teach facts concerning the redemption of man, as we shall see when we come to consider the action of Boaz.

VERSE 13

"It grieveth me much"—see margin. Hebrew is "marar" (see v. 20), "bitter." Lit. "it is more bitter for me than to you." Jeremiah expresses the significance of the type. He puts into the mouth of desolated and widowed Zion words that are much like those of Naomi: "Her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness" (Lam. 1: 4).

"For your sakes"—Naomi's anxiety was for the future welfare of her daughters-in-law.

"The hand of Yahweh is gone out against me"—The manner in which Naomi describes her experiences is very expressive, and illustrates how the Hebrews perceived the ways of Providence interwoven in the everyday affairs of life. The breaking of the famine is described as Yahweh visiting His people (v. 6), the action of Ruth in deciding to accompany her mother-in-law back to the Land of Promise

14. And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her.

15. And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister-in-law.

16. And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.

is likened to a chicken sheltering under the wings of the mother bird (Ch. 2: 12), and here Naomi recognises the adversity she had experienced as the Hand of Yahweh extended to administer punishment, as a father might deal with a disobedient child. This disciplinary action was merciful in its ultimate affect, for it drove Naomi back to the way of righteousness. For the exhortation see Psalm 103: 13-14; Heb. 12: 5-11.

Verses 14-15: ORPAH RETURNS

On the border of Moab a pathetic scene is enacted. The words of Naomi expressed the extent of the trial that lay before the two Gentile girls if they followed their mother-in-law back to Bethlehem. The journey was not only long, but the future promised only further difficulties and loneliness. Orpah reluctantly feels that the trial is beyond her.

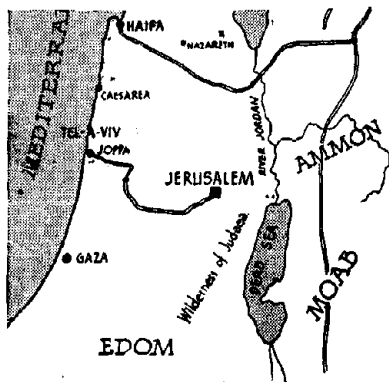
For her, this is the parting of the ways. Tearfully she kisses Naomi farewell, and commences the return journey, doubtless expecting Ruth to follow her.

Orpah foreshadows those who turn aside from the way; who having been brought nigh to the hope of the calling are deterred by the trials and difficulties that are incidental to the way of life in Christ. She thus fulfilled the meaning of her name.



VERSE 15

"Behold thy sister-in-law is gone back"—Orpah fulfilled the meaning of her name. She turned her neck to Yahweh, the promised land, his special people, the hope of Israel, preferring her gods, her natural state, her fleshly attach-



17. Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: Yahweh do so to me and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.

18. When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

ments and relations, and her own hopes. Disciples have ever done likewise—see John 6: 66-67.

And now Naomi tests Ruth's loyalty, inviting her to follow the example of her sister-in-law if she feels inclined. The fact that Naomi speaks of the pagan worship of Moab as "her gods" suggests that the girls had not then fully embraced the worship of Yahweh, and implies that Elimelech, Mahlon and Chilion had been very lax in regard to these matters.

The type is clear. The Kingdom can only be gained through probation and trial, and the prospect of these has deterred many from the way that leads to salvation.

Verses 16-18: RUTH'S RESOLVE

Undeterred by the example of Orpah, Ruth, with steady resolve, insists upon accompanying Naomi back to Bethlehem. She puts behind her the attractions of Moab, she cuts herself adrift from family or worldly hopes, she repudiates forever the false worship of Chemosh, the god of Moab, and wholeheartedly embraces the hope, the people, the God of Israel. Like Moses she chose to "suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Heb. 11: 25), like Paul, "this one thing she does, forgetting those things which are behind, she reaches forth unto those things which are before" (Phil. 3: 13); like Barnabas, "with purpose of heart she cleaves unto Yahweh" (Acts 11: 23); like the true disciples of every age she willingly undertakes to experience "the fellowship of Christ's sufferings," limiting the opportunities this world can provide, and cheerfully shouldering the difficulties this entails.

Ruth stands as a type of the true Gentile Ecclesia, completely identifying herself with the hope of Israel, represented by Naomi. The beautiful words of this section of the book have been an inspiration to many throughout the ages.



VERSE 16

"And Ruth said"—We have not the full conversation which ensued on this occasion. Doubtless Naomi explained to Ruth what her decision entailed. She could only follow Naomi if she were prepared to forsake her country, people, religion, hope. Understanding the full implication of all

19. So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi?

this, and the added responsibilities she was undertaking, Ruth accepted this course of action.

In like manner, the acceptance of Christ on the part of Gentiles, demands a like separation (Acts 15: 14; 2 Cor. 6: 17).

"Intreat me not"—Do not hold me back from my resolve; I am determined to go with you.

"Whither thou goest, I will go"—I accept the way that leads to the House of Bread and Praise.

"Where thou lodgest I will lodge"—I accept the trials that may be our lot.

"Thy people shall be my people"—I accept the patriotism of Israel.

"Thy God my God"—I accept the worship of Yahweh, God of Israel.

"Where thou diest, will I die"—I dedicate my life to this service.

"Yahweh do so to me and more also"—This is my irrevocable decision. (These words are the common formula used in connection with an irrevocable oath (see 1 Sam. 3: 17; 14: 14; 20: 13, etc.).

VERSE 18

"Was stedfastly minded"—Heb. "amats"—"to be alert, active, firm," hence alertness of mind, firm in spirit. The Septuagint translates: "was determined to go." Ruth was firmly determined to shoulder her responsibilities and throw in her lot with one she had learned to love. These verses express Ruth's confession of faith.

Verses 19-22: ARRIVAL IN BETHLEHEM

The two lonely pilgrims traverse the difficult and tedious route from Moab to Bethlehem, and at last arrive at the city. Bethlehem was but a small place (see note, v. 1), and Eli-melech was well-known and respected. The return of Naomi, showing all the marks of suffering, and with a young Moabitess as companion, but destitute of her husband and sons, exciting the interest and sympathy of her acquaintances. It was a notable event, so that the whole city was moved as a result.

And in the type, the return of Israel is a similar notable

20. And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

event. It is a return from suffering, and the companion of Israel under such circumstances, is the Gentile Ecclesia that has embraced the same hope, and is moved by love and sympathy for the one who through adversity has returned to the House of Bread.



VERSE 19

"All the city was moved"—Heb. "hum," lit. "make a noise." In 1 Sam. 4: 5; 1 Kings 1: 45, the word is rendered "rang again." The report of Naomi's return quickly spread through the city, and became everywhere the topic of conversation. Her great losses, the fall of such a prosperous house as that of Elimelech, the marks of suffering on her face, the strange appearance of the foreign companion with her—all excited interest. The city hummed with talk regarding it.

"They said"—In Hebrew this is in the feminine gender. The women of the city, keenly excited, gathered around Naomi, asking the question.

"Is this Naomi?"—In the Hebrew this is given as "the Naomi." "Is this the Naomi we knew?"

VERSE 20

"Call me not Naomi"—"My pleasantness, favour, sweetness" (see Note v. 2).

"Call me Mara"—Word means "bitter" (see Exod. 15: 23).

"The Almighty"—Heb. "Shaddai," comes from a root "shadad" to be strong or powerful. It is used to describe "destroying, laying waste, devastation" (Prov. 11: 3; Ps. 17: 9. "Shedim" is rendered "devils" in Deut. 32: 17; Ps. 106: 17, or "destroyers" as the word has been translated. Hence "Shaddai" are destroyers (Job. 5: 17; 21: 20; Isa. 13: 6; Joel 1: 15). The word is plural, signifying "Powerful Ones."

But from the same root we have another Hebrew word "shad," which signifies "breasts" (Song 4: 5; 8: 1), which, metaphorically, represents nourishment. Hence Shaddai are also Nourishers (Gen. 28: 3; 43: 14; 49: 25; Job. 22: 25).

The Shaddai (Powerful Ones) rendered "the Almighty," are Yahweh's representatives performing His bidding, and revealing His power before men. They can help or destroy, and will assist or oppose men according as men accept or

21. I went out full, and Yahweh hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing Yahweh hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

22. So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

reject the Word of Yahweh. Naomi experienced their destroying power in the deaths of Elimelech and her sons; but she lived to be nourished by them as well.

The Shaddai, therefore, are angels, ministering on behalf of the "heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1: 14). Abraham worshipped "God Almighty" (El Shaddai—Exod. 6: 3), or The Strength of the Powerful Ones. Their Strength (El) is Yahweh. It is Yahweh, and not the Shaddai, whom Abraham worshipped.

VERSE 21

"The LORD"—Wherever the word "LORD" is printed in small capitals in Scripture, the name in the original is Yahweh. In this verse the Almighty and Yahweh are identified as one. The angels act in concert with the Father, and what they do, is done in His name and on His behalf. They are one, as saints hope to be "one with Him" in the future (John 17: 17).

"Has testified against me"—Elimelech had deserted the House of Bread and Praise, had wandered from the Covenant Land, had settled in the Land of Sin and Death, but Naomi's reduced state was a witness against the wisdom of all this. It was an example to all who took heed, of the folly of walking in the way of the flesh. The reduced state of Israel today testifies to the same truth.

VERSE 22

"So Naomi returned"—Lit. "turned back." So shall Israel one day.

"Beginning of barley harvest"—In the Spring. The barley harvest commences about the time of the Passover, and is the first grain crop to be cut. Therefore, Naomi appropriately returned at the time of Passover, which feast speaks of deliverance. Her experiences would allow her to enter fully into the solemnity of the occasion. Israel's return is associated with this feast (see Jer. 16: 14-15, where it is predicted that the words spoken each year at the feast of Passover will be superseded by words expressing the greater deliverance of the last days).

Character Sketch**RUTH — THE VIRTUOUS****Her Meekness**

Gentle, self-effacing Ruth! How strongly the example of her unselfish service underlines the lesson of faith and love. It has even coined a word in the English language, for to be ruthless is to lack the characteristics for which she is noted

Her appeal to Naomi: "Intreat me not to leave thee!" expressed the gentleness of her nature, whilst her determination to provide for them both, revealed the strength of her character. Her decision to stay with her mother-in-law was governed by love for her. She could not bear to see the older woman walk with sad, lonely steps back to poverty and perhaps despair; but she is too tactful to suggest Naomi has need of her. No, she expresses it the other way, as though as to be rejected by Naomi would put her at a disadvantage: "Intreat me not to leave thee."

Her Strength

Ruth was meek, not weak. She accepted the path of duty, and cheerfully walked where it led. For a time, it brought her into experiences of poverty and difficulty, but she was equal to them all. She had accepted the God of Israel as her God, not merely because it was Naomi's God, but because she was convinced that He should be worshipped.

There was strength of purpose in her actions. She did not bewail the fact of her poverty, nor rave about what her rich relation should have done, nor claimed the right to public charity. She quietly sought out a service she could perform, and patiently toiled in the field to relieve the pressing need of both Naomi and herself.

To use the figure of Boaz, when the storm of trouble broke over the little family in Moab, she trustingly crept under the shadow of Yahweh's wing, as a chicken crouches under the protecting wing of the mother-bird (Ch. 2: 12). And out of weakness she was made strong.

Her Industry

Ruth did not presume on others. She manifested a noble spirit of independence. She resolved to obtain the

necessities of life by working with her hands, in the one way that the law provided for such as were in her case.

What motive dominated Ruth to accept these conditions? What caused her to willingly follow the reapers in the heat of the burning, Palestinian sun, laboriously gleaning the few grains they left? Had not she willingly served Yahweh? Could He not move to alleviate her condition, and render unnecessary the back-breaking, unaccustomed toil?

She knew He could, and perhaps He would; but she patiently, in faith, accepted the conditions, waiting for Him to change them. She manifested a willingness to submit to what was required: "Not my will but Thine be done." This was her religion. She had accepted Yahweh as her God, and was prepared to accept the conditions.

Her Affection

Ruth's abounding love was such that she accepted an apparently hopeless future, the degradation of poverty, the disadvantages of a foreign country, the knowledge that the people of her adoption hated the people of her nativity, to cleave unto Naomi, and to serve Yahweh. Here is love of such a quality that only the words of Paul (1 Cor. 13) are adequate to express it. It was love expressed in action, not only to Naomi, not only to Boaz, but to Yahweh as well.

She accepted the country, the hope, the religion of Israel. She turned her back completely and utterly upon Moab and all its ways, upon her father's house, upon the certainty of security in the land she knew so well, to embrace the strange customs, to learn the unaccustomed Law of the Israelites, to worship in such a form as to adversely reflect upon her native way of life.

Ruth was thus modest, industrious, meek, patient, and doubtless beautiful. She had the qualities to attract Boaz and engage his affection. Her tender solicitude for Naomi, her cheerful shouldering of the cares of the household, her voluntary acceptance of poverty, her patient endurance could not fail to arouse his esteem, as it did that of all Bethlehem. "All the city know that thou art a virtuous woman" said Boaz (Ch. 3: 11). She appealed to him, and her character drew him to her. The same attributes in us will attract and please the Lord Jesus.

All these matters worked together in the providence of Yahweh to bring about a matrimonial alliance intimately bound up in the birth of Christ, and the salvation of the world. It is significant, that by her marriage, Ruth became related to another wonderful woman of faith who likewise has been a great inspiration to true Israelites throughout the ages, for the mother of Boaz was Rahab of Jericho (Mat. 1: 5). In the typology of the narrative Ruth stands as representative of the Gentile ecclesia, united to the hope of Israel as Ruth was to Naomi, and redeemed by the Strong Man provided by Yahweh. Of her, the words of Proverbs apply: "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all" (Prov. 31: 29).

Chapter 2: LOVE'S RESPONSE

Ruth's Faithful Service — She Responds to Naomi's Pressing Need



1. And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz.
2. And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. and she said unto her, Go, my daughter.
3. And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.

Verses 1-3: RUTH IS GUIDED TO THE FIELD OF BOAZ

The first act in the drama is completed. Naomi and Ruth are both home, but their condition is still one of difficulty. There is a pressing need to relieve the poverty that rests so heavily upon them. Fortunately, the Law of Yahweh provided the means. It required that when farmers reaped their fields, they were not to strip the grain completely, but leave some for the



4. And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, Yahweh be with you. And they answered him, Yahweh bless thee.

strangers and the poor of the land to glean. These were allowed to follow the reapers and glean what remained. Thus Yahweh, by law, compelled His people to acts of love and mercy. All that the farmer reaped had come from His bountiful hand, and it was only right and moral that the farmer should, in turn, be bountiful to those less fortunate than he.

Ruth was providentially led to the field of Boaz, and gave herself up to the hard, back-breaking job of laboriously gathering the few grains left after the reapers had done their work. Her industry was observed by Boaz who had also learned of her faithful service to her mother-in-law, and his relation. He bids her to continue gleaning in his field, and sees that she is suitably rewarded for her industry.

And the type? Boaz stands as a representative of the Lord Jesus, Ruth as the Gentile Ecclesia gleaning in the fields of Israel, and suitably rewarded with what she finds there, through the blessing of the Lord Jesus, the antitypical Boaz.

And the lesson? Industry, patience, selflessness, faith, acceptance of trials and difficulties without complaint and with gentle courage.



VERSE 1

"Kinsman"—Heb. "yada"—"an acquaintance, or familiar friend." The LXX renders it: "an acquaintance of her husband." A different word to "near kinsman" (v. 20).

"A mighty man" — "Mighty" (Heb. gibbor) signifies "strong," "valiant" one, and hence a warrior (1 Sam. 16: 18; 2 Sam. 23: 8, 9). "Man" (Heb. Ish) signifies a great man.

Thus Boaz was highly respected among the community of Bethlehem, being a man of character, as well as of substance. His wealth did not lift him in pride, nor was he spoiled by flattery. He types the Lord Jesus who has "a name above every name" who though possessing riches more than any other, "made himself of no reputation, and took upon himself the form of a servant" (Phil. 3).

"Boaz"—Signifies "In him is strength" (cp. 1 Kings 7: 21), hence "the Strong One." His name presents a direct contrast to the name of Ruth's first husband, Mahlon (see Ch. 4: 10, 1: 2).

VERSE 2

"Ruth said"—Conditions in the little household are criti-

5. Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this?

cal. The pressing poverty must be relieved. How can it be done? The Law of Yahweh provided the means. Naomi explains it to Ruth, who asks permission to glean. Naomi is too old to endure the rigours of this work in the burning heat of the eastern sun. Ruth offers a sacrifice of love.

"Glean"—See Lev. 19: 9-10; 23: 22; Deut. 24: 19. Ruth was not only poor, but a stranger as well, and therefore had a special claim on gleaning (Lev. 19: 9-10). Gentiles today can glean the Gospel message in the spiritual field of Boaz.

"After him in whose sight"—Ruth could claim her right to glean, but it was possible for an Israelite to evade his responsibilities by making it unpleasant for such as she.

VERSE 3

"Hap"—This is an old Anglo-Saxon expression signifying "happy," or "good luck." Men look upon Ruth as lucky in selecting the field of Boaz, but actually she was providentially guided to the field, and that is expressed in the Hebrew word used, which signifies, "her chance chanced." The invisible, but ever-present, Hand of Yahweh is revealed in the incidents that now take place (cp. vv. 12, 19, 20). So will our steps be guided, and our actions blessed, if we manifest the faithful service of Ruth.

Verses 4-17: RUTH MEETS BOAZ FOR THE FIRST TIME

The wealthy farmer is not above doing work in the field; there is joy among his labourers at his approach; his keen eye looks over their work; he has an interest in the gleaners; he detects the foreigner among the workers; his interest aroused by her faithful service which in his abundant generosity he must reward. All this is an index to the character of the man who here types the Lord.

The type shows that even the most humble worker in the Lord's fields will not lack for care, attention, and suitable reward. No work, humbly done in faith, will pass unnoticed.



VERSE 4

"Yahweh be with you"—Heb. "Yahweh immachem." The greeting can be paraphrased: "May Yahweh be with you to preserve you from accidents, and strengthen you to accomplish your work" (cp. Jud. 6: 12; Ps. 129: 7-8).

"Yahweh bless thee"—Heb. "Ye barechecha Yahweh"—"May Yahweh bless thee with the increase of the field, and grace to use His bounty to the glory of the Giver."

6. And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab:

There is nothing servile or humiliating in this scene, nothing merely sentimental. It is the pledge of happy fellowship, of sacred and prosperous co-operation. It reveals the beauty of Boaz's character that his labourers should look to him like that, and that he should receive their enthusiastic co-operation. And this at a time when Israel was in a chaotic and antagonistic condition. The beauty of the character of this man is further enhanced by his kindly interest in Ruth.

But perhaps the greatest index to the character of Boaz is found in the use of the word "Behold" in this verse. One gains the mental picture of Boaz arriving on the scene, and his very presence being a delight to the workers, so that they draw the attention of each other to his coming among them. How pleasant, how exciting, how rewarding it is when a work is accomplished in the gospel field, and one has felt that the Lord has been present in the labour! We draw the attention of others to it. "Behold, how He wrought with us!"

VERSE 5

"Whose damsel is this?"—Boaz' keen eye roves over the field. The reapers after the greeting, have returned to their labour, the gleaners follow, searching the crop for the grains that remain. By the side of Boaz there is the foreman of the field, and now, though he has previously heard of Ruth (v. 11), her future husband meets her for the first time.

VERSE 7

"She tarried a little in the house"—The foreman gives a good account of Ruth. He remarks on her industry. "The house" probably refers to a tent that was set up in the field where the workers could rest during any breaks for that purpose. But Ruth had been too busy for relaxation. The Septuagint renders the phrase as: "rested not even a little in the field." Darby translates: "Her resting has been little as yet." R.S.V.: "She has continued from early morning until now, without resting even for a moment."

Verses 8-10: THE THOUGHTFULNESS OF BOAZ

Touched by the faithful industry of Ruth, Boaz provides for her need. The Ecclesia has the same assurance (see Heb. 13: 5).

7. And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house.

VERSE 8

"Hearest thou not, my daughter"—R.S.V.—"Now, listen, my daughter." Boaz' use of this appellative hints at his seniority in age.

"Abide here fast"—"Fast" is obsolete for "steadfast," i.e., "cleave by my maidens." These maidens were probably engaged in making bands and laying on them sufficient stalks to make a sheaf which the binders would tie and form into shocks. Ruth picked up any heads or ears that the maidens left; she was thus given a privileged position in the gleaning.

VERSE 10

"She fell on her face"—She made obeisance as to a superior.

"Why have I found grace in thine eyes?"—Ruth is astonished that she is given such preferential treatment, particularly as she is a foreigner. The same astonishment is often expressed by those who have experienced the kindness of the antitypical Boaz today, in that the Truth has been revealed to them, and they have received preferential treatment, being invited to "steadfast cleave to his maidens." In the condescension and kindness of Boaz, let us see a foreshadowing of the grace and favour of the Lord. In Ruth's gratitude let us learn how we should react to the call of the Truth. It was a matter of life and death for Ruth to glean the grain; the same urgent need should force us to the Word.

"I am a stranger"—As such she had a special claim on gleaning (Lev. 19: 9-10), but Boaz in his thoughtfulness had gone beyond the requirements of law (Gal. 3: 11).

Verses 11-18: THE KINDNESS OF BOAZ

Recognising in Ruth one who had extended kindness to a fellow Israelite, Boaz repays her actions with equal kindness. How this reminds us of the words of the Lord: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Mat. 25: 40).



VERSE 11

"Boaz answered" — The kindness and graciousness of Boaz is revealed in his words to Ruth. He commends her

8. Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens:

9. Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst go unto vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn.

10. Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?

11. And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore.

kindness towards Naomi, and her action in separating from home and country to become an "Israelite indeed."

VERSE 12

"Yahweh recompense thy work"—And what did that work consist of? It was revealed in her care for Naomi, and her faithfulness in leaving Moab for Israel. But what motivated it? This verse provides the answer! Note the three words, **"WORK," "REWARD," "TRUST."** May these three principles dominate our work on Yahweh's behalf.

"A full reward be given thee"—This is the promise given those who glean in the fields of Christ (1 Cor. 3: 8, 14; 2 John 8; Rev. 11: 18; 22: 12).

"Under whose wings thou art come to trust"—A beautiful analogy denoting the tender care of Yahweh for His people. The Revised Version renders "come to take refuge," the Vulgate: "art fled" (see Heb. 6: 18). The figure is that of chickens seeking the warmth and protection of the wing of the mother bird, under the shadow of which they feel completely secure. It is an expression repeatedly used by the Psalmist (Ps. 17: 8-9; 36: 7; 57: 1; 61: 4; 63: 7), and was taken up by the Lord Jesus, as he wept over Jerusalem (Mat. 23: 37).

The Law of Moses prohibited the entrance of a Moabite into the congregation of Yahweh (Deut. 23: 3). How then could Ruth "flee for refuge" to Yahweh? Apart from the fact that Yahweh has the right to vary His laws if He sees the need, the words of Deut. 23: 3 are in the masculine gender in the Hebrew, and therefore do not specifically refer to the women of Moab. The Jewish Targum acknowledges this, stating in regard to Ruth: "What the Lord hath decreed, he hath not decreed concerning women, but men."

12. Yahweh recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of Yahweh God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.

13. Then she said, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens.

VERSE 13

"Thou hast spoken friendly"—Lit. "to the heart" (see margin). Boaz' words had touched her heart. She felt humbled and grateful for his consideration and kindness—as we do when we experience similar kindness from the Lord. Who are we that we should receive such blessings?

"I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens"—She was a foreigner, not engaged in his service, and could not expect such kindness. How the circumstances of Ruth answer to our own!

VERSE 14

"The vinegar"—Heb. "chomets"—a sour wine. It was used by the harvesters as an acid sauce or relish with bread, and was both cooling and refreshing.

"Parched corn"—Thomson in "The Land and the Book" (p. 648) describes it thus: "A quantity of the best ears, not too ripe, are plucked with the stalks attached. These are tied in small parcels, a blazing fire is kindled with dry grass and thorn bushes, and the corn heads are held in it until the chaff is mostly burned off. The grain is sufficiently roasted to be eaten, and is a favourite all over the country."

Thus Boaz attended to her needs. Christ has promised likewise (Mat. 6: 25).

"She was sufficed and left"—The same word rendered "left" (yathar) is translated "reserved" in v. 18) She reserved some of the food given her to take home to Naomi. In her own poverty she also thought of her beloved mother-in-law (cp. Rom. 15: 27).

VERSE 15

"Glean even among the sheaves"—A gracious privilege was granted Ruth. No one should glean until the sheaves were bound and set up in shocks.

VERSE 16

"Of purpose"—i.e., "on purpose." Boaz made certain that her industry would be amply rewarded. Cp. the promise of the Lord (Luke 11: 9-13).

14. And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers; and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left.

15. And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not:

16. And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not.

17. So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned; and it was about an ephah of barley.

18. And she took it up, and went into the city; and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed.

VERSE 17

"She beat out"—Thomson remarks that "in the evening you might see some poor woman or maiden, that had been permitted to glean on her own account, sitting by the roadside, and beating out with a stick or a stone what she had gathered as Ruth did" ("Land & Book," p. 647). The point of the story is that Ruth had to labour for her living. There were handfuls on purpose" left for her to pick up, there was rich reward for her labour, but it required toil and trouble to gain results. The Truth is like that. There are handfuls on purpose left for our gleaning in the Word, which will please us with the rich rewards they provide, but we must not overlook the hard, "beating out" that is required before our labour will be rewarded.

"An ephah"—About 5 or 6 gallons. The omer (a tenth of an ephah) was the daily ration of manna for each man (Exod. 16: 16, 18, 22, 36). Here was enough to support both for about 5 days.

Verses 18-23: NAOMI'S PLEASURE

Returning home, Ruth surprised Naomi with the results of her labour. It evinced extreme generosity in the field where she had gleaned. She learned that the field was that of Boaz, who was a near kinsman of Naomi's, and therefore was in a position to redeem both Naomi and Ruth from poverty and the reproach of widowhood. As she considered the implications of all that had occurred, Naomi recognised the hand of Yahweh in the matter, providentially guiding Ruth to the field of their redeemer. She advised her on no account to be diverted to any other field, and to strictly adhere to the instructions of Boaz.

19. And her mother-in-law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to day? And where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And she showed her mother-in-law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to day is Boaz.

20. And Naomi said unto her daughter-in-law, Blessed be he of Yahweh, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen.

21. And Ruth the Moabitess said, He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest.

22. And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter-in-law, It is good my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field.

VERSE 18

"She gave to her that she had reserved"—Cp. v. 14. Ruth had reserved some of the prepared food given her at dinner time to take home to Naomi. Naomi instantly perceived she had been given preferential treatment above normal gleaners, and with quickened interest questioned Ruth on her day's work.

VERSE 20

"Yahweh's kindness to the living and the dead" — Through the mercy of the Father, the name of the dead was to be carried on, and his dependents cared for.

"One of our next kinsmen"—Heb. "miggoeleym"—"of our redeemers," from "goel," — "redeemer." See margin: "one that hath a right to redeem." See notes on the Redeemer.

VERSE 21

"My young men"—Heb. "Hannearim." The same word is used in vv. 9, 15, and denotes both male and female servants, but especially female. See vv. 22, 23.

VERSE 22

"Meet thee not in any other field"—It was now absolutely imperative that Ruth remain in the field of the Redeemer, if they were to derive the benefits which the Law provided from such a source. The application of the type needs no stressing. Having been granted permission to glean in the fields of Israel's hope, we, too, must follow the advice of Naomi. Any straying to other fields will prove disastrous. Notice the marginal rendering of this verse. There is trouble and danger in any other field. There would have been for Ruth. There is a beautiful expression in the Song of Solo-

23. So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother-in-law.

mon, Ch. 1: 6, where the Bride speaks of the trouble she experienced when she was forced to labour in vineyards other than her own. True happiness, true contentment of mind, and true rewards of service will come only from labour in the field of Boaz, and by keeping close to his young maidens!

VERSE 23

“End of barley and wheat harvest”—This would bring to the time of Pentecost (50 days after Passover—Lev. 23: 16), at which time the book of Ruth is read. Ruth had entered the land at the Passover, speaking of deliverance, and now the time of service had brought her to Pentecost, when the full results of labour could be expected. Those results, as far as she was concerned, she was about to witness.

NAOMI — THE FAITHFUL

Her Faith

Though perhaps overshadowed by the virtues of Ruth, the narrative nevertheless reveals Naomi as an outstanding woman of faith, courage and kindness. She never lost faith, even in the dire distress that overtook her in the land of Moab, but when in trouble sought the help of Yahweh, and out of weakness gained strength.

She was compelled to leave home by the decision of her husband, but in spite of the tragic reverses that she suffered, she maintained a constancy of purpose that won through to victory and joy in the end.

Her Lovingkindness

It speaks volumes for Naomi's character that though submerged by disaster, and left without hope, her two daughters-in-law continued with her. Death had desolated their homes, and laid in the dust the support upon which they all relied. But in the bitterness of their experience, we hear no word of complaint from Ruth and Orpah. They still cling to Naomi, that by their united efforts they might be mutually strengthened to surmount the mountain of trouble that stood in their way.

They preferred Naomi to their own family — to the security they could have found among their own kindred. Such love to a mother-in-law is so seldom seen, so scarce among the sons or daughters of men, as to reveal the

true quality of her character. It had not only won their respect, their affection, but their warmest attachment. They turned to her rather than to their own; they had a confidence in her guiding hand that had greater appeal than the security of their kindred.

It was only when she proposed to leave Moab for the added difficulties that loomed for them in a foreign country, and by the suggestion of Naomi herself, that Orpah turned back. As so many who have been attracted to Christ have done since!

Her Piety

Naomi was a godly woman. Her language was steeped in expressions that revealed her reverence for the Creator. She constantly recognised the ways of Providence in her life, and accepted her reverses as the hand of discipline administered for her good. In her distress, she does not echo the foolish cry of Job's wife: "Curse God and die!" but seeks the means of redress. "The hand of Yahweh is gone out against me," she said (Ch. 1: 13).

She was not only prepared to toil along the hard, difficult road from Moab to Bethlehem, but also the often more difficult road of spiritual reformation. She sought the Way of Yahweh, humbling herself in her distress, seeking the means of restitution in the provisions of His law, educating the half-pagan Ruth in the necessary principles that would lead to redemption, and guiding her to an end that meant joy for them both. In her old age, she experienced a joy she never expected, in the birth of the little boy, Obed, the Worshipper.

Her Prudence

She was a prudent, kind, tender, pious matron. Burdened with a terrible load of grief, limited by the restrictions of age, her faith remained strong, and with steady, resolute steps she sought her land and her God. As much as she must have desired their company, she refused the temptation to impose a burden on her daughters-in-law which she thought they could not undertake. She does not force them to go with her, but gives them the choice of returning to their kindred, and to an environment with which they were familiar.

Once in the land, her earnest desire is to "seek rest

for Ruth." The future of her daughter-in-law becomes her sole and absorbing concern. But she realised that the attainment of her objective must be through trial and labour. There was no short cut to the end she had in view, no easy road. A lesser woman would have forced her presence on Boaz, reminded him of his great wealth, told him in straight terms that he had the means to help them all without feeling it himself. But Naomi did not want charity. She knew (as did Boaz) that such charity would not have been a true kindness, would not have accomplished the end in view, but would have destroyed it. She wanted something greater than material help, that which Boaz could only give her in the way revealed in the narrative. That way: the patience and faith it demanded, brought out the best in the characters of all concerned.

Sometimes people wonder why tribulation is the lot of those who live godly lives. Why does not Yahweh intervene, make the road easy, pour out His blessings without limit? Because He knows what is best for each one of us. What a pity it would have been if Boaz, with clumsy generosity, had insisted upon relieving the poverty of Naomi, and made it unnecessary for Ruth to glean in the fields. Ruth would never have been touched with the **need** of a redeemer, would never, with loving modesty and deep humility, appealed to Boaz in that capacity.

Naomi allowed the invisible, guiding hand of Yahweh to direct her affairs in accordance with His purpose. She exercised faith and patience, though she did her part resolutely when the time came. She allowed Yahweh to reveal the way in which she could go, and in the end her faith was suitably rewarded.

Chapter 3: LOVE'S REQUEST

Ruth's Virtuous Appeal — She Seek the Help of the Chivalrous Kinsman



1. Then Naomi her mother-in-law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?

Verses 1-5: NAOMI SEEKS REST FOR RUTH

When Ruth had revealed to Naomi her experiences in the field of Boaz, and Naomi had recognised the ways of Providence guiding her daughter-in-law to their near kinsmen, she doubtless expected that Boaz would soon move to help

2. And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley tonight in the threshingfloor.

their need, as a kinsman or redeemer was directed to do under the Law. But there was inexplicable delay. The days drifted into weeks, and nothing was done. Ruth continued to labour in the fields, Boaz continued to help her by seeing she received ample gleanings, but he remained silent and inactive as to the real work of redemption. Something was hindering him, and Naomi determined to find out what it was.

She instructed Ruth to offer herself as wife to Boaz. There is nothing indelicate in the way this was done, for it was in accordance with the custom of the day. In fact, each party acted with the greatest care, consideration, and thoughtfulness towards the other, each thinking of each other's welfare.

Thus the urgent need of Naomi and Ruth caused them to appeal to Boaz to act the part of Redeemer. And then it became apparent why there had been delay. There was a closer kinsman who had a prior right to that of Boaz. He stood in the way of any action on the part of the latter. Boaz was anxious to play the part of Redeemer for he had developed a love for Ruth. He therefore determined to force this nearer kinsman to fulfil his responsibilities, or allow Boaz to do so.

The type points forward to the urgent need of all believers for a Redeemer. Whilst Christ has the power to redeem, it is required of us that we come unto him, as Ruth did unto Boaz. We must first recognise our need, and then act in accordance with Yahweh's requirements.



VERSE 1

"Shall I not seek rest for thee?"—See note Ch. 1: 9, and compare with Ch. 2: 9. The Hebrews speak of a husband's house as his wife's "menuchah," "safe shelter," or "rest." It signifies a place of rest, of protection, of honour, of security that cannot be violated. The husband's house was his bride's menuchah, as the Promised Land was Israel's menuchah, for the Hope of Israel was the hope of a virgin (Isa. 62: 4). "Menuchah" (rest) signifies "peace, favour, rest, protection." See the use of it in the following places: Gen. 49: 15; Deut. 12: 9; 1 Kings 8: 56; 1 Chron. 23: 25. The Lord Jesus offers his followers rest (Mat. 11: 29) and peace (Jhn. 14: 27) in his "house" (Heb. 3: 6).

Naomi recognised the urgent need for security for Ruth, besides which there was her duty towards Yahweh, to raise

3. Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor; but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking.

4. And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do.

up seed, that the name of Elimelech might not fade out. It was the responsibility of the kinsman to do that, but none had stepped forward to perform the duty. Sufficient time had elapsed, and now she was determined to take matters into her own hands.

VERSE 2

"Of our kindred"—In considering a "resting place of security" for Ruth, Naomi had in mind a Levirate marriage with Boaz (see Note 1: 11 and Deut. 25: 5-10; Matt. 22: 26-33). In doing so, Naomi was acting both faithfully and courageously, in the spirit of the Law, and with concern for Ruth's future. See Boaz's reply—Ch. 4: 5, 10.

"Winnoweth barley tonight"—In Palestine a breeze rises from the sea about 4 p.m. and lasts until after sunset. It is ideal for the purpose of winnowing, carrying away the chaff, and letting the grain fall to the ground.

"Threshing floor"—An open, exposed spot was chosen with a large, hard surface, on the side or summit of a hill. Ruth would have to leave Bethlehem, and "go down" (v. 3) to where it was situated.

VERSE 3

"Wash thyself"—The antitypical Bride has been invited to do likewise—Isa. 1: 18.

"Anoint thee"—See Esther 2: 12. Ruth had to "make herself ready" for the purpose Naomi had in mind. The antitypical Bride (2 Cor. 11: 2) must do likewise (see Rev. 19: 7).

VERSE 4

"Uncover his feet"—There was nothing indelicate in Naomi's suggestion, nor in Ruth's action. It was in the nature of an appeal, based on the teaching of the Law. To die childless, to have one's house come to an end was considered a disgrace to the Hebrew, because of the hope in the Messiah who would one day be born of Abraham's seed. It was the hope of every true Israelitish family that it would have the honor of providing the promised seed. This was encouraged by the Law that required that in the case of one

5. And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do.
6. And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother-in-law bade her.
7. And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.
8. And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself: and, behold, a woman lay at his feet.

dying childless, the next of kin should raise seed in his name. Naomi had waited long enough for the next of kin to assist her and Ruth, and in the absence of such action, she now was about to make a direct approach.

Her instructions to Ruth were in accordance with the custom of the times. According to Calmet, it was a custom for women of the East, when going to the bed of their lawful husband, through modesty, and in token of subjection, go to the foot of the bed, and gently raising the clothes, creep under them to their proper place. Ruth's action, was a reminder to Boaz that she had a right to the protection he could give her, and which the Law demanded.

It is significant that Naomi and Ruth made the first move towards redemption. Their action commenced a train of circumstances that ultimately provided the Saviour of mankind. We, too, must make the first move towards our Redeemer, with the assurance that he will grant us the protection and the help that he has promised all who come unto him.

VERSES 6-7

RUTH ACTS

"His heart was merry"—Heb. "Yatab," sig. "to be good, well," i.e., pleased, cheerful, joyous (cp. Jud. 19: 6, 9, 22). It does not necessarily imply excess (Prov. 15: 13).

"At the end of the heap"—It is an age-old custom to sleep on the threshing-floor in the open air.

"Softly"—Quietly so as not to disturb.

Verses 8-9: RUTH'S HUMBLE APPEAL

Boaz retired for the night, little realising what it would reveal. Acting on Naomi's advice, Ruth took her place as directed. Her presence disturbed Boaz. He realised he was not alone. He was amazed to find a woman in close proximity to him. He saw that it was Ruth, and heard from her lips, her humble and modest appeal.

9. And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman.

VERSE 8

"The man was afraid, and turned himself"—He started up and bent forward to see who was there. See Revised Version margin.

VERSE 9

"Spread thy skirt over thine handmaid" — Heb. "Thy wing" (same word as in Ch. 2: 12). This was a symbolic act denoting that the kinsman claimed the widow as his wife. Boaz would show by this that he was prepared to give shelter or protection (see Note, v. 1, cp. Ezek. 16: 8). The Law provided such protection for the widow. Ruth was now making this claim in the approved manner of the time. The casting of an outward garment over the bride's head was the customary ceremony at old-time Eastern marriages, as a token of the husband's protection thenceforward given to the bride.

"Near kinsman"—A different word to Ch. 2: 1. Here the Hebrew is "goel," and signifies "one who has a right to redeem" (see margin). The Goel was a very important person in Israel, representing to the family what Yahweh represented to the nation. See notes on "The Redeemer."

Verses 10-13: BOAZ'S GRACIOUS RESPONSE

The heart of Boaz was touched by the appeal of the young and lonely widow. He recognised her faith in seeking the provision of the Law to relieve her distress, rather than following the dictates of the flesh. Her character was well known to him, and had become the subject of favourable comment in Bethlehem. Moreover, Boaz had developed a tenderness for Ruth, and was therefore willing to act the part required. But there was an objection that appeared insurmountable. There was a nearer kinsman than Boaz whose responsibility and privilege it was to act the part of Redeemer if he could. Though Boaz was now fully prepared to take Ruth to wife, his respect for the Law of Yahweh, required that its provisions should be scrupulously obeyed.

Boaz typifies the Lord Jesus who fulfilled all the requirements of the Law before acting the part of a Redeemer. We shall see that even in the case of the Lord there was one (the Law) standing in the way of Redemption whose inability to redeem had to be made clearly obvious to all.

10. And he said, Blessed be thou of Yahweh, my daughter: for thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich.

11. And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman.

VERSE 10

"Showed more kindness in the latter end"—Ruth had shown kindness to her late husband during his sickness, and after his death, when she threw in her lot with his mother. But her action in seeking out Boaz, to claim the right of the near kinsman, and thus raise up seed to build the house of her deceased husband, was even greater than her former kindness. She was young, and doubtless attractive, and could have obtained a young and wealthy man if she desired. Boaz was wealthy, but evidently not young. Nevertheless she preferred him because of the requirements of Yahweh's law.

VERSE 11

"All the city of my people know."—Lit. "all the gate of my people know" (see margin). The elders of the city assembled at the gate, and their opinion on matters was the opinion that counted.

"Virtuous woman"—The word used (*chayil*) has the sense of "force of character, or strength of mind."

VERSE 12

"There is a kinsman (ga'al) nearer than I"—The nearer kinsman had the better right. The existence of such a kinsman is possibly the reason why Boaz had not volunteered to act the part of Goel, earlier, and thus prevent the need of Ruth having to appeal for his help. Boaz seems to have been moved by love for Ruth, but possibly felt his seniority (v. 10: Ch. 2: 8), would stand in the way of Ruth returning that love. Besides which, there was the nearer kinsman.

What a beautiful type of our position in relation to the Lord, our Redeemer. Our circumstances are such that we, too, must make the first approach; but we can do so in full assurance that his love is great, and any obstacles can be overcome.

VERSE 13

"Tarry this night"—He will only allow her to return when it is light enough to travel, as a precaution against possible peril. He does not touch Ruth as she lies at his feet, in case

12. And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I.

13. Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part; but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as Yahweh liveth: lie down until the morning.

14. And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor.

15. And he said, Bring the vail that thou hast upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her: and she went into the city.

16. And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, Who art thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her.

the nearer relative might agree to marry her. He risks being compromised by her presence, out of consideration for her.

"As Yahweh liveth"—Boaz binds himself with an oath to take Ruth as his wife, should the nearer kinsman refuse (cp. Ezek. 16: 8).

VERSES 14-15: HIS CONTINUED KINDNESS

VERSE 14

"One could know another"—R.V.: "one could discern another." In the early dawn before a man could distinguish his neighbour.

VERSE 15

"Bring the vail"—Heb. "Mitpachath." It has been variously translated. The LXX has "apron"; the Vulgate, "cloak." It was a large wrap or loose cloak worn over ordinary clothes.

"She went into the city"—The verb is masculine. The Revised Version is "he went into the city." Boaz lost no time in performing his part.

Verses 16-18: NAOMI'S PREDICTION

She recognised in the gift of Boaz, and in the oath that he swore, his determination to act the part of Redeemer. She detected his love for her daughter-in-law, and predicted that he would act immediately.



VERSE 16

"Who art Thou?"—R.V. marg., "How hast thou fared?" i.e., Are you married or not.

17. And she said, These six measures of barley gave he me: for he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law.

18. Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest until he have finished the thing this day.

VERSE 18

"Until thou know"—Until it is determined whether she was to be the wife of Boaz or the other kinsman.

Character Sketch

BOAZ — THE STRONG

His Occupation

Boaz was a farmer. This is man's oldest form of occupation. In Eden, before sin entered the world, Adam was given charge over the Garden "to dress it and keep it" (Gen. 2: 15), for there is no pleasure or satisfaction in idleness. On the contrary, the greatest joy comes from the rewards of toil, particularly when such is done in harmonious co-operation with the Creator. And the farmer must work in co-operation with the Creator as in no other occupation. He knows, more than any other, how dependent we are upon the mercy and goodness of Him who sendeth His rain on just and unjust alike.

The angels are as farmers toiling in the fields of Yahweh, bringing forth fruit to His glory (Heb. 1: 14); and to their state, every true believer aspires (Luke 20: 36; Heb. 2: 5).

His Diligence

But a man's true character is not revealed by his occupation so much as by his application to it. Boaz was a successful farmer. He was wealthy. So wealthy, in fact, as to be described as "a mighty man of wealth." Yet he made that no excuse for wasting his life in ease and idleness. He employed an overseer in his field as the record shows (Ruth 2: 5), but he did not commit his business entirely into his hands. He was called to account by Boaz who strictly supervised what went on in his fields.

Thus he was not irresponsible towards his servants, nor did he give them latitude that they might abuse it. He was strict but fair, just but merciful.

"The hand of the diligent maketh rich," declares

the writer of Proverbs. But it does more. It occupies a person's mind to the exclusion of less profitable things; and it therefore contributes to moral safety. The sin of Sodom was "fulness of bread and abundance of idleness" (Jer. 16: 49). Boaz was never guilty of that, but was open-handed in his liberality. He never let the pursuit of wealth dominate him; he never allowed diligence to degenerate into tight-fisted avarice and greed.

His Humility

Though mighty in wealth, though he had no need to labour except for the actual pleasure it gave him, Boaz was not above joining in the common labour of the field. We see him with his labourers, toiling in the sun, sharing the discomforts of winnowing, sleeping on the threshing-floor, that he might not waste the time occupied by travelling from the field to the house each morning and night.

In this he beautifully types the Lord Jesus who though greater than all others, humbled himself as a servant (Phil. 2: 4), and was not above doing the most menial tasks (John 13: 5). In the readiness with which both Boaz and the Lord were prepared thus to humble themselves is found the secret of their success. It is a lesson everyone must learn who desires to rise in life, whether ecclesiastically or otherwise.

His Courteousness

Men are usually ready to defer to those above them, and yet show scant thought for those considered their inferiors. Boaz was courteous to all. His courtesy sprang out of his consideration for others. And this brought forth suitable responses from those about him. There was joy when Boaz visited his fields, implied by the statement of the narrative, "Behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem" (Ch. 2: 4), and which can be rendered: "See! Boaz cometh!" Listen to his words of blessing as he enters the field where his men labour; hearken to their response, their words of welcome. Here is master and servant working together in joyful harmony, both interested in the welfare of the other. They found a joy and pleasure in mutual service, and a constant daily reward. He does not treat his men as inferiors, as clods, but as his companions, his fellow-labourers. He sits down and eats with them.

His treatment of Ruth was the acme of courtesy. He was not as some who looked with disfavour upon the privilege of gleaning, and surreptitiously stripped their fields of all. To Ruth: the humble, gentle, poverty-stricken Moabitess who so willingly identified herself with Naomi, Boaz showed a consideration that sprang from his kind and strong nature, long before love for Ruth gained possession of his heart as well.

His Piety

In this is found the true strength of his character. His name means "In him is Strength," but that Strength was derived from Another, much Higher than flesh. The Lord is likewise styled, "the Son of Man whom Thou (Yahweh) madest strong for Thyself" (Ps. 80: 17). In Christ is strength (Phil. 4: 13), as there was also in Boaz. And that strength came from his piety. His love of Yahweh is exhibited in his obedience to His law, his acceptance of its responsibilities, his praise of His name, his reflection of the Divine character. Divine love moulded his life. Because of it, great riches did not spoil him, diligence in business did not completely absorb him, strength of character did not harden into harshness.

With strong sure hands, Boaz ruled his own life, and guided and directed the lives of those in his care. Because of the excellence of his character, He was permitted, by the grace of Yahweh, to become, like the Lord Jesus, the Goel (Redeemer) of his family. The events of his life forecast the future, and gave help and encouragement to all who study his character and experience.

Chapter 4: LOVE'S REWARD

Ruth the Beloved Wife and Mother: Naomi the Joyful



1. Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down.

Verses 1-5: BOAZ NEGOTIATES WITH THE NEARER KINSMAN

Losing no time, Boaz took his place at the gate of Bethlehem where, in those times, it was the custom to conduct

2. And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down.

3. And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land which was our brother Elimelech's:

matters of business. He was anxious to claim Ruth as his own, but before he could do so, he had to give the opportunity to the nearer kinsman to redeem in accordance with the Law.

The type is a beautiful one. The Lord Jesus is our "near kinsman," for he is both Son of God and Son of Man. The Law of Moses, which cursed both Jew and Gentile, stood as a barrier between man and salvation. But Paul, writing to Gentiles, declared: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law" (Gal. 3: 13).

In the Story of Ruth, the nameless kinsman, who was prepared to take the lands of Naomi, but was not prepared to marry Ruth lest his own inheritance be marred, stands for the Law which could only take but could not give life.



VERSE 1

"Then went Boaz up to the gate"—The elders and judges of a city assembled at the gate for such purposes as Boaz now contemplated (Deut. 16: 18; Josh. 20: 4). What Boaz was about to do was done publicly; what the Lord did was likewise before all mankind.

"The kinsman"—Heb. "goel."

"Ho, such a one!"—Heb. "shebah poh peloni almoni." "Peloni" comes from a root, "pala," "to separate or distinguish," hence somebody definite. But "almoni" comes from a root "alam," "to hide, conceal," hence someone hidden or secret. The two words indicate a definite person known to Boaz, but whose identity remains hidden. Throughout the record, this Goel remains nameless. LXX has "secret one."

VERSE 2

"Ten men"—According to Jewish custom, this constitutes a quorum.

VERSE 3

"Selleth a parcel of land"—Naomi had come into possession of Elimelech's property, but being reduced to want, and immediate inheritors being dead, it was open to the next of kin (the goel) to purchase it and so retain it in the family (Lev. 25: 24).

4. And I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee: and I am after thee. And he said, I will redeem it.

5. Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.

6. And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it.

VERSE 4

"I thought to advertise"—see margin. This is a Hebraism signifying to "draw aside the long hair covering the ear in order to whisper a secret."

"Redeem it"—Heb, "ga'al"—Redeem by purchase.

VERSE 5

"Thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess"—The purpose of redemption was to raise seed to inherit the land in the line of Elimelech. Naomi was past bearing (cp. Ch. 1: 11), and therefore the nameless Goel would be forced to marry Ruth. But, as Boaz stressed, she was a Moabitess, and marriage to such would be abhorrent to a Jew resting in strict letter of the Law.

"To raise up the name of the dead"—cp. Deut. 25: 5.

Verses 6-8: THE NAMELESS GOEL REFUSES TO REDEEM

At first the nearer kinsman of Ruth was willing to act the part of Goel, believing that it involved only the purchase of the land, but when told that he must also marry Ruth, he withdrew his consent.

In the type, this nameless kinsman represents the Law. The inability of the Law to redeem mankind from sin and death was constantly emphasised by the Apostle Paul. The law could only curse; it had no power to forgive apart from Christ (Gal. 3: 10). The work of the Lord Jesus as Redeemer, was efficacious to both those who accept him because they have heard of him and know him, and also for those "under the first covenant" (Heb. 9: 15). Thus his work of redemption reaches back as well as forward. That of Boaz was likewise. It aided both



7. Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour: and this was a testimony in Israel.

8. Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it for thee. So he drew off his shoe.

Ruth and Naomi. So that here, in the Book of Ruth, Israel had a story that told the need of seeking salvation outside the Law of Moses, through a Redeemer to be provided. The nameless Redeemer refused to act because in doing so, he would "mar his inheritance." Christ had no such scruples. He became "a curse for us" in redeeming us from the curse of the law (Gal. 3: 13). In the absence of Christ, the only approach to the worship of Yahweh was through the Mosaic covenant, in which there was no hope of life. In the absence of Boaz, the only redeemer in Israel was one unable to help Ruth effectively. So the beautiful type has a hundred lessons to tell.



VERSE 6

"Lest I mar"—The word signifies "ruin." Two factors could have governed his decision. (1)—To have paid out money for an inheritance that would pass to the children of Ruth would be to impoverish his own children's inheritance. If this were the reason, then the nameless kinsman had not the means to perform his duty. In type this pointed to the helplessness of the Mosaic covenant to grant salvation from sin. (2)—He could have implied that in marrying Ruth the Moabitess, he would be in danger of breaking the Law, and then, perhaps, the calamities that befell Mahlon and Chilion might fall on him. The attitude of the nameless kinsman was reflected in the words of Peter, who at first feared to take the gospel to the Gentiles lest he be defiled by such contact (Acts 10: 14-21, 34-36). The nameless kinsman therefore either did not have the means to redeem if the land purchased was to go to others than his own, or else feared the results of being associated in such a way with a foreigner. He therefore accepted the offer of Boaz to perform this part (v. 4).

VERSE 7

"This was the manner"—This is sometimes thought to have been an act of contempt, such as is prescribed in Deut. 25: 7-10, when a brother refused to go through with a levirate marriage. This is not so, however. The kinsman was not a brother, and the shoe was not pulled off by Ruth, as

9. And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi.

10. Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day.

would have been required under the law of Deut. 25: 7. It was taken off by the kinsman himself, indicating that he gave over the right to Boaz. This verse describes the custom by which property was transferred one to another.

"Plucked off his shoe"—Thus, by this symbolic action, delivering up his right to walk upon that land.

"A testimony in Israel"—It was completely binding as would be a properly executed contract today.

Verses 9-12: BOAZ ACCEPTS THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF REDEEMER

Before the witnesses in the gate of the city, Boaz vows to faithfully perform his part as Redeemer without considering the ignominy it might bring upon him. In like manner, the Lord humbled himself before all mankind, that he might be Redeemer of both Jew and Gentile (Isa. 49: 6). Boaz was blessed of the elders of the city, and so, ultimately, will be the Lord Jesus (Phil. 3: 9-10).



VERSE 10

"The gate of his place"—From the people of his city.

VERSE 11

"The house of Israel"—Heb. "ben," a son from the root "banah" to build, and hence "eben" a stone, because, as a house is built of stones, so is a family of children. The twelve "stones" that built the house of Israel, found their representation in the stones in Aaron's breastplate (see also Rev. 7: 4; 21: 14).

"Do thou worthily"—See margin. May you prosper.

"Be famous"—See margin. The blessing has undoubtedly been fulfilled.

VERSE 12

"Pharez"—His name signifies "to break out," and thus to expand. The circumstances of the birth of Pharez (see Gen. 38) did not reflect credit on Judah, but had particular significance to Boaz, for he was a descendant of Pharez.

11. And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses. Yahweh make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem.

12. And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which Yahweh shall give thee of this young woman.

13. So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, Yahweh gave her conception, and she bare a son.

14. And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be Yahweh, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel.

15. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him.

16. And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it.

17. And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed; he is the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Verses 13-17: THE FINAL JOY

The story which began under the cloud of tragedy, with a record of famine, calamity, death and exile, ends in joy, in the manifestation of a new life, and in the happiness of redemption.

The famine typified the famine of the Word; the calamities foreshadow the evil, hopeless state of life that men live when they are without God, the new life (the birth of Obed) points forward to the new walk in Christ which every true worshipper commences, the rejoicing is the joy we experience now in Christ whilst living in anticipation of greater ones to come (1 Tim. 4: 8).



VERSE 14

"Blessed be Yahweh"—When we contemplate the blessings that have accrued to us through Christ, and the hopelessness of our state outside of him, how completely we are enabled to enter into the joy of Naomi as expressed in this verse. Daily our prayers should ascend into heaven that He hath "not left us this day without a Redeemer." We are greatly privileged, greatly blessed, and we need to learn to express our heartfelt thanks in words of appreciation to Him who has made it possible. Naomi's joy took her to the throne of grace; let ours do likewise. Let us express our pleasure,

18. Now these are the generations of Pharez: Pharez begat Hezron,
19. And Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab,
20. And Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon begat Salmon,
21. And Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed,
22. And Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.

our happiness, in our association with our Lord. And may His name be famous in Israel, as it ultimately will be.

VERSE 15

"He shall be a restorer of thy life"—Heb. "shoob"—to turn back, and thus to restore. The misery of Naomi's life had been turned back, and now she experienced a joy she never expected to have. Naomi's experience can be ours also.

"A nourisher"—Heb. "kuwl"—"to keep in," i.e., maintain, protect, guard.

"Loveth thee"—Thus Ruth personified the Scriptural attribute of love. She was strong in character, determined in mind, yet gentle in action. Her beautiful qualities are expressed in the words of Paul in 1 Cor. 13, and her actions have helped mould the English language, so that a ruthless person is one devoid of the qualities of Ruth. Her love was manifested particularly towards Naomi—and the love of the Gentile Ecclesia will be particularly manifested towards Israel (Rom. 16: 25-26). Notice the language of one such as Ruth in expressing his affection for Israel—Rom. 10: 1, 9: 1-3).

VERSE 16

"Laid it in her bosom"—It is said that the aged gain refreshment and energy from the young. So Naomi found renewed zest in life by the presence of her little grandson, whose name, significantly, means "worshipper."

VERSE 17

"The women gave it a name"—They saw the child of Ruth rendering a service of joy to Naomi, and so called it "Obed"—worshipper, or server. As Ruth represents the Ecclesia, her son represents the members thereof who are worshippers of Yahweh in the truest sense, and who also delight to serve Israel, rendering any service of which they are capable.

Verses 18-22: BIRTH OF THE KING

These verses trace the remarkable consummation of this

delightful story. Out of the distress of Naomi, there was not only brought a great joy, but a train of circumstances that ultimately gave birth to Israel's greatest King; David the Beloved, and through him to the Saviour of the World.

In these verses there is set before us the Divine purpose with mankind. From the Redeemer (Boaz) there comes the King (David). The Redeemer appeared 1900 years ago; the king is soon to be manifested.

Two faithful Gentile women played a prominent part in the genealogical line that led to David, and from him to Christ. They were Rahab the harlot of Jericho, and Ruth the Moabitess. Rahab was the mother of Boaz (Mat. 1: 5), and perhaps that fact caused him to look more sympathetically towards the problem of the Moabitess of Bethlehem.

So this delightful story comes to an end. It is one rich in meaning and in spiritual lessons for each one of us. A single reading will not reveal all its power. It is a subject for constant meditation, and having mastered its meaning, we will find allusions to its teaching throughout the Bible. May the reader have as much joy in seeking out these things as it has been our experience and pleasure to receive in doing the same.

— H. P. MANSFIELD



CONCERNING REDEMPTION — RUTH 4: 7

The Story of Ruth is not merely a delightful narrative showing the triumph of virtue, but also one of important doctrinal significance. Throughout Scripture, Yahweh is revealed as the Redeemer of His people (Job. 19: 25; Isa. 59: 20; Ps. 19: 14; 78: 35; Isa. 41: 14, etc.). The full import of that title is revealed in the Book of Ruth.

The Hebrew word for Redeemer is "Goel" from "gahal," to redeem. The significance of its meaning is illustrated in the Mosaic law of Redemption. Concerning this, Dr. Thomas writes in Phanerosis:

"According to this, all the firstborns of man and beast in Israel are Yahweh's, and were all to be sacrificed to Him, except the first born of an ass, and the firstborn children, being males (Exod. 13: 1, 13-15; 34: 20); fields, houses, cities and servants (Lev. 25: 25-34); all these,

when sold were returnable to their original owners, because these, as Yahweh's representatives, had the fee simple right in them, and could therefore not convey an unlimited right. The absolute fee simple right was in Yahweh; first, because He brought Israel's firstborn out of Egypt, while He slew those of the Egyptians (Exod. 13: 14); and secondly, because He claimed the Holy Land as absolutely His, the Israelites being only strangers and sojourners with Him (Lev. 25: 23). The first-ling of a cow, of a sheep and of a goat, were not redeemable from death; they were to be sacrifices to Yahweh, being typical of Messiah the prince in his cutting off (Num. 18: 17).

"The redemption of redeemable things was to be affected by a blood relation of the nearest kin. Hence, GOEL stands for the nearest relative, a blood relation, the next of kin or a redeemer in this sense. It was his duty in redeeming to pay a stipulated price, so that the near kinsman became a purchaser, and the firstborns and so forth, a purchased people, and purchased things. Under the law, the price was blood and money. Now all this was a pattern of heavenly things. It was an illustration of the substance expressed in the text words, 'Yahweh Goel of Israel'; that is, 'He shall be the nearest kinsman of Israel.' This necessitates that the Effluence of the Eternal should become an Israelite, or as Paul expresses it, 'He,' the Spirit 'took upon himself the nature of Abraham; for in all things it behoved him to be made like his brethren.' The Spirit becoming thus a blood relation, and by resurrection Son of Power and firstborn, he is the one of right to redeem the Holy Land and Israel by a blood-price out of the hand of strangers, who desolate and oppress them. They are the Eternal's, and His near kinsman is Jesus the Holy One of Israel."

The word "Goel" has been translated "Avenger" (Num. 35: 12), "Revenger" (Num. 35: 19-27), "Redeemer" (Job. 19: 25), "Near Kinsman" (Ruth 2: 20; 3: 9), "Deliverer" (Ps. 119: 154), "Ransomed" (Isa. 51: 10), "Kinsfolk" (1 Kings 16: 11), "Kinsman" (Num. 5: 8).

Under the Law, the next of kin (the Goel), was placed in the role of Protector and Avenger of the family.

Yahweh is both Protector and Avenger of His household.

But how could He claim to be "next of kin"? Only by manifesting Himself in flesh, which He did in the person of the Lord Jesus who was revealed that he might redeem mankind. Thus, as Brother Thomas, shows above, the title: Yahweh Redeemer of Israel, signifies: "He who will be a near kinsman to Israel." Yahweh became such when He revealed Himself in the Lord Jesus.

The work of the Lord Jesus in redemption is revealed by the provisions of the Mosaic Law. It provided for the following:

1. Redemption of the Land

The land belonged to Yahweh, and the individual Israel-

ite never really owned it (Lev. 25: 23); he only had it on loan. If he fell into debt, and had to realise on it, it became the duty of the Goel to buy it back, and reinstate his relation (Lev. 25: 23-25). On the year of Jubilee, the land which had passed out of the hands of a family with no Goel to redeem it, was redeemed by Yahweh Himself (Lev. 25: 23-25). Thus the Goel acted on the behalf of Yahweh.

In like manner, the land of Israel that has passed out of the hands of those to whom it was delivered, is to be restored by the Redeemer who has already been provided.

2. Redemption of Slaves

If an Israelite was sold into slavery to a stranger, it was the duty of the Goel to redeem him, and thus to restore him to freedom (Lev. 25: 47-55).

In like manner, deliverance from the slavery of sin and death is promised through the Redeemer who has already been provided.

3. Avenger of Blood

The next of kin was required to act as Avenger or Re-vengeer for those who suffered violence (Josh. 20: 3-6; Num. 35: 15-28). In these places the same word, "goel" has been translated "avenger of blood."

In like manner, vengeance has been promised by Yahweh Who has provided the Goel to perform it (see Rom. 12: 19; Rev. 6: 10; Rev. 18: 6-8).

4. Preserver of the Family

The Book of Ruth shows that it was part of the duty of the Goel to marry the widow of his next of kin if he died childless, and raise up seed in the family inheritance (Ruth 3: 1-2; Deut. 25: 5-10). Under such a law, the continuity of the family was maintained, even though through folly or disaster its continuance was threatened.

In like manner, the continuity of the House of Yahweh is being maintained by the Gentile Ecclesia which, significantly, is described in Isa. 53: 10 as the seed of Christ. He is the Goel or Redeemer of the family.

Yahweh is both Redeemer of the nation (Exod. 15: 3; Isa. 63: 9) and of individuals (Job. 19: 25; Ps. 19: 14). His Law provided that the following could be redeemed: Israel as a nation (Exod. 6: 6; Ps. 74: 2; Jer. 31: 11); Land (Lev.

25: 25); Houses (Lev. 25: 29, 33); Cities (Lev. 25: 32); Slaves (Lev. 25: 47-49); Unclean animals (Lev. 27: 13, 27); Tithes (Lev. 27: 31); Souls (Ps. 69: 18; 72: 14); Lives (Ps. 103: 4; Lam. 3: 58); Jerusalem (Isa. 52: 9); the Fatherless (Prov. 23: 11).

His Law provided that bloodshed should be avenged through the Redeemer who is styled the Avenger or Revenger of blood (Num. 35: 12; 19-27; Deut. 19: 6, 12; Josh. 20: 3, 5, 9).

There was also the promise of redemption from Enemies (Ps. 106: 10; 107: 2; Micah 4: 10); Death (Hos. 13: 14); Oppression (Lev. 27: 47); Destruction (Ps. 103: 4); Deceit and Violence (Ps. 72: 14); Evil (Gen. 48: 16).

When Yahweh announced Himself as the Redeemer of Israel, He announced that He would redeem and protect His people in the manner outlined above. Gentiles who desire His redemption must associate themselves with Israel, as Ruth did with Naomi.

Boaz, acting as the Goel, made it possible for Ruth the alien to have fellowship with Israel and with Yahweh. The Lord Jesus (our Boaz or Strong One) has done likewise (Eph. 2: 11-13; 3: 6).

The Goel in Israel had to have the right, the power, and the will to redeem. Yahweh has invested the Lord Jesus with all that.

To the Goel in Israel all the distressed had a right to look for relief. We can do the same in relation to our Redeemer.

We ever need the assurance of such a Goel. When things seem to be against us, when no voice is raised in our defence or for our comfort, when all seems to have forsaken us, then the comfort of our Goel, our Redeemer, can strengthen and uplift us.



Gospel Proclamation Association



For years the Truth has made little progress in Tasmania. Although fifty years ago, there was an Ecclesia of about 100 members in the south; it had dwindled down to a mere handful and this was also the state of things in the north. In recent months, however, an Ecclesia of some 60 members has come into existence in Launceston, whilst in Hobart a few brethren and sisters (mostly elderly) are striving to bring before the notice of others the life-giving message of the Gospel.

Launceston is about 125 miles distance from Hobart. With renewed activity in the work of Gospel proclamation, however, close contact is maintained between the two centres. Periodic visits are made by the brethren in the north to the capital of Hobart, and every possible assistance is rendered to the young brother in the latter city (Brother Ken Niejalke) to further the Truth's labours.

Following campaigns conducted by the Editor of "Logos" in Tasmania, it was decided by the Gospel Proclamation Association to mail a copy of "Herald of the Coming Age" to every person in the island, listed in the Telephone Directory. Brethren and sisters in Adelaide co-operated in the writing of labels, the wrapping and despatch of these copies. For example, some 2,000 copies of the "Herald" will be forwarded this month — will be received by 2,000 applicants before this copy of "Logos" is in the hands of the reader.

This has resulted in quite an amount of correspondence from Tasmania, of quite a varied nature. Some have indignantly rejected the copy sent — included among the latter number being an irate clergyman in Hobart who wrote saying he would not even open the copy, and yet proceeded to condemn its contents! But such reaction is few and far between, and the overwhelming response has been very gratifying.

To date we have received 80 applications for further literature. These names will be sent on to the brethren in Tasmania, and we hope that they will endeavour to contact these potentially interested people and try to encourage them further in the things of the Truth.

We believe that an application for literature received in this manner is the best indication of the interest of the person concerned. The applicant has read the booklet sent, and knows full well the nature of our approach. And yet, in spite of the knowledge that they know we represent the Christadelphian community, and that we are opposed to the doctrines of the sects about us, their interest is aroused to the extent that they desire further information. It is far better than an advertisement in the Press, or a leaflet, which may not give a true indication of our doctrines or attitude. Having received a number of such applications, under such circumstances, it now becomes the responsibility of the brethren on the spot to further the interest of those concerned.

Applications for literature have come from all parts of the Island, and as some portions of it are rather inaccessible, and far from contact by brethren, we will try to further the interest by correspondence where this is the case.

To maintain this work requires money, and in that regard we are appreciative of the generous donations of "Logos" readers. As this money comes to hand, so the work can be maintained and extended. We hope, ultimately, to cover the whole of Australia in the manner in which we are doing Tasmania — but that, of course, depends upon whether the finance is available. To date we have received sufficient to cover our expenses, and later we will publish a balance sheet showing receipts and payments. Meanwhile, donations should be sent to "Gospel Proclamation Association, Box 226, G.P.O., Adelaide, South Australia."

VOLUME TWENTY SIX

THE LOGOS

Upholding the Purity of Apostolic Doctrine and Practice

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Thoughts for the Times

Harmonious Order in the House of God

How well ordered was the house of Israel! Each man and each family in their appointed place of service. Subordination here, and authority there, and no scope for the one-man-is-as-good-as-another principle in any of these divinely-initiated arrangements. It was an honour to be "Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah, porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation," and a satisfaction to "lodge about the house of God." No such immediate privilege is ours, but we are hoping for the substance of these shadowy things, and aspiring to a station in the kingdom of God, when the whole world will know the blessedness of submission to His most holy commands, and all social questions will have received their final and effectual quietus and solution in the enlightened contentment of every class. If the poorest position in God's kingdom were thrown open to general competition, how clamorous would men be after it! It will, however, be allotted according to immutable rule—a rule which will exclude entirely the spiritually-disqualified and unworthy, and make the way plain to him that hath clean hands, and a pure heart.

City of Destiny

BETHLEHEM

City of Sorrow and Salvation



The modern village of Beit Lahm (ancient Bethlehem or "House of Bread") is about 5 miles south of Jerusalem, and today is in the territory of the Arab State of Jordan. From the Israeli border, which extends as a narrow corridor to the city of Jerusalem, Bethlehem can be seen in the distance, with the Church of the Nativity standing prominently among its buildings. When the Arab-Jewish war of 1948 broke out, cannon were mounted adjacent to this Church of the Apostasy, and the Jewish lines shelled with impunity. The Arabs knew that the Jews feared to retaliate, for if by chance they hit the Church of the Nativity, it would bring the wrath of the so-called Christian world upon the new State. Already their enemies were too many and too powerful without adding to their number. Bethlehem thus proved a thorn in the side of the Jewish State. Its past history likewise tells the story of lost opportunities for the people of God—opportunities that Jewry will continue to lose until it returns to the "House of Bread," and gladly eats of the Manna of life, that the Lord alone can provide them. The wonderful fact of Divine revelation is that that is yet to happen.



The Most Beautiful of the World's Birthplaces

History records many examples of cities dominating mankind and moulding the destiny of nations. Jerusalem, Rome, Babylon, Nineveh, London, New York, Moscow have all played a great part in the chronicles of the world, have diverted the course of history, and had their moments of triumph and glory. But Bethlehem is noted not for martial display, or the wielding of great political or national power, but for incidents that are destined to influence men and nations to an even greater extent.

Originally, Bethlehem was a village of obscurity, a place of no account; so small and insignificant as not to find a mention among the cities assigned to Judah in the list given in Joshua 15. It was in the territory of Judah, but was considered of no great account.

The city is well-known today because of events that have since occurred there. It is situated in the hill country of Judah, about 5 miles south of Jerusalem, and on a height some 2,300 feet above sea-level. Its appearance is striking. It stands on a narrow ridge which projects eastward from

the central mountain range and breaks down in abrupt terraced slopes to the deep valleys on the north, south and east. The terraces are attractive, being nicely kept and covered with rows of olives, fig-trees and vines which sweep in graceful curves around the ridge as regular as stairs. The valleys below the city are exceptionally fertile. Bethlehem has been called "the most attractive and significant of all the world's birthplaces." Even under present conditions, in the hands of the Arabs, it is a fertile place of olives, pomegranates, almonds, figs and vines.

At Bethlehem, Ruth gleaned in the field of Boaz, and the story and significance of the work of the Redeemer became immortalised in a story of transcending beauty which makes the record of Ruth of vital importance. Bethlehem was also the birthplace of three of the most prominent men of history.

Our First Glimpse of Bethlehem

We turn back the pages of history some four thousand years, and consider Bethlehem as it arises out of the mists of antiquity. The story it has to tell at this time is one of sadness and sorrow. Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, had given birth to one son (the favoured Joseph), and was now expecting the second. The little company of people, that comprised the caravan of Jacob, had travelled from Bethel to a field close to Ephrath, which was the original name of Bethlehem (see margin Gen. 35: 16; Ruth 1: 2; Micah 5: 2). There the pangs of childbirth came suddenly upon Rachel; "she travailed and had hard labour." The midwife comforted her with the assurance that she would give birth to a son, and, indeed, she lived to witness the new life, and to call the little boy that was born, "Ben-oni," meaning, "The son of my sorrow." But the birth of her son was at the expense of her own life, for "Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem."

Lovingly, the heart-broken Jacob laid his wife to rest in the sepulchre he provided, and which stood as a monument to this significant incident. Centuries later, after the allotment of the country to the tribes in the days of Joshua, the territory of the Benjamites was extended by a long strip far into the south to include the sepulchre of their beloved ancestress (1 Sam. 10: 2). Jacob journeyed on past "the tower of Edar," a word that means "the watchtower of the flocks" and which has a significance in our second picture which we will shortly consider.

Meanwhile, Ben-oni's name was changed. Jacob could

not look upon the little boy as a Son of Sorrow. To him, he was as a Ray of Light and Joy. He changed his name to Benjamin which means The Son of the Right Hand.

In this little incident, injected in the narrative of Scripture, we have a graphic foreshadowing, a wonderful type, of a much greater man than Benjamin — no less than the Saviour of the world, himself.

2,000 Years Later

We rapidly flick over the pages of history. Bethlehem appears and disappears in the sacred record. To Bethlehem the Moabitess Ruth was taken, and there, outside the city, not far from Rachel's sepulchre, she gleaned in the fields of Boaz. The Gentile maiden learned that the Hope of Israel could save her. She discovered that Yahweh the God of Israel was merciful and kind, and recognising the helplessness of mankind, had made provision for redemption. She, herself, experienced this kindness, and in the act of redemption that Boaz undertook for her, and in all the wonderful provisions of that law, there was set before her, and before us, that fact that Yahweh can and will redeem those who, like Ruth, creep under the shadow of His wings (Ruth 2: 12).

Redemption is promised and provided by the One born in Bethlehem, the antitype and descendant of Boaz the strong. For Boaz and Ruth became the great grandparents of David (Ruth 4: 17-22), and through him came the Christ, the Redeemer of mankind.

We hurry on, however, to connect the birth of Benjamin with that of the Saviour. We left Jacob as he passed the Tower of Edar (or watchtower of the flocks). We return to this same place, some 2,000 years later, and visit the plain just outside of Bethlehem. About one mile east of the city, we find a group of shepherds "abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night" (Luke 2: 8). Suddenly, to their astonishment, the darkness of night is disturbed by a blinding light, and the silence broken by an angelic voice which declared: "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David (i.e., Bethlehem) a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Startled as they were by this strange and unexpected appearance, the wonders of the night had not yet ended. As the angel ceased to speak, the shepherds saw that he was accompanied by a host of such glorified ones, and they heard

now an angelic choir which took up a refrain: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men."

Thus was announced the birth of the great Messiah of Israel. The Lord Jesus was born in the obscure village of Bethlehem in the most humble of circumstances, and at a time of great sorrow. For a rumour had gone around that the future King of Jerusalem had been born. As a result, the tyrant Herod, in an endeavour to rid himself of a possible rival, had tried to discover the newly-born infant in order to destroy him. He failed in this, but the failure roused the most evil passion of his brutal nature, and with ruthless bestiality, he promptly murdered "all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under" (Mat. 2: 16). This brutal and vile action caused mourning throughout the land: "In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not" (v. 18).

In this verse, Rachel represents the nation. And as Rachel had cause for sorrow in her hard labour at the birth of Ben-oni, so the nation did also at the birth of the Lord. Bethlehem became a city of sorrow.

It was not a time of unmixed joy even for Mary the mother of Jesus. She was told, in cryptic language: "This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also" (Luke 2: 34-35).

The Lord Jesus was Ben-oni, The Son of My Sorrow, to both Israel and his own mother. The incident of Rachel and Benjamin, rescued from the mists of antiquity, was a remarkable type of the work of the Messiah.

At the age of 30 he commenced his ministry. He brought to the people the wonderful message of salvation; he reminded the nation of its wonderful destiny — if only it would hearken to the voice of Wisdom. But neither the nation, nor individuals would have any of it. They wanted a military leader to deliver them from Rome, from the oppressions

"Amen" to Truth

A.E.G. (Boston, U.S.A.) writes: "I cannot understand any Christadelphian issuing a paper to which they cannot say 'Amen' to the articles contained therein. I certainly approve of your attitude, and what you are doing to uphold the Truth in its purity. The Truth can become completely corrupted by just one error at a time creeping in."

(You will be glad to know that the Australian ecclesias completely repudiate the false theory rejecting the virgin birth of the Lord.—Ed.)

they daily suffered; but he called upon them to endure trouble awaiting the salvation of God. They wanted manifestations of Divine power that would smite to the ground all their enemies; but he called upon them to manifest Divine principles of mercy and goodness in their lives. They wanted immediate relief from all their problems, and to be set on a pinnacle of glory before all other nations; but he pointed to the indefinite future when, by a resurrection from the dead, individuals would find true glory and happiness.

Meanwhile he had to bear with their lack of understanding. He had infinite compassion for them. He tried to help them in all ways possible. He healed the sick, he raised the dead, he cured the blind and the lame. He demonstrated to all that he was the manifestation of his Father in the heaven, and that he was capable of healing their spiritual sickness, of raising the dead to life eternal, of giving spiritual sight to the blind, and causing all to walk correctly before their God.

But they would have none of it. To them he was Ben-oni, The Man of My Sorrow. He was a complete disappointment: "Despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not" (Isa. 53: 3). Like Rachel, they called him the Son of Sorrow.

And finally they crucified him. They crucified him because he claimed to be the Son of God, and the King of Israel. They used the latter as a challenge to Pilate, and because he feared reprisals from Rome, he ordered his death, setting over the cross the accusation: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

The Sorrow Turns to Joy

They put him to death, but on the third day he rose again, and forty days later, he ascended to the right hand of the Father in the heavens. He was now Benjamin, The Son of the Right Hand, concerning whom the Psalmist declared: "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom Thou (Yahweh) madest strong for Thyself" (Ps. 80: 17).

In Psalm 110: 1, the Psalmist used words which Christ applied to himself (Mat. 22: 44), saying, "Yahweh said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

At the present moment the Lord Jesus is at the right hand of the Father in the heavens (Acts 3: 21). He is no longer Ben-oni, the Son of Sorrow; but he is Benjamin, The

Son of the Right Hand. The Apostle Paul spake of the transformation in Hebrews 10: 12: "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." The Lord is in the heavens "until."

Our Second View of Bethlehem

We leave our contemplation of the Lord in the heavens for the moment, to turn back the pages of history 1,000 years before his birth. In company with an aged man of venerable appearance, whose white linen cloak demonstrates that he is at least a Levite, and whose long flowing hair and beard testifies that he is a Nazarite, we walk the same road towards Bethlehem, as Jacob and Rachel had traversed 1,000 years earlier.

Like Rachel, the heart of this man, Samuel, is heavy with care and sorrow. He had earlier delivered a harsh message to a man he had learned to love, telling Saul, the king, that Yahweh had deposed him, and stating the reason for this action: "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. Rebellion is as witchcraft, stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. BECAUSE THOU HAST REJECTED THE WORD OF YAHWEH, He hath also rejected thee from being king" (1 Sam. 15: 22-23).

Samuel had been told to anoint another man king in place of Saul, and had been Divinely guided to the city of Bethlehem, and to the house of Jesse. One of the sons of Jesse was to be anointed in place of Saul, but Samuel did not know which one. That revelation would be given him at the right moment.

Jesse had eight sons. Seven of these sons were well-built, powerful, handsome men. The eighth was much younger than the others, a mere stripling, whose duty it was to care for the sheep.

The seven sons were paraded before Samuel. As Eliab, the eldest appeared before him, the prophet, impressed with the fine physique and appearance of the man, thought: "Surely this is Yahweh's anointed" (1 Sam. 16: 6). But the answer came: "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him. Yahweh seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but Yahweh looketh on the heart" (v. 7).

This statement is really the lesson of Bethlehem. Man judges the things of God wrongly. Present appearance, external things, govern man's opinion; but Divine eyes look

closer, searching the heart. The reward that the Bible holds out is to live and reign with Christ in his Kingdom, and the basis by which a person can attain unto this hope is illustrated by the words of Samuel to Saul, and of Yahweh to Samuel: through the Word of Truth, and by regeneration of the heart.

One by one the sons of Jesse passed before the prophet to be rejected, until, at last, the despised shepherd was brought in from the field. He was the future king of Israel. Before the amazed eyes of his brethren, he was anointed by the prophet for a glorious destiny that was only reached, however, through trial and suffering.

Probation Precedes Exaltation

David, like his more glorious son (Mat. 1: 1), became also "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" before he reached the pinnacle of glory that sat him upon the greatest throne of his day. He learned the meaning of the title: Ben-oni, before that of Benjamin. From out of obscurity, he was projected into eminence, to suffer the opposition of the people he helped, to be banished and persecuted, but afterwards glorified with the kingship.

The covenant made with Abraham was given greater meaning and significance in the promises made to David recorded in 2 Samuel 7, and which the prophet refers to as "the sure mercies of David" (Isa. 55: 3). In these promises David could see that his present glory was as nothing to that yet to be revealed in the earth, when his more glorious son shall reign. The glorious 72nd Psalm breathed forth the excitement he felt as his mind contemplated the blessings with which "the whole earth shall be filled" (v. 19). The future became the absorbing passion of his existence: "I had fainted," he declared, "unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living" (Ps. 27: 13). Again: "Thou, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth. Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side" (Ps. 71: 20-21).

The sorrows of Bethlehem were forgotten as the King contemplated the glories of salvation that would spring from him who was destined to be born in Bethlehem.

Our Final Picture

There are great changes in store for this city of sorrow and salvation. The great earthquake of Zechariah 14 will

alter the whole contour of the land, and the territory surrounding Bethlehem will be portion of the Holy Oblation that will be given over to the exclusive use of the future King of the world, and the Priests and Levites who will officiate in Jerusalem, his city. The prophet Micah addresses the obscure village of Bethlehem, recording the great honour paid it, that the world's future ruler should be born there:

"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth (or "family descent" —Dr. Strong) have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5: 2).

Bethlehem was considered "little" among the cities of Judah, yet out of obscurity, out of that despised by the world, was destined to come its Saviour and its King. How Bethlehem typifies the workings of Divinity among men! People despise the truth because it is inconspicuous among men, because of the humble nature of its adherents, because they are obscure among the mighty of the earth. But that is the very principle upon which God works, and which is illustrated in the history of this village. The Apostle declared: "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish to confound the wise, and the weak to bring to nought the mighty" (1 Cor. 1: 27). The principle upon which He does this is exhibited in the lives of David and the Lord Jesus; and the object He has in mind, is stated by the apostle to be: "That no flesh should glory in His presence." If men desire to glory "let them glory in the Lord" (1 Cor. 1: 31).

The very obscurity of Bethlehem, the humble nature of the birth of the Lord, is a challenge to faith, but as, out of such things, the Saviour and King was brought forth, so it is possible, by the power of Truth, to change and transform fleshly men and women into the likeness of their Lord, and fit them for His Kingdom.

Bethlehem becomes a type of this — the city of sorrow and salvation.

Micah shows how its most glorious son, the Lord Jesus, is to return, to become the "peace" of Israel. He whom they despised will be their salvation; their son of sorrow will be seen as the Son of the Right Hand.

So our final picture closes as we turn once more to Psalm 110, and read of how Ben-oni will return as Benjamin, the Son of the Right Hand, for, says the Psalmist:

"Yahweh shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule

thou in the midst of thine enemies . . . Yahweh hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the nations . . ."

In that day, the sorrow of Bethlehem will be over. The guns of the Arabs will be taken out of the way. Israel will rejoice in the one they previously rejected. Their sorrow will turn into joy in the national salvation that shall be effected. There will be wonderful gathering of notable heroes of this city of sorrow and salvation: Jacob, Rachel, Boaz, Ruth, Naomi, Jesse, David, and a long line of others, assembled before the greatest of them all, the Lord Jesus. Once again songs of joy will ascend because of this one born in Bethlehem, but then, instead of a few shepherds listening in wonderment to the refrain, the whole world will listen and take heed. The time of sorrow will be past, the time of joy will have come.

— G. E. Mansfield

1960 Australasian Fraternal Gathering (Sydney)

This gathering will be held (God willing) from Saturday, 14th May, to Sunday, 22nd May, 1960. The committee has endeavoured to select dates that synchronise with school holidays, but this has been difficult due to the varying dates of holidays in different States, and also the availability of the Sydney Town Hall, necessary for all major meetings.

The theme of the Gathering will be: "Be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

It will open with a reception and welcome tea at the Trocador on Saturday afternoon, 14th May, and will be followed by a service of praise at the Sydney Town Hall in the evening. The Town Hall will also be used for the Memorial meetings and Gospel Proclamation efforts.

Two planned discussion and study group sessions are being planned. The Committee would like to receive suggestions of suitable subjects, and invites brethren to forward same to the Secretary as soon as possible.

Further details will be forwarded to local ecclesias, and will also appear in "Logos." Accommodation advice forms are now ready, and will be available either through your ecclesia or on application to the Secretary, Brother J. W. Powell, 3 Wyvern Ave., Chatswood, N.S.W.



"We like the Flavour!"

"We like to read 'Logos,' especially as all the articles have a distinctly Christadelphian flavour. We have lived to see wonderful progress in the Hope of Israel, and get great satisfaction from the fact that it confirms Christadelphian teaching. No doubt we are on the verge of many more stirring events, and it will be a pleasure to read the comments in 'Logos.'"—R.W.F. (Ontario, Canada).

(The signs indicate that the greatest of all events which will cut short all our feeble efforts will soon be here—let us hold fast our hope with confidence.—Ed.)



For Private Study

NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE

An Itemised Exposition of the Book of Revelation, based on
"Eureka" and designed for home study and for Bible marking.

Introduction

The Book of Revelation comprises the final message of the Lord Jesus to "his servants," and was given that they might understand certain matters relating to the purpose of Yahweh that were previously hid from them—particularly in relation to events that were to come to pass (Rev. 1: 1). The message contains words of warning, exhortation, guidance and comfort, as well as forecasting the future. It is designed to reveal the significance of the "times and seasons" which, as "children of light" we are invited to comprehend (1 Thess. 5: 1-5), as well as demonstrating the true nature of the political and religious environment in which we live.

In "Eureka," Brother Thomas has written: "The Apocalypse (i.e., the Book of Revelation) was given to the end that the servants of Deity who are keeping their garments might be able to discern the signs of the times preceding the apocalypse of Christ; and the real nature of things extant in their several generations. No believer, understanding this prophecy, could be seduced into fellowship with the clerical institutions of the world; because he would see them in all their native deformity and sin."

A blessing is pronounced upon those who read the Book of Revelation with understanding (Ch. 1: 3). This is a challenge to every true servant of Christ. The Apocalypse is not an easy book to understand, and much thought and labour must be expended before we will attain unto an understanding of its message. But the blessing is a very real and tangible one for those who manifest the determination to master the book. As with the prophecy of Daniel, it can be said of the Apocalypse: "None of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand . . ." (Dan. 12: 10). Is the reader wise in the Scriptural sense? Or does he close his eyes and ears to these matters? The "blessing" is to those who read and hear with understanding.

A further blessing is pronounced in Revelation 16: 15: "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame." Obviously this blessing is for those living contemporary with the times of Christ's second advent. But how are they to "watch" if they do not understand? and how are they to "understand" if they do not read and study?

The book that can help us in that regard is "Eureka," by Brother John Thomas. "Eureka" is, without doubt, the finest exposition of the Scriptures extant, for it expounds upon the whole of Scripture, and not merely the Book of Revelation. The reader is advised to purchase a set of "Eureka," and read and re-read this invaluable exposition. The notes we will provide upon the Book of Revelation will be mainly (though not wholly) taken from "Eureka," but they are not intended to supplant

it. They are designed to interest the reader in Brother Thomas' great work, and lead him to it.

These notes are designed for home study. Set yourself the objective of mastering the Book of Revelation and use them as a basis. Mark your Bible with explanatory comments. If you do no more than mark up the Section of Scripture we set down each month, you will do well. In that regard, and particularly to younger readers, we offer a few suggestions:

1. Never open your Bible without asking that Yahweh bless the reading of His word—though it be but in silent prayer (James 1: 5-6).
2. Never make a note of explanation in your Bible unless you understand it thoroughly and completely agree with it.
3. Mark your Bible in such a way as will be intelligible ten years hence.
4. If you have a wide-margin Bible, use only good quality water-proof or Indian ink.
5. Use colours so as to pick out references from comments. Here is a good suggestion: Underline in green the text of scripture you wish to comment on, and place a number alongside it, commencing from No. 1 and continuing on until the end of the chapter. Put a corresponding number in the same colour in the margin. Write any comments in black. Write all references in red.

By using a system like this you will find that you can quickly connect the comments in the margin with the section of Scripture to which they refer, and the references also will be more easily picked out. If you use only one colour, your margins will ultimately look a mass of black writing, and you will find it difficult to separate one comment from another.

If you cannot follow what we mean by the above, drop us a line, and we will set it out for you, and provide an actual example of what we mean.

Finally: we shall be pleased to answer any questions upon this subject.

Concerning "Eureka," Brother R. Roberts wrote:

"I, for one, am indebted for my understanding of this most difficult part of the testimony of God. Before reading that exposition, I understood only snatches of it. Now, I am thankful to be able to follow it in its entirety. Do not be tempted to think that we lean upon a man's judgment in the matter. Dr. Thomas not only gives you his conclusions, but the reasons which have led him to those conclusions. We are able to make his conclusions our own by a process which makes us independent of all men as to the ground on which we hold them. The best proof of the soundness of the views advanced by Dr. Thomas lies in this, that once a reader is directed by him to the Bible, and becomes a Bible student, he can dispense with Dr. Thomas' books altogether so far as steadfastness of conviction is concerned. The Bible nourishes that conviction from day to day."

May Yahweh bless our study of His marvellous wisdom, and cause His blessing to light upon us, illuminating the darkness of our natural minds.

—H. P. Mansfield.

REVELATION — CHAPTER 1

Introduction to, and General Scheme of the Revelation

The Title—Vv. 1-3

"The Revelation of St. John the Divine"—This title, as given in the Authorised Version, is a spurious one. The Apostle John would never use the titles "saint" and "divine," for his exclusive use, to set him above his fellow disciples. These are mere appellations introduced by the Apostasy, and should not appear as a title for an individual.

"Saint"—The term is only used collectively in Scripture. All are saints who have made a covenant with God (cf. Psalm 50: 5; Heb. 10: 22; 1 Cor. 1: 2; Col. 1: 2). Their "sainthood" consists of their understanding and acceptance of the Truth (Ps. 50: 16; Dan. 12: 10; Rom. 8: 17-18). The word "saints" means "separated ones." It does not designate the moral condition of the ones so described, but merely indicates that they have been "separated" for the purpose of God. The Truth separates us from the world, and therefore makes us "saints." But the word is not used only for those who have the Truth. In Isaiah 13: 3, the Medes who overthrew Babylon are styled Yahweh's "sanctified ones" (i.e., saints) because He had separated them for that use. In the New Testament, the appellation of "saints" is applied to the brethren generally, and is never used of them individually. Peter did not speak of "St. Paul" but of "our beloved brother Paul" (2 Pet. 3: 15). It is never used to single out individuals above their fellows as is the custom of Rome.

"The Divine"—This is the title given to clergymen, as though John had graduated in a theological college. The Apostle would have repudiated the title (cp. Matt. 23: 8-11). All saints are in "hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5: 2), in expectation of "divine nature" (2 Pet. 1: 4) when the Divine Name will be named upon them (Rev. 3: 12). All who attain unto that glorious state will bear the title of "Divine"—but not in the sense that the world today uses it!

"The Revelation"—This is derived from the Greek word "Apokalupsis," meaning "to uncover" or "bring to light that which was hidden." Thus the Apocalypse (as the Book of Revelation is often called) is a "disclosure" of things previously hidden. Many call it "The Apocalypse" in order to distinguish it from other parts of the Revelation of Deity. Brother Robert Roberts wrote: "To speak of it as 'REVELA-

TION" is to clash with the fact that there is much other revelation besides, and that the Apocalypse is only a part of Revelation. To speak of it as Apocalypse is to identify a particular part of revelation ("Thirteen Lectures on the Apocalypse"). The word is used in other parts of the New Testament, but usually in relation to a special epoch—the coming manifestation of glory (see Rom. 2: 5; 8: 19; 1 Thess. 1: 7). The Book of Revelation itself centres attention upon the same glorious consummation; it outlines events leading to the uncovering, bringing to light, or revelation of the Lord Jesus and his brethren in glory.

Date of Writing—This would be of relative unimportance but for the fact that some place its writing before the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70) and teach that it prophecies were fulfilled in that event. The internal evidence of the Apocalypse, however, refutes that view. Brother Thomas wrote:

"Irenaeus, who flourished ecclesiastically A.D. 169, i.e., about 70 years after the death of the Apostle John, is said to have introduced an opinion that the Apocalypse was written in the reign of the Emperor Domitian, brother to Titus, who destroyed Jerusalem, and who occupied the throne of the Caesars from A.D. 80-96, when he was assassinated" ("Eureka," vol. i).

The evidence points to the later years of Domitian's reign as the one in which it was written—approximately A.D. 96.



VERSE 1

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ"—This is the true title; that which appears at the head of the book is a spurious one.

"Which God gave unto him"—This shows that Christ was dependent upon God for the acquisition of knowledge, and proves conclusively that he is not co-equal with the Father. The fullness of knowledge of the "times and seasons" was previously hid from Christ (see Mark 13: 32; Acts 1: 7). But having "prevailed" (Rev. 5: 5), and having been raised gloriously from the dead to life eternal, the full revelation of the Father's purpose was given unto him that he might have the pre-eminence (Col. 1: 18).

"To show to his servants" — These servants are the "saints," the "wise who understand" (Ps. 50: 16; Dan. 12: 10). They are those who lament at lack of knowledge (Rev. 5: 5), whose constant prayer is for a greater understanding of the Divine purpose (Rev. 6: 9-10). To such, and to no others, the Apocalypse is given. It is not designed for the

world, so that unless a person understands the Truth concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ, he cannot possibly comprehend the Apocalypse correctly. That accounts for the many poor attempts of the clergy to unravel the mystery of this book. They have not the "key," and so the door of knowledge remains closed to them. The word "servants" in the Greek denotes "bond-servants" or slaves. Paul was one such. Though he was a freeborn Roman, he gloried in his servitude to Christ (Rom. 1: 1). In 1 Cor. 7: 22 he taught that normal slaves become "free men" in Christ, whereas free men become slaves to Christ. It is not the custom of masters to reveal to their slaves their intentions for the future, for they consider themselves above condescending in such a manner. But Christ is different. He treats his SERVANTS as his FRIENDS (see John 15: 15) by revealing unto them things that are to happen. We are therefore both the friends and the servants of the Lord Jesus. For the scope of the message he provides us with in the Apocalypse, see Rev. 1: 19.

"Things which must shortly come to pass"—The prophecies recorded in this book commenced to come to pass shortly after they were delivered to the Apostle John. They cover history from his day to the coming of Christ.

"Signified it"—Brother Thomas translates: "He indicated them by sign." Brother R. Roberts writes:

"It was not sent in plain form, but in an enigmatical or sign form. To 'signify' is to represent by sign or symbol. That this is what is meant by the use of the verb 'signify' in this case is shown conclusively by what John saw and heard. He saw certain things which he describes, and concerning these he is repeatedly informed that the mystery or meaning of what he saw was this and that" ("Thirteen Lectures").

The same method of imparting knowledge was delivered to the prophets—Hos. 12: 10.

(To be continued)

Complete Set of "Logos" required

A reader desires to purchase a complete set of "Logos" either bound or unbound from volume 1 to the current volume. Any offers, together with price, can be made to "Logos" office, Box 226, G.P.O., Adelaide, South Australia. If readers have individual volumes they wish to dispose of, we may be able to find a market for these if details are forwarded to us at the address above.

An Exhortation to Faithfulness

AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS

"Look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy set before him, endured the cross and despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God . . . Consider him!" (Heb. 12: 2-3).

If we follow the daily readings set down in the "Bible Companion," we will consider the life of the Lord as depicted in the four Gospel records, no less than 8 times during the course of a year. Eight times each year, we will mentally stand at the foot of the cross, and hear the tragic words, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Do these words mean that the Lord Jesus had given way to despair? By no means. They are the opening words of a dramatic prayer, unrecorded in the Gospel narratives, but found in full in Psalm 22. In this prayer, from the lips of the Lord, there is a powerful exhortation to us all.

His Sufferings were Real

It was about the ninth hour when the cry of the Lord was heard: "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?"—"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" (Mat. 27: 46). The record makes it plain that the sufferings of Jesus were very real, representing an agony of mind and body such as we naturally shrink from. But the record takes us beyond the external physical sufferings of Jesus, and reveals the thoughts which passed through his mind in this crisis of his life and work. It is an amazing yet wonderful truth that we are privileged by the Spirit-word to enter into the very thoughts of the Lord as he hung upon the cross.

This becomes of extreme importance to us as a community commended to "let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2: 5). Furthermore, in us must be realised the words of the Apostle that "we are crucified with Christ." Paul, himself, declared that "he died daily," and he exhorted us to render similar service to Christ. Jesus is the head of the body, and we are members in particular. As such, we must feel the experiences of our Head. It can help us to do that if we enter into the thoughts of the Lord as he hung upon the cross, and if we can bring those thoughts into our own lives as a pattern to follow.

Psalm 22 Records the Prayer of Christ

The Lord Jesus declared that the Psalms are prophetic of his ministry (Luke 24: 44-46). The agonised (and oftentimes misunderstood) words of the Lord as he hung upon the cross, are found in Psalm 22. Expressed in the Psalm is the mind of the Lord Jesus as he hung upon the cross. Even though those gathered at its foot heard no more than those agonised words: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me," we, by the Spirit-word, are able to meditate upon the unspoken words which passed through the mind of the Lord Jesus, expressed in silent prayer, as he hung there.

The first three verses of the Psalm express the reverence which the Lord Jesus had for the Father. He acknowledged (v. 1) that he had now been forsaken. The spirit power was withdrawn from him; it was the hour of darkness; the power of sin seemed to be everywhere triumphant; and he hung upon the cross a dying man. At that moment he could expect no deliverance from his Father, nor did he ask for legions of angels to deliver him. In this great and terrible crisis which must have been so real to the Lord, we hear him raising his voice: "But Thou art holy, Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel." The Lord Jesus recognised the justice of Yahweh in the solemn and terrible drama being enacted on Golgotha's hill. Here was his endorsement of the truth that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.

Let us likewise learn to have no confidence in the flesh, but to lean upon the spirit-word of Truth, and seek our strength and consolation in the sanctifying fellowship of communion with the Father, through the Son, on the basis of our recognition of our own unworthiness.

Despised and Rejected of Men

Having expressed in prayer the personal recognition of the righteousness of Yahweh, the Lord Jesus comforted himself with the fact that Yahweh was indeed Israel's God, and mighty to save. He referred (v. 4) to the great deliverance which the fathers of Israel had experienced under His hand. He could think of the Divine protection overshadowing Abraham through all the changing scenes of his life. At times Abraham was brought into difficult circumstances out of which there seemed no prospect of deliverance. Angelic intervention had been sufficient for his need. He could think of David, whose very experiences in type reflected his own sufferings, but who was saved out of all his difficulties

by the overshadowing power of Yahweh. He could think of the prophets who were persecuted, whose word was ignored, whose testimony was treated with derision, but whose lives of service bear the seal of Divine approval, and whose resurrection and exaltation to glory is assured. As the Lord hung upon the cross, it was with the confident realisation that he would rise from the grave, for he was the son of Abraham, the son of David, Son of the Promises. The rich promises to the fathers must be realised; then all Israel will be saved from dispersion and downtreading, to inherit the glories of the kingdom restored.

The Psalm continues its prophetic foreshadowing of the events portrayed so clearly in the Gospel records. Verse 6 speaks of the helplessness of the Lord; verses 7 and 8 of the manner in which onlookers mocked him from the foot of the cross; verse 12 shows how the very leaders of Israel failed to understand his mission; verses 14 and 15 record his physical suffering, and its effect upon his heart, which was bringing the onset of death closer every moment; verse 16 tells the tragic fact: "they pierced my hands and my feet;" verse 18 relates the indifference of those who parted his garments among them, and cast lots for his vesture, at the very foot of the cross.

The Lord's Confidence

Intermingled with these expressions of suffering, however, there is a note of confidence constantly expressed throughout the prayer. He was able to declare (v. 9) that Yahweh had been his hope from infancy, that his life had been under the overshadowing power of Yahweh from his very conception (v. 10). In verse 19, despite the approaching experience of death, he cries unto Yahweh to be near unto him, to hasten to help him.

In verse 20 he uses the expression, "yachid," translated "darling." The word really signifies "the lonely one," the "one dwelling singly." In Psalm 68: 6 the same word is translated "the solitary," and there it is said that such will eventually be established in families. In our exposition of Psalm 68, we have seen that this relates to the redemption of the Ecclesia from the loneliness of its pilgrimage. In the Psalm now before us, we have the redemption of the head of the body, as the Lord Jesus beseeches the Father to save his "lonely one," his "solitary one," from the power of the enemy. The Lord Jesus was the one who stood apart. He was the one who was different from his fellows. He did not honour, or bow down to the power of sin. He served his Father, de-

spite the attitude of the whole human race. He was the "lonely one" for whom, among the sons of men, there was not "a helper" (v. 11).

The Joy Set Before Him

From verse 22 onwards, however, a great change comes over the Psalm. Instead of dwelling upon the suffering and agony, and the triumph of the powers of darkness, the Lord Jesus turns to a glorious contemplation of the coming glory. Before his mind, as he hung upon the cross, arose a wonderful vision of the Kingdom which will eventually dawn. He beheld the glory of that Kingdom, and his own glorious position therein. He saw the result of his own faithful work, in the redemption of a great multitude whose voices will be lifted up in praise to Yahweh.

He looked to the day (v. 22) when he would declare the Divine name unto his brethren, and when, in the midst of the Ecclesia he would praise Yahweh. What a wonderful expression of confidence in the certainty of his resurrection, at the very hour of death. How this knowledge of the future was able to sustain him in the very midst of suffering! His mind filled with an exhortation to those who would follow "in his steps" (v. 23): "Ye that fear Yahweh, praise Him; all ye seed of Jacob, glorify Him and fear Him all ye seed of Israel."

The Lord Jesus, who knew the Scriptures as no other man has ever known them, was thoroughly conversant with all the details given through the prophet Ezekiel of the future glory to be manifested in the temple in Zion, when that wondrous mile-square House of Prayer and Blessing will be in existence. In verse 25, we learn that as he hung on the cross, his mind went forward in joyful contemplation of the day when the "great congregation" of the redeemed will be gathered in the precincts of the Temple, and the Lord will pay his vows in the presence of his brethren. What a transcending thought to fill his mind as he hung upon the cross.

He contemplated also the fruits of his labours. He saw (v. 26) that the meek will eat and be satisfied; that those who seek Yahweh will praise Him, and shall live forever; that through the very sufferings he was then experiencing, a great multitude will be redeemed.

He could see even beyond that, to the time when the blessing of Abraham will be experienced by all nations of the earth; when all the ends of the world will come to a state of

perfect understanding of Yahweh, and will turn in reverential thankfulness to His praise (v. 27).

The Suffering and the Glory

Thus the Psalm reveals that in the midst of agony, the Lord was comforted, encouraged, strengthened by the contemplation of the joy set before Him. With the sure and certain knowledge of that glorious destiny beyond, he was strengthened to overcome.

We are told to "consider him." What do we see when we do this? Does not the exhortation come home to us in a very powerful manner, that it was the knowledge that the Lord Jesus had which enabled him to show such great courage and fortitude in the hour of trial? His was a clear and precise realisation of the power of the resurrection to be accomplished in him. To him the Kingdom was a coming reality, not shadowy and vague, but tangible and clear. He looked to the future, when through him a great multitude will be redeemed; he saw them assisting him in bringing all nations to the worship of Yahweh; he saw the glorious coming Temple in Zion with all the ends of the earth flocking within its precincts to worship, and in the very centre of this Divine service he could contemplate himself paying his vows before Yahweh.

We ask the question: Is the servant greater than his Lord? Dare we ignore the means of strength which the Master himself turned to in his hour of trial? Do we dare neglect the study of the Word, dare to allow the things of the Kingdom to remain as something merely vague and shadowy in our minds, when we can see so clearly that it was the knowledge of his own glorious destiny which was so helpful to the Lord Jesus in his hour of trial.

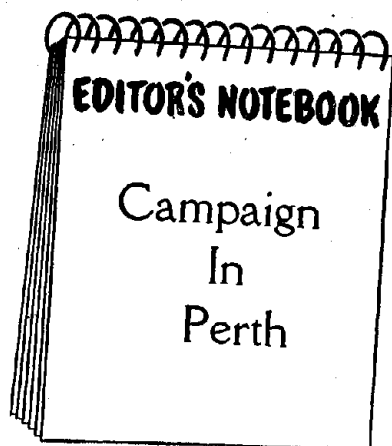
Do we think we will succeed if we neglect that which he found so essential?

We repeat: Is the servant greater than his Lord?

—Bruce Philp

If You are Passing through Harrington, N.S.W.

Harrington is a small town on the Manning River, about 22 miles from Taree. Sister A. Worthington has recently removed to this town, and would be delighted to receive a visit from brethren and sisters passing through. Having, ourselves, once lived in isolation, we can appreciate how such visits are enjoyed.—Ed.



I am typing these notes in Perth, in the midst of what must be one of the most ambitious efforts ever conducted by an ecclesia of the size of that in Perth. The Perth Ecclesia numbers a little over a 100 members, having steadily grown to that size over the past few years. It regularly holds campaigns of a spiritual and fraternal nature, catering for the needs of the Body of Christ as well as proclaiming the truth to the stranger. Some 38 years ago, a Town Hall effort was conducted with Brother C. P. Wauchope as speaker, and the present recorder, Brother S. Jewett, has vivid memories of the effort then undertaken, and which resulted in the Perth Central

Ecclesia (as it is called) came into existence.

On the present occasion, three Town Hall addresses are scheduled to be delivered, together with supplementary addresses for the stranger, in the Ecclesial Hall, Canning Highway, South Perth. In addition, country lectures are arranged for places such as Kellerberrin (125 miles east of Perth), Harvey (80 miles south of Perth), Pemberton and Manjimup (220 miles south east of Perth).

All other evenings, of this campaign extending over some 18 days, are set down for meetings of a fraternal and study nature, to be held in the Ecclesial Hall. The main subject set down for consideration on those occasions is—The Psalms of David in their Historical and Prophetic setting.

On this occasion, we made the journey by plane, leaving Adelaide at 2.40 and arriving in Perth a little after five. As we flew due west into the setting sun, we gained an hour and a half in time. It is an evidence of this fast moving age that we are able to cover such huge distances in such short time. We are not the better for this speed. In fact, man's prowess in scientific attainment gives him a false sense of power and pride of accomplishment that is only drawing him nearer to destruction. The world is speeding up its transport; it is becoming more and more clever in the use of God's natural gifts, but it lacks the spiritual qualities to do this to best advantage. Because of this, Armageddon looms heavily on the political horizon, whilst morally the world sinks lower and lower.

Perth is very much isolated from other Ecclesial contact in the Commonwealth. Some 1,500 miles (as far as Birmingham is from Moscow) separate it from its nearest interstate Ecclesia, Adelaide, and this isolation has an influence upon the community. It means that it is more completely thrown on its individual resources than in the case elsewhere, and this can sometimes present difficulties. In a small group, separated from the world, there is a need to view each other's problems and viewpoint with greater understanding and consideration, otherwise difficulties can arise. There is an ever-present need, in all Ecclesias, to blend faith and courage with tact, in order to gain the best results. The

Lord Jesus, in his contact with fellowmen, ever sought to help them, considering not his own wants, but the needs of those before him. With gentleness and care he ministered to them, and so helped to uplift them in their worship of the Creator.

In the strenuous programme mapped out, we had every assistance rendered us by the brethren. The campaign opened with an excellent Fraternal evening, on Saturday, 26th September, in which four speakers (Brethren E. R. Mansfield, N.S.W.; D. Hurn and W. Thompson, W.A.; and myself) spoke to the subject of "The Feasts of Israel." They drew attention to the communal and individual value of these "holy convocations" in the lives of Israelites, how the lessons then impressed upon the people can be applied to our own day and circumstances, and how the whole purpose of Deity was typically set forth in them. It is, for example, of the greatest significance that the Lord Jesus, our Passover Victim, was slain at the very time that the national passover was being prepared, that fifty days later, on the Day of Pentecost, which celebrated the ingathering of the harvest, the Gospel was first proclaimed in the name of the Lord Jesus, and a harvest of 3,000 people were gathered in. Other features of these feasts, relating to the solemn rites of the Day of Atonement pointing to the present attitude of the saints—humbled and chastened, awaiting the return of the High Priest (Lev. 23: 29; Heb. 9: 28), and the final glorious and happy Feast of Tabernacles—anticipating the joy of the Kingdom (Zech. 14: 16), were also expounded.

On Sunday evening, the first of the three special Town Hall addresses were delivered. In the afternoon, an enthusiastic team of workers laboured to prepare the hall for the proclamation of the Gospel message. Large charts had been prepared, itemising the outstanding signs of the times, and the main doctrines of the Truth, whilst across the stage, a long streamer set out the words of the Lord: "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved." At the entrance to the Town Hall, two large stands had been prepared; one to display free literature, and upon which was set out some 50 books, and the other (an illuminated sign) to draw attention to "Elpis Israel," and the prognostications of Brother Thomas that time has so remarkably vindicated.

The Hall was transformed by the efforts of this group, and presented a dignified and attractive appearance calculated to aid the address given. This was to the subject: "Is Civilisation Doomed?" Attention was drawn to the grim future that is threatened if the terrible modern weapons of destruction are used. The words of Daniel were quoted, that there "shall be a time of trouble such as never was" (Dan. 12: 1), and the warning issued that a world which had so flagrantly repudiated the mercy of God could only expect His wrath. That wrath is building up, and one day shall break. Then the accumulated sorrow and trouble will be heaped upon a godless and unheeding generation, as it was in the days of Noah. Thus, the return of Christ, once looked upon as a glorious hope, is now an urgent need. Recognising this fact, how important it is to shelter in the refuge that Yahweh alone provides (Heb. 6: 18-20).

During the week, several fraternal meetings were held, the subject of this study being: The Historical and Prophetic Significance of the Psalms. This is a very beautiful subject, and provides a deeper and fuller meaning of these glorious songs of Zion. It is wonderful how the events of David's life foreshadowed that of the Messiah, and how these same events gave birth to the Psalms. A mistake is made, however, if it is imagined, as some do, that the Psalms only give expression to the personal experiences of David. It is not David we hear in the Psalms,

but the Spirit through David (see Heb. 3: 7), selecting incidents in the life of the King that foreshadow those of Christ, causing him to speak and utter the words and feelings of Christ, and give expression to the uttermost thoughts of his heart as he hung upon the cross (Ps. 22), or saw the joy of the Kingdom (Ps. 45).

Such a subject as this not merely expounds the Psalms, reveals their prophetic meaning, but gives greater insight into the character of the "man after God's own heart." We learn something of those virtues in which Yahweh finds pleasure, and are guided in the direction of true morality.

The Psalms selected for consideration set forth both the glory and tragedy of the King's life. We considered the fall of David, the tragic moments when this great man was humbled by sin, and brought low before Yahweh and the people. From this sad incident came Psalms 51 and 32, David's pleading that his sin might be blotted out: "Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee" (Ps. 51: 13-14). We can better enter into the spirit of these words when we recognise our own need of forgiveness and our own deficiencies. In these two Psalms, David speaks from the standpoint of the multitudinous Christ rather than the individual Christ. The tear-felt sadness of Psalm 51 emerges into the "blessed" state of the man whose "sin is covered, whose iniquity is forgiven" (Ps. 32).

An indication of the strength of character manifested by David is seen in that he delivered these Psalms unto the "chief musician," to be publicly sung in the Temple service when it was later set up by Solomon. He did not hesitate to give the most public expression to his experience that others may learn of the Divine mercy, and be led in time of need to seek it also. "My tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness" he had promised (Ps. 51: 14). David emptied himself of all pride, he openly confessed his sin and tried to make restitution in every way possible. He experienced the forgiveness of Yahweh, and invites others to do so also: "For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee in a time when Thou mayest be found" (Ps. 32: 6). When we consider the fall of David, and the forgiveness extended towards him, we are both warned and exhorted. Who can rest confident in his own strength, when he sees David fall? Who need despair of Divine mercy when he sees him forgiven?

We considered other Psalms that spake of the glory of David and of Christ. Such a Psalm is Psalm 2. Though prophetic of Christ it undoubtedly has a historical background. We learn from 2 Samuel, chps. 8 and 10, that after David had wrested Zion from the Jebusites, and brought the Ark to Jerusalem in glory, he extended his kingdom into an empire by seven great military campaigns. Among the kings defeated was Hadadrezer, of Zobah, to the north of Palestine (2 Sam. 8: 3), but later this same king, in company with confederate kings (2 Sam. 10: 16, 19), endeavoured to break the bands of David from him, and cast away the cords that held him in check (Ps. 2: 3). The rebellion was futile however, for David was appointed king by Divine decree, and the rebellious nations were exhorted to "receive instruction" lest in opposing Yahweh's anointed they perish in the way they had selected (Ps. 2: 12; 1: 6). All this is typical of Christ's coming glory.

The first of the country lectures was at Kellerberrin, some 125 miles due east of Perth. We travelled by motor car to this town in company with the secretary of the Perth Gospel Extension Society, Brother A. Hearn. Kellerberrin is in the wheat-growing area of Western Australia, and seemed to us a prosperous town. There are some excellent modern

buildings in it, including a splendid hall in which we were due to give the address. Unfortunately, the night set down for this purpose coincided with quite a spate of activity in other directions, and we did not have any success as far as interested friends were concerned. It seemed futile to give a public address under those conditions, and so the project was abandoned in favour of an exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews. As a result, a profitable evening was spent by a little company of some fourteen brethren and sisters. Gathering our chairs around, and with pencils and notepads on hand, we discussed the outline of this wonderful epistle which shows how the shadows of the law merged into the substance in Christ. Highlights of the book were then treated with, and suggesting that a regular study of this epistle be conducted by those in Kellerberrin, we undertook to try and obtain study notes on the epistle for them as a guide.

On Thursday evening we had the first of two informal discussion nights in the Ecclesial Hall, Canning Highway. This was for the benefit of interested friends, and the opportunity was given for public questions to be asked. It was gratifying to find the hall well filled, and a good sprinkling of friends. With the aid of a blackboard, especially prepared for the occasion by Brother Hearn, we tried to illustrate some of the fundamentals of Bible doctrine, showing how the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is a complete unit, and should be studied as one. We also expounded upon the Edenic covenant, spending some time in analysing Genesis 3: 15.

Another evening was given over to "Elpis Israel." We set out what we consider to be the best manner of studying this work (or, for that matter, any book). We recommended that as each paragraph is read, the main teaching of the paragraph be written down, either on the margin of the book, or in a notebook. Then, when a section is completed, the teaching of a section will be clearly set down, like the notes of a lecture. This has two advantages. It causes the student to be mentally alert, always seeking the significance of what he is reading; and the action of writing the headings down helps him to retain in mind what he has read. We pointed out also, that a true student should ever seek to thoroughly understand any passage of Scripture he might quote. For example, Genesis 2: 3 reads: "God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it . . ." What is meant by "blessing" the day and "sanctifying" it? Brother Thomas gives an answer in "Elpis Israel," and we are wise to ascertain the significance of these words to our personal satisfaction, and write it in the margin of our Bible so that the true meaning of the statement might be revealed.

The second Town Hall Lecture was upon the theme: "The Coming Great Millennium; How Christ's Coming will Affect the World." It was well advertised by the brethren, and again excellent service was rendered by providing suitable brochures for the evening upon which was printed the hymns, the Bible reading for the evening, as well as advertisements for forthcoming meetings. Again an excellent attendance was in evidence, and interest seemed to be keen. To date (as I write this, the campaign is not yet over) over 100 applications for further literature have been received, and during the coming week these will all be personally written to, suggesting that they attend the second discussion-night for Thursday next.

Meanwhile, on Monday, we left Perth for Manjimup and Pemberton, some 220 miles south of the city. These two towns are about 20 miles apart, and a little Ecclesia has sprung up there in recent years, which, though small, is very enthusiastic. But we were somewhat dubious as to the results. Particularly as the weather became bleak and wet, and

as the time drew near for the lecture, the rain poured down. We were agreeably surprised, however, to find over a score of friends present, and several of these showed keen interest in the things put forward. To me there seemed every possibility of even more tangible results in the near future. But whether that proves so or not, our duty is done when we have played our part in bringing the glorious message of salvation before men.

Next day brought us to Pemberton. This is situated in some of the State's finest forest area, and is called the "Kingdom of the Karri." It is said that the Karri tree is rivalled only in size by the Redwoods of California and the Mountain Ash of Victoria, so that here we were able to see some of the greatest trees of the world. How stately and dignified are these giants of the forest. How fittingly they typify the perpetuity of the Jewish nation. "As the years of a tree are the years of My people," declared the Spirit through the prophet, and it is said that apart from disease or accident a tree will go on living indefinitely. Trees are the oldest of all living things upon the earth.

But we were not in Pemberton to look at the scenery, but to try and minister to things that will bring about our immortality. A meeting was scheduled for Tuesday evening: a damp, bleak, bitterly-cold night. We presented ourselves at the meeting place, convinced that we would have to revert to a talk more calculated to interest brethren than strangers. But we were agreeably surprised to find a group of some seven strangers present, together with the brethren from Manjimup, so that an audience numbering 22 folk were gathered together. Furthermore, the supper room which we used in preference to the main hall, was replete with fire which warmed the room up considerably, and made it much more comfortable for those gathered together. On this occasion we spake to the subject of the Covenant to Abraham, and at the conclusion of the 90-minute address, an animated discussion was maintained showing that some, at least, were interested in the message.

A third evening in this district, held at the home of Brother Bain, completed the Pemberton effort. This evening was conducted for the benefit of brethren rather than strangers. With the aid of some duplicated brochures to illustrate the matter, we attempted to give an outline of the beautiful, but oft-neglected story of Ruth, emphasising the work of the redeemer Boaz, as illustrative of the redemptive work of Christ. Discussion continued late into the evening, and it was with regret that we finally bade farewell to our brethren of this district, to return to Perth to complete our work in that city.

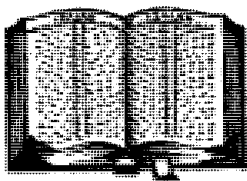
—Editor

(To be continued)

"Helps for Christian Warfare"

We have received requests for this book, which is at present out of print. Should any reader have a copy to dispose of, we will be pleased to receive any offers together with price. This also applies to early volumes of "Logos." In fact, should any reader have a complete set of "Logos" to date for sale, in either bound or unbound form, we are able to find a market for such. Address any offers to The Secretary, "Logos" Publications, Box 226, G.P.O., Adelaide, South Australia.





Things New and Old

No. 5—

The JOY OF LIFE ETERNAL

“Tis not for present power or wealth,
Or worldly fame we look to thee,
We ask Thy gift of heavenly health,
The gift of immortality.”

“The Gift of Heavenly Health”

Heavenly health! what a glorious hope. When that surge of new life flows through us after the glad words of acceptance for which we hope, what a thrill it will be. Heavenly health — the word “health” comes from the old English “whole’th” — “the state of being whole.” We are only half men now. We don’t know what it is to be alive — really alive. When the glow of the spirit suffuses us — the most robust of human health will seem like ill health in comparison. And for those who have been sick, sad and weary, what abundant joy when they shall “run and not be weary, walk and not faint” (Isa. 40); when “the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; when the lame man shall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing” (Isa. 35); when “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away” (Rev. 22). When the “Redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their head; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away” (Isa. 51).

This joy will flow from physical “whole’th” and mental “whole’th.” When a “healthy mind and a healthy body” will be a fact. In our exultation in complete spiritual health (“Fear God and keep His commandments, this is the whole man!” — Ecc. 12: 13), let us not minimise physical health. Let us try to imagine dimly what it will feel like to be immortal. Never to need sleep! True, it is a blessing to mortal man, but also humiliation, in that the greatest of men have to lie prone, helpless and unconscious for so many

hours each day in order to recuperate the lost energy of his waking hours. What a joy to arrive home as fresh as when we started out (and immortal saints will have to go out and do work and will have homes suited to their status to return to).

"Thy dead men shall live"

Never to feel off colour — let alone ill. At present all know what "illness" means. The younger among us have had influenza, headaches, bilious attacks, or at least a common cold. The older among us are only too conscious by the deterioration of their powers that life is but a procession to the grave. Yet the removal of all ailments and fatigue is only the negative side of heavenly health. Positively it is something we cannot imagine. Flesh, as the Psalmist tells us, is "spirit that passeth away," or God's spirit organised in temporary manifestation (Ps. 78: 39). The Scriptures abound with phrases stressing this: "The grass which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven;" "a vapour that appeareth for a little while and then vanisheth away;" "a wind" (Job 7: 7); "a shadow that declineth" (Ps. 102). The highest form of animal life is based on a constant replacement of cells and elimination of poisons in which the inevitable trend is for the rejuvenation to become progressively retarded. Thus life is a pilgrimage to the grave.

But the spirit nature for which we look is spirit that passeth not away. It is Deity in permanent manifestation; incapable of corruption; with no bodily poisons requiring to be eliminated; no seed of deterioration within; like unto the angels to die no more. What vast chasm there is between our present "bodies of humiliation" than those "fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3: 21)! If we think about it, those familiar words will come to life: "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' Oh Death, I will be thy plagues; Oh grave, I will be thy destruction" (1 Cor. 15; Hos. 13: 14).

Isaiah declares that they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles. Psalm 103 says that their youth shall be renewed like the eagles. The eagle referred to is the buzzard, who in the time of the moult, retires into the caves of the mountain to hide its misery as it sheds its feathers. There it huddles forlorn and deathlike, eating no food and scarcely moving.

Then a change begins, and it ventures forth and begins to scavenge for a little food. The feathers begin to grow, the inward strength of the bird begins to be recuperated. One day it spreads forth its wings and rises; its youth is renewed and it is glorious in its new-found vigour. It is the basis of the legend of the Phoenix that rises from its own ashes. It is a perfect symbol for the change from that nature which Paul characterises as dishonourable, weak, natural and earthy, to that which is honourable, powerful, spiritual and heavenly (1 Cor. 15: 42-49), and for the emergence of those of whom it is written: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust, for thy dew is as the dew of lights, and the earth shall cast out her dead" (Isa. 26: 19).

What shall we look like?

Thinking about immortality brings us to the appearance of the saints in the Kingdom. We are talking about it because we wish to stir brethren up against the vague way in which we tend to think about immortality, and so make it so remote as to have no connection with our present identities.

The fact is we shall still be "ourselves," and recognisable as such. No doubt, if we die in old age, there will be a rejuvenation of our features, and a timelessness about our looks. Thus the angels at Christ's tomb appeared as young men, and other immortals were entertained unawares of their true identity because they appeared as ordinary human beings. Human artistry has to associate wings and halos and perpetuate brilliance with immortality — but generally speaking, the "splendid ones draw in their brightness" (Zech. 14: 6, R. V. margin). Human philosophy, from which we as a body are not immune, talks metaphysically about the divine nature, and generally throws up much mystical dust which leaves immortality bodiless, and with little personal identity.

But the Bible speaks of people in the Kingdom as recognisable entities. "Ye shall see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom." They will be as identifiable persons, recognisable by each other and those who knew them. Jesus himself will be recognisable. The scars of wounds received "in the house of his friends" will be there for Israel to look upon, and mourn over (Zech. 12). Husbands and wives, parents and children, will know one another, and be able to continue the companionship begun in the days of frailty,

on a higher and more perfect plane. Intimate friendships will be able to continue and expand their closeness and love. Jesus illustrates this by the way in which he is going to keep twelve special friends near to him, reigning over the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19). The whole atmosphere of the Word makes these intimacies of fellowship certain. Joshua will be near to the Lord when he takes up his inheritance in Ephraim; and Caleb when he resumes his portion at Hebron which he came to love when, as a spy, while others gathered fruit, he felt a thrill standing by Abraham's burial place (Josh. 14). Jeremiah will come again to Anathoth and dig up the deeds of his inheritance buried in faith when the future looked black for Israel (Jer. 32). Get the realism of the scene — real people — living personalities; not a list of stereotyped automatons. Brother Roberts was not letting his imagination run away with him in the "final Consolation" (which I will ask Brother Mansfield to republish as a single article in this series at the appropriate stage). He there gives us David's personal circle as consisting of Jonathan, Asaph, Nathan, Uriah and Bathsheba — a lovely touch, the inclusion of the last two with David. I like his imagination of David: "a fresh, elderly man of noble look;" of Abraham: "a venerable figure rises — not bent or aged, but noble in the air of ripe maturity — hair and flowing beard of pure white; a countenance full of gravity and kindly repose, but having no sign of weakness." Some brethren ridicule such ideas, but they are the expressions of a man to whom the Kingdom was so real that he had to try and visualise it in his mind's eye. In the midst of twentieth century sophistication we need more of this childlike simplicity.

Diversity in Unity

The perfect manifestation of Deity in immortal saints will not turn them into a multitude of uniform and abstract beings, but will create of them a lively company of varied personalities, full of diversity, yet bound together in a common unity. They will not lose their personalities, or even their temperaments, though they are clothed with a house from heaven. The object of probation is to develop out of what we are, by the Word and experience, the sort of family in whom God can be enthroned. He, the angels, and the Lord Jesus, have gone to endless trouble to produce a vast variety in this family; or to vary the figure, they have developed a multitude of living stones, all diverse, to fit into the one Holy Temple. A common family likeness, but a thousand facets of experiences and types for God to take pleasure in. His whole object has been to create a fellow-

ship for Himself of kindred spirits, each different, yet all alike! From Eden onward He has avoided stereotyping His saints. He will not suddenly do so in the Kingdom, and change us entirely from what we are, so that we become a company of monotonous, depersonalised, colourless robots. That would be the orthodox heaven, than which the orthodox hell is a more interesting place, as the poet Dante found.

No! God has been at work from the foundation of the world, developing a place for each saint, and a saint for each place. He is the Master Craftsman, and there will be sublime artistry about all the finished products of three-score years and ten wrestling against sin in the world of mankind. As we have seen, the Judgment Seat will be the final purging of the dross, but it will not change the essential personalities of people. The Kingdom will be the brightest array of interesting people ever assembled; there will be never a dull moment in that joyous company.

God chose all kinds of people to be subjected to His discipline in order to develop all kinds of vehicles for the indwelling of His one spirit. He has use for men of action like Peter and Paul, for quiet and unassuming people like Jeremiah, for rocklike foreheads like Ezekiel, for emotional, deep-feeling people like David, for kindly folk like Jehoshaphat, all duly humiliated by learning their need for redemption, all in love with the Truth but expressing it through varying personalities. So, if you are timid and of few words now, you will not suddenly become a vigorous, talkative person then, but you will lose the embarrassment that comes of shyness, and will blossom out as a taciturn but worthwhile fellow of Yahweh. He will find valuable use for your characteristics in the Kingdom, where they will be developed to best advantage. If you are energetic and excitable, you will be toned down, but God will harness and direct that energy of temperament, not obliterate it. Our hereditary nature, our experiences and the Word of God will have made us what we are, and when freed from sin and failure, that is what he will want us to be. (Note Paul's words in Ephesians 5: 26-27.—Editor).

Continuity of Experience

Similarly we shall still feel we are ourselves; there will be a continuity of feeling and memory between our present selves, and our new selves. Were it otherwise, probation would have no point. Those who chant "the former things will not be brought into remembrance" simply ignore the context of the passage and fail to understand the purpose of

probation. The former things will be forgotten in the sense that all the bitterness, the frustration of human existence will be a thing of the past; it will torment us no more, and be forgotten in that sense. But the things that mortal life taught us will be ever present as a precious gift from God. Jesus is Judge of all because he first had a human experience which enables him to be touched with the feeling of our infirmity. We shall "need to have compassion on them that are out of the way" (Heb. 5), if we are to be true shepherds to mortal men in the ages to come. We are today being prepared by being tried in all points "like as they" will be. Today is the day of having our senses exercised to discern good and evil. Then will be the time to use the experience so gained. Often when we act as the voice saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it," we shall recall mortal experiences whereby we learnt to walk in it also.

Again, the sense of gratitude which will cry out in praise to God for the great salvation is something that can only be maintained against a lively remembrance of having been saved from something. We shall be conscious of abounding grace which will give rise to constant thanksgiving which will resound to the glory of God (2 Cor. 4: 15).

I am stressing this because I want us to feel the continuity between what we are now, and what we will become. We shall still be **you** and **me**. Our minds will essentially be those with which we concluded our mortal life, freed of all cloudiness. We shall be able to look back on mortal days and reminisce in the best sense of the word. To give an actual example, if I am permitted to share in these joys, I shall be able to say to the brother who visited us one day last week, "Do you remember that day when you and I took that fence up at Cherry Tree Cottage, and staked the Cherry Tree? Well, the things we talked of that afternoon are now a reality, but they exceed our wildest dreams! Do you remember how I thought that Samson would have some unmentioned helpers when he slew 1,000 Philistines with the jawbone of an ass? Well, I met Samson last week—and you were right, he did do it single-handed!"

I can now look back to the age of 6, and vividly recall happy holidays on a poultry farm, where I learnt to love clean country living. The little boy who then looked with wonderment upon the world that was opening to his eyes, was the same "me" who today is thrilled to look out of my bedroom over a wide expanse of countryside, thanking God for letting me live here. There is a continuity in change—the same person, yet how different! I was then a child, I spake

as a child, and thought as a child. Today, physically not an atom of my body is the same (they change every 7 years) yet that little lad was me, and so strong is the connection, that I am quite excited at the thought of shortly possessing the actual clock which used to chime the hours in the room next to where I slept in those childhood days.

I do not think there will be any less sense of oneness and continuity between our days of immortality, and those many days of "toil and sadness" which will have prepared us for the gladness of "that day of sweet surprise." It will be clear remembrance of bitter experience at the hands of Rome that will cause saints to cry out: "Give them blood to drink, for they are worthy." It will be vivid recollection of "many wrestlings for the prize," of the times when our "beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and our bowels were moved for him" (Song 5: 4), which will cause us all to say: "Lo! this is our God; we have waited for him; we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation" (Isa. 25: 9).

And why am I labouring this point? To keep the Kingdom before us as a reality. To show that it has a very close connection to present personal existence, and is not a remote contingency that has nothing to do with this life. To the orthodox believer, heaven seems very unreal, and, unfortunately, for many Christadelphians, the Kingdom is the same. They find little connection between the days of flesh and the future age. It is to such I would appeal that they throw aside the childish things of Babylon, whether in their business and domestic lives, or in their ecclesial connections, and let the future glory become the guiding star of the present.

—E. Wille

The Work of the Gospel Proclamation Association

To indicate the wide extent of this work, during recent weeks, applications for further literature as a result of the distribution of "Herald of the Coming Age," have been received from the following places: U.S.A. — Texas, SanSaba, California, Mass. CANADA — St. John, New Brunswick. PHILIPPINES. ENGLAND — Birmingham, London. NAURU ISLAND (Central Pacific). NEW ZEALAND — St. Albans, Christchurch, Dunedin. NIGERIA. VICTORIA — Corio, Geelong, Mildura, Miranda, Bairnsdale. NORTHERN TERRITORY—Darwin. N.S.W. — Mosman, Loftus, Ballina, Rooty Hill, Sutherland, Goulburn. TASMANIA — Launceston, Temana, Jetua. QUEENSLAND — Townsville, Bundaberg, East Warwick. INDIA. The work is thus upon a world basis.

Those who have so generously supported this work will appreciate that their money has not been used in vain (though no work — whatever the "results" may be, is ever wasted when it is done "unto the Lord"). Unfortunately, in this vital work, we lack not merely finance, but also adequate help. As in the days of the Lord: "the fields are white unto harvest, but the labourers are few!"

VOLUME TWENTY SIX

THE LOGOS

Upholding the Purity of Apostolic Doctrine and Practice

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Thoughts for the Times

THE WARNING OF PROPHECY

Speak not lightly of prophecy, as do the scoffer and the fool. God bids you look to prophecy as a light shining in a dark place (1 Pet. 1: 19). "The Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets" (Amos. 3: 7). To those instructed in the Scriptures, the future is not wrapped in mystery. With unerring accuracy, prophecy has foretold the uprise and downfall of the earth's greatest empires. With equal precision it delineates the future of the kingdoms which now exist. The social and political events now transpiring before our eyes are all matters of prophecy: the great unrest that obtains throughout the world; the reviving strength of Israel; the growth of Russian power; the arming of the nations; the widespread unbelief and wickedness; the increase in crime and child delinquency, etc. Prophecy, too, gives information concerning the near future. 'Ere long the clouds of God's anger will burst over a rebellious world, preparatory to the inauguration of the Kingdom of God (Zech. 14: 9; Rev. 11: 15). This is a challenge to the world and a challenge to us. The world will feel the weight of Divine anger, and so also will we, if we neglect our great salvation. It is vitally important that we not only preach the warning of prophecy to others, but apply the lesson to ourselves.

City of Destiny

JERUSALEM !

Remarkable History!

Glorious Destiny!



"Since the expulsion of Israel by the Romans, Jerusalem and her children are in the situation of Hagar and her son, while wandering in the wilderness of Beersheba. She is divorced from the Lord as Hagar was from Abraham, and 'being desolate she sits upon the ground,' and bewails her widowhood (Isa. 54: 4). But, there is to be 'a restitution of all things.' Jerusalem is to become a free woman as Sarah was; and to take her stand in the midst of the earth, as 'the city whose architect and builder is God.' She will then 'remember the reproach of her widowhood no more. For her Maker will be her Husband; the Lord of Hosts is His name; and her Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel (even Jesus), the God of the whole earth shall he be called.' She will then be the metropolis of the world; and her citizens, or children, will be more numerous than those she rejoiced in under the law, as a married wife. The period of her glory will have arrived; the twelve tribes be again the united, peaceful, and joyous inhabitants of the land; the 'greater than Solomon,' their king; and his city, Jerusalem the free."

—J. Thomas



The subject of Jerusalem is not one of popular interest. People care little for its history or destiny. They know it only as a city of violence, a danger-spot in a world of tension and trouble.

But its history is remarkable, and its predicted destiny glorious. To those educated in the Divine purpose, the gradual uprise of a city from out of the 'dust of its humiliation today, is the greatest symbol of hope, speaking of wide-spread and drastic changes to be inaugurated throughout the earth.

The First Picture—A King-Priest Reigns

Let us consider its past in its bearing upon the future. We turn back the pages of history some 4,000 years. This is 2,000 years before Great Britain finds any mention, and over 1,000 years before ancient Rome—the so-called Eternal City—was founded. In Jerusalem, there is a King-priest reigning by name of Melchizedec. At the time of which we write (Gen. 14), the Land of Promise was submerged in bloodshed and war. Chedorlaomer, at the head of a confederate army from the north, had invaded the land. He swept down south, following the direct trade route east of the Jordan that

linked Damascus with the Gulf of Elath, conquering the massive cities of Bashan en route. At Elath, he turned north (v. 7), conquered the Amorites just west of the Dead Sea, and then, besieging Sodom and Gomorrah, ultimately took captive its inhabitants, including Lot, who was then resident in the former city.

SITUATION OF JERUSALEM

The situation of Jerusalem is in several respects singular amongst the cities of Palestine. Its elevation is remarkable, occasioned, not from its being on the summit of one of the numerous hills of Judea, like most of the towns and villages, but because it is on the edge of one of the highest tablelands of the country. Hebron, indeed, is higher still, by some hundred feet; and from the south, accordingly, the approach to Jerusalem is by a slight descent. But from every other side, the ascent is perpetual; and, to the traveller approaching Jerusalem from the west or east, it must always have presented the appearance, beyond any other capital of the then known world—we may add, beyond any important city that has ever existed on the earth—of a mountain city; breathing, as compared with the sultry plains of the Jordan or of the coast, a mountain air; enthroned, as compared with Jericho or Damascus, Gaza or Tyre, on a mountain fastness. In this respect, it concentrated in itself the character of the whole country of which it was to be the capital—the “mountain throne,” the “mountain sanctuary,” of God. . . . “His foundation is in the holy mountains (Ps. 87: 1). “They that trust in the Lord shall be as the mount Zion, which may not be removed, but standeth fast forever” (Ps. 125: 1). “God is in the midst of her, therefore shall she not be removed” (Ps. 46: 5). It was emphatically the lair of the lion of Judah, of “Ariel,” the Lion of God (Isa. 29: 1-2). “In Judah is God known; His name is great in Israel. In Salem is His leafy covert,” and His ‘rocky den’ in Zion (Ps. 76: 1-2). . . . Thou art more glorious and excellent than the ‘mountains of the robbers’ (Ps. 66: 4).” And this wild and fastness-like character of Jerusalem was concentrated yet again in the fortress, the “stronghold” of Zion. That point, the highest in the city, the height which most readily catches the eye from every quarter, is emphatically the “hill-fort,” the “rocky hold” of Jerusalem—the refuge where first the Jebusite, and then the Lion of God, stood at bay against the hunters.

—From “Sinai and Palestine”

When Abraham heard of the predicament of his near relative, he pursued after the invading forces, determined to rescue Lot. In this he was successful, returning triumphant with the spoil he had obtained. He passed close by Salem (as Jerusalem is called in this narrative), and the record states:

“Melchizedek, King of Salem, brought forth bread and wine; and he was priest of the most high God” (Gen. 14: 18).

Who was Melchizedek? We learn from Hebrews 6: 20-7: 1 that he was a type of the Lord Jesus. His name signifies

"Prince" (Melchi) of "Righteousness" (Zedec), and as he was also King of Salem, it also signifies Prince of Peace. Paul makes the point that he was "FIRST" Prince of Righteousness, and "AFTER THAT" Prince of Peace.*

Righteousness must precede peace. Christ must establish the first in the earth before he can set up the second. Without the one there cannot be the other.

Melchizedek was thus a type of Christ. In our first glimpse of Jerusalem, therefore, as we watch it emerge out of the mists of antiquity, we see a picture of its King-priest blessing the household of Abraham after a period of trouble and war, dispensing bread and wine to the faithful.

This is also the ultimate picture presented by the prophetic Scriptures. Speaking of the second advent of the Lord, the Psalmist declares:

"Yahweh said unto my Lord, Sit thou at My right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Yahweh shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Yahweh hath sword, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" (Ps. 110: 1-4).

The Lord Jesus, as King-priest of Jerusalem in the Age to come, as the antitypical Melchizedek, will also dispense bread and wine to the household of Abraham after a period of trouble and war. At the inauguration of the memorial last supper he declared:

"I will not any more eat thereof, until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God" (Luke 22: 15-16).

Thus from the very beginning the ultimate destiny of this city was set before men in a prophetic picture over which they could meditate with profit.

The Second Picture — Jebus Defies Israel

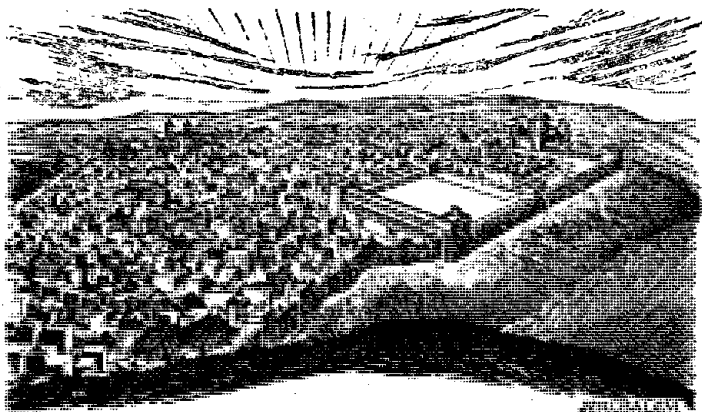
We turn the pages of history some 500 years. Under Joshua, Israel invaded the Land of Promise. With faith and courage this valiant leader tackled the work before him. Citadels fell, the enemy was subjected, the land was divided among the tribes.

One fortress stood proudly defiant. It was the mountain stronghold called Jebus (Josh. 15: 8). Situated upon an eminence commanding a long, narrow, winding valley that led upwards to the summit, later called Zion, it was a place easily defended. The record states that "the children of

*The statement of Heb. 7: 3: "Without father, mother, descent," etc., relates to Melchizedek's appointment as priest in contrast to that of the Aaronic priesthood, which was determined by family descent (cp. Num. 18: 1-2). He was made "like" the Son of God in being constituted a type of the Lord Jesus. — Editor.

Judah could not drive out the Jebusites" (Josh. 15: 63). They lacked the faith and courage to do so. Given those two requisites, no problem would have been beyond their power.

Jerusalem was then known as Jebus, signifying: "A Place Trodden Underfoot," such as a threshing-floor. "Jebus" has been the condition of the city down the ages. Its record has been one of bloodshed, war and violence. More battles have been waged over Jerusalem than any other city. Since A.D. 70, as the Lord predicted, Jerusalem has been "trodden down of the Gentiles" (Luke 21: 24). In the words the Lord



used on that occasion, there is almost a play upon the meaning of the ancient title. Even today it is a city of violence. The rubble of past wars spills over into its streets today; barbed-wire entanglements extend to the very heart of the city. And the developing crisis suggests that it is soon destined to become again the threshing-floor of the nations (Joel 3: 14; Zech. 14: 1).

Jebus is still its State, though men no longer know it as such.

It Becomes the City of David

Another five hundred years pass, and the status of Jebus is changed by David. He had been anointed king at Hebron, first by his own tribe of Judah, and then by all the tribes. As head of a united nation, David desired a more central capital. Jerusalem was ideal for that purpose. It was situated on the border of Judah and Benjamin, being in the territory of the latter tribe. To make a city of Benjamin capital, would help weld the two tribes (previously antagonistic) more closely together.

David determined to occupy it. But the citadel of the upper city (later called Zion) was still in the hands of the Jebusites, and had to be wrested from them. "David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which is Jebus: where the Jebusites were" (1 Chron. 11: 4).

The details of the taking of the upper citadel comprise one of the great heroic deeds in Israelitish history, and was the means whereby Joab obtained the position of Commander-in-Chief of David's army. The fortress was easily defended. It stood at the top of a steep incline, and was protected by massive walls which were impregnable against any attack David could launch. It was well served with water by a secret subterranean passage (called "the gutter"—2 Sam. 5: 8), so that it could easily withstand a siege. The only way of gaining entrance was through this "gutter." This was a passage cut in the rock from under the citadel, and which by a series of stairways and galleries, led from the surface to a perpendicular shaft some 40 feet in depth up which water was drawn as in a well. The foot of this shaft was connected with a horizontal passage that led to the Upper Gihon and the Kidron Valley, by which this secret reservoir was fed with water.

This was the only way the fortress could be occupied. But would anybody try the desperate expedient of first pushing through the horizontal water-channel at immense risk of being drowned, then scaling the upright shaft where a single stone dropped from above would bring certain death, and afterwards guard this shaft for others to follow, and so penetrate into the fortress? It was a desperate plan, but there was no other, and Joab attempting it, succeeded.

Jebus now became known as the City of David (or the Beloved). Instead of being known as "A Place Trodden Down" (Jebus), it had become "The Vision of Peace" (Jerusalem). Yahweh had revealed His intention of seeking out a specific "place" as His peculiar habitation, and now it was revealed that Jerusalem was the selected spot (cp. 1 Chron. 21: 28; 22: 1.). To this place, amid much rejoicing, David brought the Ark in preparation of the time when his son would build the Temple. It witnessed the triumphs of David as he returned from his conquests against the enemy without; it became a city of glory, the centre of culture and truth, when Solomon's Temple was established there.

But its title of Jerusalem was not because of what was then established there, but because of what was promised for the future, when a greater than Solomon shall reign. In anticipation of God's promises, David sung of its glory. He

made mention of the time when the Lord Jesus will be anointed there as king, and when the "uttermost parts of the earth" will be his possession (Ps. 2: 6-9). He looked forward to the time when the glorious House of Prayer for all nations will be established there, when it will be the centre of universal worship, and "because of Thy Temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto Thee" (Ps. 68: 28). He spake of the "set time to favour Zion," when "the nations shall fear the name of Yahweh, and all the kings of the earth Thy glory," when "Yahweh shall build up Zion, and shall appear in glory" in the person of His son (Ps. 102: 13-21). He praised Yahweh because of His intention to "build up Jerusalem, to gather together the outcasts of Israel" (Ps. 147: 1-7).

The prophets took up the same strain. Isaiah predicted the time when men shall voluntarily seek the Lord in Zion, and will willingly elect to hearken to His truth, and walk in His ways (Isa. 2: 2-4); when the Lord shall reign in Jerusalem before his ancients gloriously (Isa. 24: 23). Jeremiah prophesied of the time when it will be called the Habitation of Justice, and Mountain of Holiness (Jer. 31: 23). Ezekiel saw in vision the Divine glory returning to Jerusalem in the form of a host of glorified ones (Ezek. 43: 7). Zechariah declared it will yet be called The City of Truth (Zech. 8: 3).

To them all, it presented the Vision of Peace. Unfortunately, its inhabitants saw little reality in that vision. A time of apostasy and evil set in. The nation turned from God. The Kings of Israel became lifted up in pride and arrogance. The worship of Yahweh fell into disuse. And then troubles thick and heavy fell upon the ancient city. In 606 B.C. the Babylonians invaded the land, the city was overthrown, and the people taken into captivity. The throne of David (called also the Throne of Yahweh—1 Chron. 29: 23) was overthrown until "he comes whose right it is" (Ezek. 21: 29).

Trodden Underfoot

It was rebuilt again some 70 years later, and the Jews returned to establish, once more, their State. A measure of glory again came to the ancient city; decades and centuries of history again flowed by, until, some 500 years later, the greatest prophet of all walked its streets. He was the man born to be king. He described the city as the City of the Great King (Mat. 5: 35). He spake to his disciples a parable of his second coming "because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear" (Luke 19: 11). The proximity to Jerusalem was appropriate to such a parable because the city will

witness the things concerning which the Lord spake on that occasion.

He predicted the coming desolation of the city, when it would be turned into "Jebus" again; when it would be "trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21: 24). He wept over the city because of the folly of its inhabitants in rejecting the message of peace he could offer them, saying: "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Mat. 23: 39).

But the Jews would have nothing of his teaching. They obtained sentence of death against him because he claimed to be King of the Jews, crying, "We have no king but Caesar!" And into Caesar's hands they were given. Caesar proved a hard taskmaster. In A.D. 70 he marched his legions against the city, and in one of the worst sieges in history, it was overthrown. The record of this terrible siege is sufficient to cause the blood to run cold. There were division and bloodshed within its walls, and death and destruction without. The city was completely destroyed, and later was completely annihilated. Its very site was ploughed as a field, and salted with salt as a symbol that the destruction was absolute and forever. The Jews were driven from Palestine, and desolation settled down upon the Land of the Covenant, "until . . ."

Rising from the Dust

We are privileged to be living contemporary with the uprise of this city of Destiny. In December, 1917, the Balfour Declaration resulted in the doors of Palestine swinging open to receive Jewish exiles. Out of World War 1 had come hope. In May, 1948, the Israeli State was proclaimed. Out of World War 2 had come promise. And what of World War 3? Surely it will see the realisation of that Vision of Peace that has been before mankind for so long. The "Tabernacle of David" is to be "rebuilt as in the days of old." The order and glory of David and Solomon, with Jerusalem the city of world-wide culture and Divine religion, will be restored on a greater, more glorious scale. Jerusalem will again be called "the throne of Yahweh," and the Lord shall reign surrounded by his "ancients"—those with the obedience of Abraham, the Faith of Moses, the courage of Joshua, the humility of David, the vision of the Prophets, the abounding enthusiasm of the Apostles, the quiet, faithful service of every humble son and daughter of God whose implicit trust is in the One who builds the foundations of Zion.

Such people are the real inhabitants of Zion; they are

accounted as having been "born there" (Ps. 87: 6). Their roots are in Jerusalem, though they may never have seen the city; they "take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof" (Ps. 102: 14), though all they know of the city they have read in the Scriptures. To them it is the Vision of Peace, the symbol of hope and future glory.

Salem of the Future

In that day its name will be changed. It will be no longer the Vision of Peace, but Peace itself. Thus Psalm 76: 2 declares: "In Salem also is His tabernacle, and His dwelling place in Zion. There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle." Jerusalem becomes Salem (Peace), the name we first meet with when Melchizedek inhabited it (Gen. 14: 18). When it is called Salem, the antitypical Melchizedek will be there, to bless the house of Abraham after a period of trouble. Thus the three titles Jebus, Jerusalem, and Salem express the evolution from war to peace that this City of Destiny must pass through. We have seen the "treading down," and we know it must come again at Armageddon; we have read of the Vision of Peace, and we glory in its possibilities; but how wonderful it will be when the vision becomes a reality. Read Psalm 122 and experience the thrill of true patriotism for Zion, for Salem, when the glorious picture of Psalm 45 will be a reality, when the King and his Bride will be united in marriage, and the words of the prophet will be a fact in the earth: "And he said unto me: Son of man, the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever, and my holy Name, shall the house of Israel no more defile" (Ezek. 43: 7). The long, tortuous history of ancient Jebus will enter upon the glory for which it was destined from the very beginning.

—H.P.M.

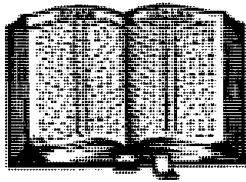
Greetings from Toronto

Brother Styles, of Toronto, Canada, asks that we convey to all our associates in the great work of spreading the Truth, the kindest greetings from Toronto brethren. We place the note in "Logos" as the helpers are located in various States of Australia, separated from each other by hundreds of miles.—Ed.

Articles Enjoyed

"I would like you to know that I and others of the Ecclesia have gained much from the reading of 'Logos.' The articles 'Pleasure and Profit from Bible Study' have been of the greatest assistance, and whilst I have not used the notebook as extensively as suggested, I can see the gain which undoubtedly accrues from such a use. The articles have filled a long-felt want."—S.T. (N.Z.).

(Thank you for your encouraging comments. We trust you found the special issue on Ruth equally as interesting.—Editor.)



Things New and Old

No. 6—

Bringing Things Into Remembrance

In my last article I was stressing the continuity of personality between what we are now, and what we hope to be: between probation and exaltation. I now want to take it a stage further, and show that not only shall we feel that we are the same persons as we were before (albeit in perfect mental and physical "wholeth"), but that actually our probation should have developed in our brain flesh something Divine and imperishable, which when brought out of God's Book of Remembrance, will become the nucleus of our new selves.

This thought was in the mind of the Lord when he said, "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (John 8: 51). His hearers were familiar with the idea of bodily resurrection; they knew that Abraham and David would need to rise from their sleep to inherit the promises; that Isaiah looked for the day when his dead body would arise; that Daniel would stand in his lot in the latter days. But here was someone who talked about never dying!

The faithful Israelite, like Martha, knew that her brother would rise again in the resurrection at the last day (Jhn. 11: 24), but Jesus was able to lead her on to the promise "whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Notice the phrase "liveth in me." This was life with a quality that coming from God, and centred in the Lord, would abide.

Such ideas were not easily received. The Jews said: "Abraham is dead and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my sayings he shall never taste of death" (Jhn. 8: 52-53). Abraham is dead! But he wasn't—not really—in God's eyes. Oh, yes, he was asleep—unconscious—so much dust—devoured by worms—mouldering in the grave. He couldn't give thanks or praise God. He certainly wasn't in celestial bliss playing his harp before God. Yet in a deeper sense of the words he wasn't dead; that that is what the Lord himself declared when answering the ribald heckling of the Sadducees (Luke 20: 27-38). He referred to the way in

which God described Himself to Moses at the bush as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and stressed that "God is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto Him." As far as God is concerned, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are very real personalities—living in His mind; on record in His memory. When they died there was something of God in them, and God cannot die. That which was of God in them remains with God, for it is part of Him. To an extent, He, the Eternal, had become part of them, and so they had become part of Him. In fact, that is the teaching of the Name of Yahweh revealed by God at the bush—that He wills to become others—to be in them by His imperishable seed; to beget a family of whom the chiefborn is Jesus.

The Book of Life

This idea was summed up in one of the most beautiful of Scriptural symbols. God speaks of the way in which He remembers these characters as His "Book of Remembrance."

In a "day of small things," not unlike our own, "they that feared Yahweh spake often one to another; and He hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared Yahweh and thought upon His name. And they shall be Mine, He declared, in that day when I make up my jewels" (Mal. 3: 16-17).

This concept of a dead man being as good as alive if God remembers his character, is often mentioned. Paul says of certain of his fellow labourers that their names were in the Book of Life (Phil. 4: 3). The Apocalypse speaks of "the Book of Life of the Lamb slain" (Rev. 13: 8; 20: 12-15). In Exodus 32: 32, we read of God refusing to blot Moses out of the Book which He has written. The Spirit in David declared: "Are not my tears in Thy Book?" i.e., "are not my sorrows in Thy remembrance?"

Brother Thomas asks ("Eureka," vol. 1, p. 362, old Ed.): "But how is a man's name inscribed on the memory of God for resurrection?" He shows how the Spirit of God is the "remembrancer." The man who has the Truth, or Spirit of God at work in him, has an intellectual and moral identity with God, "so that he who has the Truth has in him the mind, the thinking and teaching of the Spirit." (This is surely the proper sense of the present possession, or indwelling, of the Spirit). "The spirit is the truth" (1 Jhn. 5: 6), and is called the word of the Truth of the Gospel of the Kingdom, and when it is believed and obeyed, relations are established between man and God. This is the spiritual connecting medium that links them to His throne in their present state.

Men are sanctified by God's word which is Truth (Jhn. 17: 17), "and as the Truth is God's and precious to Him, and always before His mind, the sanctified are His special treasure. Their names are therefore inscribed in His Book of Remembrance by their union to the Truth in the obedience it enjoins."

God's Living Epistles

Many epistles might be bound up into a book, and Paul likens God's work of writing His thoughts into men's minds to the writing of a letter. Let Brother Thomas (p. 363) continue the theme of the way in which God implants something in a man that is imperishable, because it is of God, something which is the basis of the continuity between the present and future existence of the saints:

"Paul styles the baptised believers in Corinth, 'an epistle of Christ written with spirit of the living God.' The writing, he says, was done through him and Timothy, as the instruments. God, Paul, spirit and Corinthian hearts held a similar relation to each other in the writing of the epistle (and all similar ecclesias collectively, made, as it were, a Book of Epistles) that head, pen, ink and paper, do to an ordinary letter. The mentality of God was by the process stamped upon Corinthian hearts so that they became part of His thoughts; and while He is written upon their memory, they are also written upon His, who is the way, the truth, the resurrection and the life. Hence, to be written in the scroll of the life, is to be 'in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ' and they in him by the Spirit—truth dwelling in their hearts (2 Cor. 3: 3; 1 Thess. 1: 1; Eph. 3: 17; Jhn. 6: 54-56).

The next section in "Eureka," entitled the "Life of the Lamb," should also be read. In it Brother Thomas shows how immortality and the resurrection are but the perpetuation of a divine quality of mind developed in the days of weakness (p. 365). The resurrection of the saints is the opening of the Book of Life, or God's remembrance of them practically demonstrated in their deliverance from death. Spirit-truth inscribed them on His memory, and Spirit-power, the same spirit of God that revealed the doctrine through prophets and apostles, raises them from the dead. Then will be verified the words of Paul: "If the spirit of him who raised up Jesus from among the dead dwell in you, he who raised up Christ from among the dead shall also make alive your mortal bodies by means of His spirit dwelling in you" (Rom. 8: 11). The Spirit of God which raises us from the dead is the same spirit which gets into a man from the Word to give him newness of life even now. But please turn up the section in "Eureka," and if it is not already one of your favourite sections, it will rapidly become so.

Sealed in the Forehead

The way in which the seed of immortality gets into a man—the means whereby he becomes part of the permanent-God-dwelling-in-him, is described as being “sealed” in the forehead (Rev. 7). The forehead is the seat of intelligence. A saint has the “Father’s name written in his forehead” (Rev. 14: 1) when God’s thoughts are transferred to his own mind.

Again let Brother Thomas lead our study:

“Seals were anciently, as in modern times, engraved with devices, that when pressed upon a softened surface the device might be transferred thereto, as the mark of the owner of the seal. The Deity has a device which He has Himself engraved upon His own seal, the counterpart or mark of which is transferred to the hearts of those who are impressible, and they become his sealed servants. It is written in Job 33: 16, ‘The Deity openeth the ears of men and sealeth their instruction.’ From this we may learn that sealing has to do with teaching; and, consequently, as the seal of the Deity is applied to a surface capable of thinking, his seal is that which impresses his ideas, or ‘thoughts and ways,’ upon the brains of his creatures . . .” (“Eureka,” vol. 2, p. 290, old edition).

We are familiar with seals on documents and letters in our own day, and can see the aptness of the symbol.

Brother Thomas shows how Jesus was “sealed” by the Spirit, so that the things he said were those “impressed upon his brain” by the Deity. “The seal of the Deity is divine teaching. This may be sealed, or impressed upon the brains or foreheads of men directly or indirectly.” Inspiration is being sealed directly, as when Jesus heard in his “sensorium” what “no one heard but himself.” Apostles were similarly led into all Truth. God only “inspires” or uses the seal direct when new revelation is required. Otherwise He requires men to “use their foreheads upon what He causes to be presented to them for faith,” and so the Word speaks of “renewed in mind,” “set your affection on things above,” “the peace of God which passeth understanding keep your hearts and mind,” “humbleness of mind,” “think on these things,” “as a man thinketh, so is he.”

The Mind in Action

If we consider the mind a little, we will realise how literally this sealing and writing of God’s ideas on our brain-flesh does take place. The mind is a wonderful recording organism which has embedded in it millions of impressions which become the basis of habit and action. When duly sorted out into right focus they become the foundation of character and, therefore, of destiny. If the uppermost impressions are from God and of Christ, then “Christ is being

formed in a man. As Christ is deathless, so to the extent Christ is embedded in his brain, a man has something imperishable about him which although he dies and lapses into the forgetfulness of the grave, God will remember what was in that brain and restamp it on a newly-created replica of that man's body. The restamped mind and new body will be "the man," and when finally purified that same man will be one of those who inherit the earth. There is, therefore, strong exhortation with this to get the right impressions embedded in the mind.

Men have discovered a lot about the mind, although their ignorance is still profound. The brain weighs three pounds, it is a mass of pink-grey jelly and contains ten thousand million cells!!

In treating certain disorders, one Canadian doctor opened the skull of conscious persons, and with the aid of an electrode identified what parts of the body are controlled by certain cells which he touched.

When touching certain spots, he revived long-forgotten memories in his patients! (The Judgment Seat will do this without an electrode). He also proved a continuous thread of memory running through adjoining cells. He declared:

"Among the millions of nerve cells that clothe parts of the brain, there runs a thread. It is the thread of time, the thread that has run through each succeeding wakeful hour of the individual's past life. When my electrode activates some portion of that thread there is a response as though the thread were a wire recorder or a strip of film on which are registered all those things which the person selected for has attention in that interval of time."

As has been said by one writer, every day our eyes take half a million snapshots. Our ears bring the accompanying sound to the adjoining part of the brain. The sound is synchronised with the "film" so that the two are always together when the memory is "played back." It is like a tape recorder and cine-camera combined.

The mystery runs even deeper in that the brain has its own index system. You meet someone you haven't seen for ten years; you ask yourself, "Where have I seen him before?" To use another simile, the brain hunts out the old file, and you are able to identify your acquaintance and note the changes time has caused. This index system is one of the brain's most wonderful benefits; it enables us to bring "to mind" a wealth of recorded experience in a moment of time, whether it is in assessing people in a difficult situation, or negotiating traffic in a busy street.

When we think of this vast record storehouse, and all

the complicated telephone lines passing to it from all over the body to convey information, and to receive "orders" we are moved with the Psalmist to say, "I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are Thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well" (Ps. 138: 14).

Thus the five senses—taste, touch, smell, sight and hearing are constantly relaying impressions of what they have contacted to the brain for recording, and there the impressions stay permanently, although some of them will be more vivid than others, according to how far we have dwelt on them. The actual synchronising is even more remarkable in that we can think back to a good dinner, and re-live the enjoyment of the pleasant aroma; the delicious taste; the appreciation of the guests, both to God and their hostess. We can remember the conversation we enjoyed, and how we reacted to the whole occasion.

We are taking in impressions all the time, whether we intend to or not. Go on a long car or train journey, and as you speed through the countryside, every inch of the journey which you actually see is being photographed. You may not realise it at the time. At journey's end, you may not be able to reproduce the whole "reel." But do the journey again, and then you come to a point which looked unfamiliar, and right "out of the blue" comes the memory: "They've demolished that stately old house that stood there!" If you had not repeated the journey you might never have recalled the existence of the house. It is similar with faces. Move to a new town, and walk down the street for the first time on the way to work. You will see scores of people, and probably remember none of them; see some of them a second and third time, and you will recall that you saw them on the first day, proving that the brain must have then recorded the fact.

"Evil Communications Corrupt Good Manners"

I have gone into a little detail regarding the mind to help convey the practical reality of the ideas expressed earlier on "the book of life," "being sealed," etc. We can see how almost tangibly God can dwell in us—His thoughts, His spirit-word, can become impressed on our brain flesh. So God can come in and dwell with us.

This is very thrilling, but it is also very sobering. Two verses of Scripture come to mind, one from David and one from the Lord: "Turn Thou away mine eyes from beholding vanity" . . . "Take heed how you hear." A third may be added from Paul: "Evil communications corrupt good manners."

If the impressions we absorb are permanently imbedded on our sensorium, how careful we ought to be about what we read, look at, or listen to, lest it corrupt us from the simplicity that is in Christ. This becomes all the more serious when we remember that "as man thinketh so is he;" and the whole act of resurrection is bodily remaking combined with re-stamping man with his memory—the sum total of his human experience and identity.

But I see a difficulty here. In many ways we cannot control all the impressions we receive. We can choose to keep away from the cinema, or keep television out of the house, or be selective about our reading—but we cannot walk about evil cities and work with godless people with our eyes shut and our ears stopped. We are bound to see corrupting pictures on the advertisement hoardings; we shall inevitably hear filthy jesting and foolish talk. As I write these words, quite contrary to my desire, my consciousness recalls a lewd cinema advertisement that obtruded itself from the boards in several streets I travelled down this week, and some unclean jokes told in my hearing not long ago. I can remember working for three months once with some building labourers—every other word was a bad one, and I was relieved to get on my bicycle at 5 o'clock and cycle down a country lane away from it all. Yet some brethren have to endure these things all their lives. They are passive receivers of impressions they detest.

They are not responsible for them, however. Those impressions are embedded in the memory, but are counter-balanced by what the person felt and thought about the things seen and heard. Thus the importance of using the five senses to impart only right impressions as far as possible, and avoiding corrupting influences. Yet to the five senses which imbed the impressions in the mind, we must add a sixth aspect which is also recorded in the brain cells—how we react to what we see and hear. Habit, character, and destiny is determined by what we think of the impressions, how we correlate and link them, how we fight some and nurture others. When our memory is stamped back on our resurrected bodies, it will be complete with both what we have seen and heard, as well as how we have reacted to these impressions; and on that we shall be judged.

The Lord suggests this when he says, "Whoso looketh upon a woman to lust after her has committed adultery in his heart." In an age when the female form is suggestively paraded—in person, on hoardings, in print—we cannot help seeing these things, but if we are tempted to look and lust,

then every ounce of spiritual energy must be summoned up from the other cells of the mental storehouse to resist the devil that it may flee from us. Every triumph makes the next resistance easier, so that though these things may be thrust upon us, they will not be synchronised with "lustings," or they will be linked with battles in which character is developed in obeying the injunction, "Wherein shall a young man cleanse his ways? By taking heed thereto according to Thy word."

I bring these matters out as an example only, though I choose it deliberately knowing that brethren have been helped by honest discussion in purity on such things.

But the point I wish to stress is that the characters and personalities we shall have at the resurrection will be those moulded in the brain by the impressions we have received, and by the thinking we have done about the experiences so received.

Bringing All Things to Remembrance

The experience of the Apostles illustrates what will happen to us at the resurrection.

Jesus told them that he would send them the Holy Spirit (in the special sense in distinction from the general sense of the word spirit) which would "teach them all things and bring all things to remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you" (Jhn. 14: 26).

All the words of wisdom they had heard from the Master came back to their memory. Like the impressions on a journey as mentioned above, they had all been placed on the human recorder (of which the cine-camera and tape-recorder are cumbrous imitations) embedded in their brains. But they needed the touch of the Divine "electrode" to bring them up, and reveal them in proper focus. If they had not "been with Jesus," there would have been nothing to bring to remembrance.

So it will be with us. All the meditation, wrestlings, study, conflicts, whereby we have come to know God and the fellowship of His son will have left their mark on the recording machine. Even if we die, God will remember what was recorded there, and put it back on the new body He makes for us. At the judgment seat, the Lord will make manifest whether the mind of the Father was there, and if so will grant immortality, the perfection of new life. And then, "all things will be brought to remembrance." What is embedded in the brain flesh will be brought to the surface. But again the warning. It must be there—and be put there now if it

is to be brought to remembrance then. If there is no word in our hearts now—there will be none then.

The New Song

Brother Thomas first directed my attention to these lovely Scriptural thoughts; so he shall have the last word. In "Eureka," vol 3, p. 390 (old ed.), he shows that only the redeemed can sing the new song, because only they will have been through the experiences of which they sing. But as most of them will have but recently emerged from the house of the dead, how will they be able to sing of their past experiences?

"Whence then can the 144,000 harps give forth the melody and sentiment of the song, but from the Eternal Spirit who 'brings all things to their remembrance;' and this He does in writing the Father's Name in their foreheads, after he has developed them corporeally from the dust. He flashes upon them the knowledge of a previous state, together with the knowledge of what shall be hereafter. Thus they are taught and made conscious of a previous existence. But for the operation of the Eternal Spirit in writing His name upon their new cerebral organisation, they would have no more consciousness of the past, or of any antecedents therein, than Adam when he first opened his eyes upon the light. Unless the Spirit impress upon them the knowledge, they would be conscious only of what present sensation could impart—of this, and no more."

He stresses that dead saints are really dead, and know nothing, having no personal identity whilst in the grave. Of Paul, for example, nothing remains but dust, from which God can make any creature.

"What provision, then, has been provided by the Creator for the reproduction of the non-existent Paul and his companions in nothingness? The creation of 144,000 (not less, but numberless more) living bodies from the dust; and stamping upon their foreheads, as with a seal what is already on record, not in the memory of the disembodied souls, but in the mind of the Eternal Father. This is where the personal consciousness of the past comes from, the Father's name written in the forehead, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God in fleshly tables of the heart (2 Cor. 3: 3), so that whosoever is so written upon after creation from dust, is, in the creative operation, taught to sing the song of redemption by inspiration. The apostles who listened to the discourses of Jesus remembered this defect by afterwards bringing all things to their remembrance, opening their understandings, and guiding them into all truth (Luke 24: 45; Jhn. 14: 26; 16: 13). In this operation, their consciousness of what Jesus really taught was stamped or written upon the fleshly tablets of their hearts. What they had forgotten and did not understand was not lost. It was retained in the Spirit's, in the Father's own mind, who afterwards photographed in their foreheads what He had said. Suppose the apostles had all died with Jesus, and like him, while dead, came to know nothing; and suppose after being dead they were brought to life on the third day, where was their remembrance of all things to come from? When people fall into a trance they forget everything, even the letters of the alphabet;

and have to recover knowledge by the slow process of ordinary tuition. How total and complete, then must be the oblivion of death; and how impossible the consciousness of the past, unless He who restores to life also restamp or rewrite the 'New Man,' or 'New Creature,' formed by the word in the old body of the present state upon the new body of the future. And this He does, not by causing the newly created being to pass through the experience of the past again; but by an instantaneous transfer of what exists in His own mind to theirs.

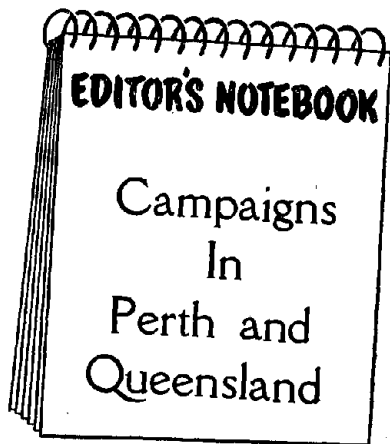
Eighteen hundred years ago, the Father spirit said, 'I am the way, the truth, the resurrection and the life.' He affirms this of Himself. The truth in a man by faith, is Christ in him. When the man dies, the truth and its personal developments remain with the Father, whilst the man, as flesh, is 'a wind that passeth away and cometh not again.' But though it cometh not again, the truth in its particular personal identity, whether called by the name Paul, or any other name, does come again. The Father, being the resurrection as well as the truth, reproduces from Himself the personally-developed truth, named Paul, in a former state. He reproduces it in a newly-created body. In view of the statement affirmed by John the Baptist, it is immaterial whether the body be made of the dust to which Paul is reduced, or of some other crude matter; for if of stones the Deity can raise up children to Abraham (Matt. 3: 9), He can as easily reproduce Paul from one kind of material as another. Paul sleeps 'in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.' In this sense, he may be said to be 'with Christ' even now. He sleeps in Christ the Resurrection—in Christ the Sun of Righteousness. When this Sun shines forth with healing in his beams, Paul and the 144,000 will be the embodied emanation of these beams. They will be the Kings which are risings from a Sun (Rev. 16: 12). They no longer sleep. Every individual is a rising—the reproduction of a former character in a new body; the character and not the body constituting the personal identity. The body is of the earth; the writing upon it from heaven. In the finishing of this, the body is transfigured in the twinkling of an eye; and from an earthy body it is changed into the likeness of the quickening Spirit, by which the redemption celebrated in the song is made complete."

What an exalting theme this truly is—and surely everyone who hath this hope in him will purify himself as he is pure (1 John 3: 3); will ensure the Truth is dwelling in his heart by faith, so that God may be able to "restamp or rewrite the 'new man' or 'new creature' formed by the word, in the old body of the present state, upon the new body of the future."

—E. Wille

U.S.A. and Canadian Ecclesias Please Note:

Some 30 Ecclesias in Canada and U.S.A. were recently asked to undertake Gospel extension follow-up contact work with interested friends on the mailing list of the Gospel Proclamation Association. Some have advised us of the visits made, and have indicated whether we should continue to send on literature from Australia. Would any who have not yet replied please let us know whether they are prepared to cooperate in this work—Editor.



The concluding meetings in Perth followed the pattern of those outlined in our notes last month. But, in addition, two further addresses were delivered in the country: at Narrogin, on a Friday evening, and at Harvey on the following Monday evening. These towns are about 125 miles south of Perth.

At Narrogin, a very pleasant surprise awaited us. We were scheduled to give an address of encouragement for the little company of brethren and sisters in that town, but on arrival were informed that an interest in the truth had been aroused in a neighbour, Mrs. Carder, who desired to obey Christ in the way appointed—Baptism.

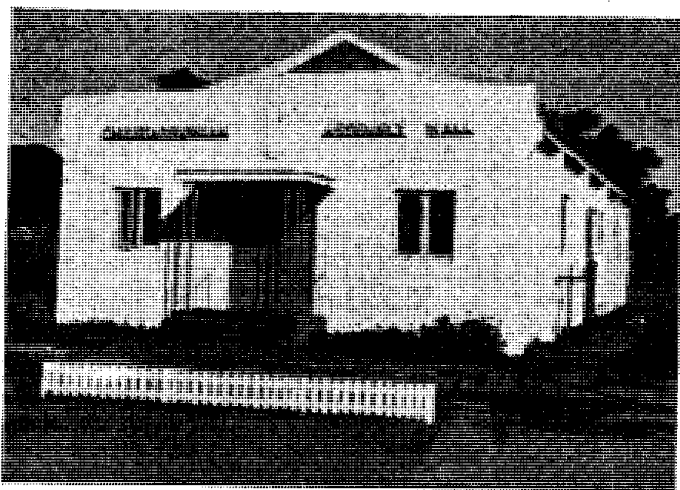
The examination revealed that she had a very good understanding of the basic elements of the Truth, and her baptism took place the same evening. Thus the night that we had thought might conclude by about 10 p.m., permitting us to return to Perth a little after 1 a.m., continued on until about 12.30, so that it was something like 3 a.m. the following morning before we arrived back at our hotel.

Meanwhile, a variety of subjects engaged our attention. The little company at Narrogin had many questions to ask, and we endeavoured to fulfil our obligation to impart some encouragement in regard to the Truth. We were very interested to learn how Mrs. Carder first came into touch with the truth. Apparently an English reader of "Logos" had arranged for the magazine to be sent to her in Australia, and through the pages of this periodical and the "Story of the Bible," her interest had been aroused. Then she had learned that her next-door neighbour is a Christadelphian, and through the ministrations of Brother Peers her instruction became more rapid. It was a lovely coincidence that we should be present at her immersion.

On our last Sunday morning in Perth, it was our privilege to address the Sunday School associated with the Ecclesia. Good work is being done in this direction. It was our duty to present prizes for an essay competition that had been conducted, and the number of essays submitted, as well as the quality of the work, was worthy of the highest commendation. The final public address in the Town Hall was delivered that evening, in which we contrasted the Truth with the errors that prevail in Christendom today.

Two more appointments remained for us to fill. In Harvey, about 125 miles south of Perth, Brother and Sister Tyson had arranged for a public lecture to be delivered. When we arrived at our destination, a spirit of gloom pervaded the few brethren and sisters present. Apparently, another sect had been busy a few days earlier, and it was thought that this would have an adverse effect upon the attendance. When only a few minutes before the scheduled opening time found a very

meagre audience, we began casting in our mind what subject to select as a substitute, for the exclusive benefit of brethren. But our gloom was premature. A sudden influx of friends, and further car-loads of brethren, made a very good audience. Among the audience was the local Church of Christ minister, who seemed rather restless throughout the meeting, and either had some trouble finding the references quoted in his Bible, or knew them sufficiently not to worry to turn them up! We dealt with some of the wonders of the prophetic word, showing that as these had come to pass in the manner predicted, complete reliance can be placed upon those prophecies that speak of the return of Christ and the establishment upon earth of the Kingdom of God. At the conclusion of the address, an open session for questions was announced. The minister asked one question, after which he remained silent—but other questions were forthcoming from the rest of the audience, and these continued after the official question time had been closed. Supper was provided by the sisters, and this gave grand oppor-



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tunity of pressing home in a personal way to those interested, the facts of Divine revelation. During this period, the clergyman unobtrusively made his departure.

Brother and Sister Tyson are to be greatly commended for the work they put into this effort. It is not easy for an isolated couple in a country town to effectively spread the Truth, and we felt encouraged by their faithful efforts, and the apparent success that attended them. Whatever "results" might come, Yahweh is served by such faithful efforts. He has assured us that such labours done in His name will not lack their reward. The very act of serving Him brings its own blessing.

And so our final night in Perth came around—a Fraternal Farewell. As a basis for encouragement and exhortation, we took the 19th Psalm. We showed how that the glory of the natural heavens displayed therein is a type of the "new heavens" to be set up under the Lord Jesus. The Apostle Paul quotes v. 4 and applies it to the work of the Apostles (Rom. 10: 18). That work will be seen at its clearest and greatest in the future

age, when the saints will appear as stars in the firmament of Christ's kingdom (Dan. 12: 3), and in their midst will be seen the Sun of Righteousness (Ps. 19: 4; Mal. 4: 1-3). In the Psalm, he is represented as both "bridegroom" and "strong man" or warrior (Heb., "gibbor"). His influence and light will extend to all parts of the earth, so that none will be able to hide from his power (v. 6).

This Psalm is beautifully set out in two sections. The first deals with natural creation, which is typical of the "new creation" of God; the second (from v. 7) speaks of the power and influence of the Word. At first sight these two sections seem disjointed, but in actual fact they are closely united. The first part of the Psalm shows in symbol the glorious future, and the latter portion directs the mind to the wondrous Word by which it alone can be attained. That Word should be heeded because of—its Author—Yahweh (v. 7); its Sufficiency—it is perfect (v. 7); its Utility—it concerts, gives wisdom; its Infallibility—it is sure; its Benefit—it rejoices and enlightens (v. 8); its Purity—it cleanses from sin (v. 8); its Perpetuity—it endures forever (v. 9); its ultimate benefit—it promises great rewards (v. 11); its Value—it is more precious than gold (v. 11). Finally, we drew attention to the concluding confession of sin (v. 12), the Psalmist's prayer for help (v. 13), his expressed faith in his Redeemer (v. 14).

Following this exposition and exhortation, we briefly reviewed the campaign, in which all had played such a grand part. Though small in numbers, though greatly isolated from other ecclesias, splendid work is being done by those of "like precious faith" in the West. All Ecclesias have their troubles, and Perth is no exception, but trouble in an ecclesia is really the individual's opportunity of demonstrating that "he has been with Christ and learned of him." We need to learn to react to the distressing circumstances of life in all its ways, as Christ would have us do—and then these matters will be seen as character-building in their effect.

The other members of the little company that had travelled to Perth all spake at this concluding meeting. They expressed the great pleasure they had experienced in meeting with the brethren in the West, the mutual profit that had been obtained from the effort that had combined public testimonies to the Truth with expositions and exhortations to the brethren.

On the morrow a large company of brethren and sisters were at the airport to bid us farewell. Some 18 days of pleasurable activity were behind us. It was with regret that we bade each other "God speed," and then turned our backs to the West to board the plane, and fly east. The engines of the large Viscount roared into life, we taxied down ready for the take-off. We adjusted our seat belts; the engines roared louder for the take-off; then suddenly we were moving ever more rapidly over the ground. The company of friends became a blur of waving hands; then, suddenly, we were airborne, and as the large aeroplane banked and turned, the whole of Perth swung around below us, with the broad waters of the Swan marking the position—a swirling confusion of houses, streets, and buildings that had swallowed up our friends. A few minutes later, and the whole city was far behind us. In the plane, seat-belts were being unbuckled, travellers were adjusting seats, reading magazines. As for ourselves, we let our mind travel back over the past days, the great joy of labouring together in the things of the Truth, the great privilege that is ours to be united in such a wonderful hope—and the desire to meet again those friends in the West whom we have come to love in the Lord.

Preaching the Truth in the North

As the plane flew swiftly east, we drew from our bag a file marked "Queensland Visit." Whilst we were in the West we had been in touch with brethren in the north of Queensland, who had asked that we conduct a campaign in those parts. This campaign came a little soon after the Western Australian one to be really comfortable, but it seemed either a case of doing it immediately, or waiting until next year. North Queensland is in the tropics, and from November onwards experiences its hot months, when the weather can become uncomfortably warm and humid. These are also its wet months, when floods can make communications between towns difficult. We had therefore finally agreed to the arrangements, seeing that halls, etc., had already been booked. It meant, however, that we would arrive home by plane on Wednesday, to leave on the following Saturday by plane for Townsville, some 2,500 miles distant from Adelaide. There was this advantage that we were already packed ready for the journey; although I would have to find some space in my bags (usually given over more to books than clothes) for Sister Mansfield's requirements, for though she had remained home on the Perth visits, she had agreed to come to North Queensland.

I was looking forward to the visit for several reasons. Though I have been in Queensland on a couple of occasions, I have never been further north than Brisbane, and it is always interesting to enter new fields. Originally, I had no idea of the size of the ecclesias in those parts, nor of the towns, but judging by outback towns in Sth. Australia, and of usual country ecclesias, I did not anticipate that either would be large. Though this proved to be the case with the ecclesias, it was not so with the towns, and the campaign has proved an education as far as the needs of this continent is concerned in the preaching of the Truth, as also the encouragement of brethren.

Due to the huge distances involved, it was thought necessary to pack as much as possible in the limited time available. Some 23 days were set aside for the overall effort, during which time we spoke on nearly 30 different occasions, on a variety of different subjects.

On the Saturday, we covered the 2,500 miles from Adelaide to Townsville in three hops, landing in Sydney and Brisbane, and arriving at Townsville about 7 p.m. We were met by Brother and Sister Steele, who showed us every courtesy, every help and consideration during our stay with the brethren in Townsville.

Townsville is a city of 45,000 people, being the second largest city in Queensland. From a scenic point of view we found it quite attractive. The city is dominated by an extremely steep hill—Castle Hill—around which the city is built, and which stands boldly upright like some harsh, forbidding sentinel. There is a beauty in its very ruggedness, and from its height a glorious view of the surrounding country, and the Pacific Ocean, can be obtained. About 8 miles offshore is Magnetic Island, a large and beautiful island, which seems to beckon the people of the mainland to come and enjoy the relaxation it promises, with the suggestion of cool breezes from the surrounding ocean, so desirable in the hot and humid climate of the tropics.

The Queen's Hotel, where we were domiciled, is on the seafront, and the sea breeze was very welcome of a daytime when we used the balcony of the hotel as our workroom. For work must go on in spite of these "holidays."

Later that evening, we met the Ecclesia at an opening Fraternal. We found that Townsville Ecclesia numbers some 30 members, the great majority of which have embraced the Truth within the last two years.

The Ecclesia was not only young in the Truth, but also a great number of its members were young in years, being between 20 and 30 years of age. We found, therefore, that though a measure of inexperience was manifested in normal Ecclesial procedure, this was more than compensated for by a keen enthusiasm for the Truth. We were scheduled to give five nights at Townsville, then to leave for Atherstone, about 300 miles further north, where we were to stay four days, returning on the following Monday to Townsville, where we stayed for a further four days. Thus we were nine days in Townsville, during which meetings were held on every evening, as well as three times Sunday—and yet the attendance of the brethren and sisters was excellent. The continuity of meetings, the hot, humid weather, did not sap their enthusiasm for the Word.

In addition to the usual exhortations and public addresses, addresses on forms of Bible study, Bible marking, and Bible exposition were delivered. Our experience in meeting with these brethren in the far north illustrated some problems of ecclesial life which we hope to outline in our next issue (God willing).

GOSPEL PROCLAMATION ASSOCIATION

Due to the generosity of readers, we have continued to forward 2,000 copies of "Herald of the Coming Age" bi-monthly to Tasmania, as well as to parts of Western Australia, N.S.W., and Queensland. A team of workers in Adelaide has co-operated in the preparing of labels, the wrapping and despatching of books, as well as the growing correspondence thus entailed. We propose giving periodic reports of the work on this page, as well as acknowledging moneys received. This letter is essential that readers may ascertain that their donations have been safely received. The following is the list of donations to the moment:

P.A.P. (Tas.) £1; L.J. (S.A.) £10/10/-; M.P. (N.S.W.) £1; Anonymous £15; Ecclesial grant (N.S.W.) £15; A.S. (N.S.W.) 10/6; B.C. (S.A.) £1/17/3; K.B.F. (Vic.) £3; M.H. (Currie) £18/10/-; Ecclesial Grant (W.A.) £3; M.H. (S.A.) 10/-; Sister E. (N.S.W.) £1; F.L.P. (S.A.) £1; L.W. (N.S.W.) 4/-; Anonymous (N.S.W.) £5; F. (Vic.) £1; C.M. (N.S.W.) 10/-; Anonymous (S.A.) £5; K.N. (Tas.) 17/-; E.B. (Qld.) £1; W.T.C. (Tas.) £10; T.H.V. (Qld.) 10/-; P.L. (Tas.) 10/-; Anonymous £2; W.P. (Vic.) £2; N.G. (W.A.) £5/9/-; H. (W.A.) £1; D.M. (Tas.) £1; H.M. (Vic.) £6; G.L.C. (Vic.) £1; R.H. (N.S.W.) £10; M.B. (S.A.) £1; R.E. (N.S.W.) £1; F.U. (Vic.) 3/-; W.K. (Tas.) £12/10/-; Sis. D. (N.Z.) £6/5/-; Ecclesial Grant (W.A.) £6/13/-; A.A. (Qld.) £5; Sis. T. (Qld.) 10/-; A.C. (S.A.) £4; P.S. (Qld.) 3/9; Ecclesial Grant (N.S.W.) £15; I.K. (Vic.) 11/6; G.K. (S.A.) £5.

Brother A. Cheek has consented to handle all matters relating to the Tasmanian effort. At the moment, he is preparing report sheets for all applications received from the island, and these will be forwarded to brethren in Launceston and Hobart for follow-up work. The brethren in Launceston have made preparations for the handling of all such contacts. They will call upon all those who have applied for literature (wherever such is practicable) and will advise us whether to continue forwarding the "Herald" or to refrain. For when an application is received, the name of the person applying is added to our regular mailing list to receive the "Herald" over a period of time.

We do appreciate the financial assistance of readers to further this work, and any such help should be directed to Gospel Proclamation Association, Box 226, G.P.O., Adelaide, South Australia.

—Secretary

At a Sutherland (N.S.W.) Ecclesial Fraternal

FAITH IN YAHWEH'S COVENANT

The fifth anniversary of the Sutherland Ecclesia was marked by the holding of a thanksgiving fraternal. Under the general theme of "Faith in Yahweh's Covenant," and against the background of Hebrews 11, four brethren addressed themselves to the lives of Abraham, Jeremiah and Paul, and the application to our modern times. The conquering of natural inclinations was the underlying theme. Abraham gave up a settled existence for the difficulties of a nomad life. Paul spurned position and honour that he might win Christ. Jeremiah was prepared to invest his material wealth in the future. The address relating to Jeremiah's faith is given hereunder.



Abraham displayed his faith in Yahweh's covenant by giving up a settled existence for the life of a wanderer. Few of us have been required to make this particular sacrifice.

Jeremiah displayed his faith in Yahweh's covenant in many directions. He manifested:

UNSWERVING LOYALTY in delivering his various messages of condemnation to king, priests, rulers and people.

COURAGE IN ADVERSITY by enduring bonds and imprisonment.

PATIENT ENDURANCE in the face of opposition and persecution.

FULL CONFIDENCE in the outcome of the Divine purpose.

I wish to highlight an aspect of Jeremiah's faith which we are able to emulate today. I refer to his readiness to put his money into things which brought him no immediate return—but which constituted an invaluable investment for the future.

The Land Purchase

The record is found in Jeremiah 32. The events briefly are these:

V.2—he was shut up in the court of the prison.

V.5—the word of Yahweh came to him telling him his cousin was on the way to offer him a block of land at Anathoth.

V.8—the cousin arrived and made the offer. Jeremiah accepted it in view of Yahweh's instructions.

V.14—the title deeds are carefully sealed in an earthenware vessel to continue many days.

Now imagine how some could level a charge of inconsistency against Jeremiah. Think how tongues could be busy in whispered distortions of his motive: "What do you think! There's Jeremiah telling us we are all going into captivity to Babylon, and we won't come back in our lifetime! But do you know what he did yesterday? He bought a block of land up at Anathoth! Looks as if he's not too sure about this captivity business."

Jeremiah also was puzzled.

His Prayer for Enlightenment

Seeking clarification, Jeremiah addressed himself in prayer to Yahweh for enlightenment. In his prayer, he referred to the divine intention to scatter the nation, and refers to his land purchase: "Thou hast said unto me, Buy thee the field for money, and take witnesses; though the city is given into the hands of the Chaldeans" (v. 25).

Then came the wonderful reply. Israel had sinned; Israel would be scattered in fury, but:

"Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in My anger, and in My fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely. And they shall be My people, and I will be their God. And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good: but I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with My whole heart and with My whole soul. For thus saith Yahweh, like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them. **AND FIELDS SHALL BE BOUGHT IN THIS LAND, WHEREOF YE SAY, 'IT IS DESOLATE WITHOUT MAN OR BEAST: IT IS GIVEN INTO THE HAND OF THE CHALDEANS.'** Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal them, and take witnesses in the land . . . for I will cause their captivity to return, saith Yahweh" (vv. 37-44).

Partial Fulfilment Today

When the Jewish people, in our generation, went back to the land, when they first obtained the right to buy land from the Arabs, the Jewish communities throughout the nations were told of the fact by cablegram from their central headquarters, advising them to read the verses quoted above.

These verses show the reason why Jeremiah had to buy the block of land. Jeremiah is yet to witness fields taken up by his countrymen when their hearts have been changed, and they have been brought under the "bonds of the covenant." In the meantime, we are today witnessing the token

fulfilment of that which yet remains to be done on a more wonderful scale at Messiah's return.

Because Jeremiah doubted not, he purchased the land.

But it required personal conviction of the Truth to do this. He demonstrated his faith by investing his money in the future. He had to take out of his pocket the weight of silver necessary to complete the purchase. Money in any language is the token of security; it represents value and substance; it permits one to employ servants; to command activities; to set up children in comfort. When we give money, we give away the protection money commands. This was true of Jeremiah as it is true of us. Jeremiah passed over money for a scrap of paper that meant **nothing** at that time. Between him and Anathoth were seven miles of Babylonian soldiers. He knew that a long and bitter captivity was commencing. He knew that he would never, in his lifetime, receive any benefit from the purchase he was making. He put his money into the future, and thereby displayed faith in Yahweh's covenant. He was tested by the Divine will reaching into the mundane things of life—into the money which Jeremiah had. He honoured Yahweh with his substance.

Future Profit

Jeremiah will not lose by this. He was commanded by Yahweh to put the evidences of the purchase into an earthen vessel, that they might continue many days (v. 14). In a remote part of the Land of the Covenant, men recently unearthed such an earthen vessel which had rested there for nearly 2,000 years, and which contained ancient copies of Isaiah's prophecies. Somewhere, in the same Land, the earthen vessel with Jeremiah's title-deeds of the block of land at Anathoth rests against a great day to come.

He bought this apparently useless purchase from Hana-meel, the son of Shallum. These names combined mean: "The gift of El the Recompenser." That block of land was a gift to Jeremiah from Yahweh, despite the adverse appearances of the times.

In Ezekiel's prophecy, the area which will be the personal possession of Christ in the Kingdom (Ch. 45) is described. It is to the north of, and includes portion of the glorious temple to be built, including Anathoth within its borders. Ezekiel, in the same chapter, speaks of Christ delighting in the giving of gifts of land from within his personal possession to certain honoured ones whom he will redeem.

In vision, we can see the glorious gala day in the Kingdom, where Jeremiah shall receive from the Lord Jesus that

little plot of land which he so faithfully bought, 2,500 years ago, despite the then adverse appearance of things.

Honour Yahweh with our Substance

Jeremiah's faith was demonstrated in a very practical manner. It is a powerful exhortation to those who are obviously of the opinion that it is wise to put most of the material blessings obtained into personal advancement, personal comfort and luxury; in an age when the imagined needs of the individual take so much money, as to leave but a fraction for the work of Yahweh. It is obvious too, that even in that giving there is a greater willingness to give when money is to be put into material buildings which can be seen, rather than into intangible testimonies which are investments for the future. The sound of Jeremiah's money falling into the weighing scales should cause us to search our hearts in the realisation that we are also required to demonstrate our faith in Yahweh's covenant by the manner in which we use the substance with which He has blessed us.

—B. Philp

Correspondence

V.N. (Calif., U.S.A.)—We appreciate your encouraging comments relating to "Logos" and will pass on your commendation to the writers concerned. Your generous donation materially assists us to extend the work already being done.

Sister A.H. (Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.) writes: "We were surprised to learn that the "Logos" has been in existence so long, as we had never heard of it. Many words of comfort we have been missing. We have received one issue, and would like to continue with it. Also please forward "Story of the Bible," and "Herald of the Coming Age."

(We shall be happy to forward sample copies of our periodicals free of charge to any at present not receiving them—Editor).

"I have been very privileged to have been called out of a Catholic family. Sister ———, by her wonderful way of life and character was the means of me searching the Scriptures, and after several trips to the priests to ask why we were not taught what was in the Bible, and when I asked to have verses explained, I was told to leave the Bible alone. After three such visits I gave up. Through God's mercy I was able to leave my home-town and come to my present place of abode, and I have never been so happy in all my life, as since I became a Sister in Christ. What a glorious feeling to be called out of darkness."

R.G., Oregon, U.S.A., writes: "Thank you for sending 'Logos,' as I get much joy out of reading it. As well as spiritual edification, it has cleared up many perplexing questions for me."



For Private Study

NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE

An Itemised Exposition of the Book of Revelation, based on
"Eureka" and designed for home study and for Bible marking.

(continued from page 71)

VERSE 2

"The word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ"—"Word" relates to the express declaration or teaching of Yahweh; "testimony" ("marturion" in Greek) signifies "witness," and relates to the personal experience of the one proclaiming the "word." The word of God is shown to be true by the personal witness of the Lord Jesus, for having risen from the dead, he is the guarantee, witness or testimony of the truth of all things proclaimed in the Divine message.

"And of all things that he saw"—John "heard" the "word of God," and was caused to "see" certain visions which he reported for the benefit of his hearers.

VERSE 3

"Blessed is he that readeth . . ."—Here is a grand incentive to study. The book closes with a similar benediction (Rev. 22: 7). Similar words are given in the companion volume to the Apocalypse, i.e., the Prophecy of Daniel (Ch. 12: 10). So anxious was John to experience the fullness of the blessing that he wept when he found that the Apocalypse was a sealed book (Rev. 5: 4), but his joy at the opening of those seals must have been great. Such anxious desire to learn the wisdom of Yahweh should characterise all the saints of God. An increasing knowledge of the Truth is an urgent need (cp. Col. 1: 10; Acts 20: 32), because it constitutes the sanctifying influence which God has designed for that purpose (John 17: 17; 1 Thess. 2: 13). God has promised to help us in attaining knowledge if we approach Him aright—see James 1: 5).

"They that hear"—In "Eureka," Brother Thomas states that the word in the Greek implies "one who gathers exact knowledge of a matter;" one who "knows accurately," or "observes narrowly." Mere "reading" is not sufficient for the blessing, it requires a gathering of exact knowledge. We must exercise the greatest care to ascertain the true meaning of this wonderful book—then the blessing will be ours. To do this takes time and effort, but a blessing rests upon those who thus labour in faith.

"And keep"—This is the third of the trinity of virtues here set forth. First—read; Second—study; Third—keep. The Apocalypse will reveal things for which we must strive as well as things which we must avoid; it will reveal life to us from the perspective of God; it will outline the future. And this knowledge, in turn, will provide us with concrete blessings even now; it provides the seeds of true happiness.

"The time is at hand"—The time was at hand in the days of John when the beginning of the prophecies contained in this book were to commence their fulfilment.

THE SALUTATION — vv. 4-8

VERSE 4

"Seven"—A symbolical number indicating completeness. God finished the work of creation in six days and rested on the seventh—thus the idea of completion. The complete, or entire, Ecclesia is here referred to in seven states of its existence throughout the ages. In Hebrew, the word for "seven" is "sheba"; and the same word also denotes "oath." An "oath" completes a contract, so that to the Hebrews, the number seven had the significance of completion.

"Churches"—The word "church" is a corruption of the Greek—"Kuriake"—"pertaining to a lord." From this word is derived the Scottish word "kirke." The modern usage of "church" makes it quite unfit for its presence in this verse. The Greek word "ekklesias" (writes Brother Thomas) "never signifies the place where Christians meet, or which they consecrate to the worship of God." In place of the word "church" he suggests the Anglicised form of the original Greek: "Ecclesia." This word is far to be preferred to the word "church." It is compounded of two Greek words: "EK" meaning "out of," and "KLEISIS" signifying "a call or invitation." Thus an Ecclesia is an assembly of people who have obeyed the "invitation" or call, to "come out" from among the Gentiles (see 1 Thess. 2: 12; Acts 15: 14; Gal. 3: 26-29; Acts 20: 28). The "servants" of Rev. 1: 1 constitute the "ecclesia" of v. 3. Thus the Revelation was not written for "the churches" as commonly understood, but for those "called out" of such. The first portion of the word "ecclesia" (i.e., "ek"—"out of") is found in such passages as Rev. 5: 9-10; Acts 15: 14; 2 Cor. 6: 17, and is translated "out of." "Klesis" is found in Rom. 11: 29; 1 Cor. 1: 26; Eph. 4: 1; Eph. 1: 18, etc., and is rendered "calling," etc. As an adjective ("kletos") it is found in Mat. 20: 16; 22: 14; Rom. 1: 1, 6, 7; 1 Cor. 1: 2. Invariably the idea of a call or invitation is associated with this word. One Greek scholar has defined the word "ecclesia" as "An assembly called forth by the herald." Wherever the word "church" appears in the A.V. (with the exception of Acts 19: 37—where the word is "temples" in the Greek), the word in the original is "ecclesia."

"Him which is, and which was, and which is to come"—The reference is to Yahweh, the great Increate. He was with Moses at the bush when He proclaimed to him His name (Exod. 3: 14); He revealed Himself in the Lord Jesus, who is now the manifestation of the Father in glory; and He is the coming One—yet to be revealed in the earth. When the Lord Jesus appears in glory, he will reveal Him who is invisible (1 Tim. 6: 15-16). Men shall see in him the manifestation of Deity. In the Revelation, the great Creator is set before His servants in the several phases of manifestation in which He has and will reveal Himself. This manifestation is referred to in Isaiah 41: 4; "I am the first and with the last." The word "first" in this verse is in the singular number, and the word "last" is in the plural. "The first one" relates to the Lord Jesus who is the manifestation of the Father; the "last ones" relate to the brethren of Christ, who will be exalted to similar glory and honour at his coming—cp. Rom. 5: 2; 1 Pet. 1: 3; Rev. 3: 12. Yahweh was revealed in His word from the beginning (John 1: 1-5); He is today revealed in His son (1 Tim. 3: 16); and is yet to be revealed in the glorious company of the redeemed, at the second advent of the Lord. The name of Yahweh signifies "He who will be" and speaks of the intention of God to reveal Himself in a son and sons according to His purpose.

"The seven spirits"—There is only one spirit (Eph. 4: 4), but it is manifested in various ways, and, in the days of the Apostles, through many individuals (1 Cor. 12: 8). Thus to express the principle of "one

spirit" in multitudinous manifestation, the term "seven spirits" is used. The number "seven" implies completeness or unity. It defines the "one spirit" in its complete, multitudinous manifestation. Yahweh has revealed Himself to man through His spirit, for His spirit is His power by which He does all things. Thus "grace and peace" from Yahweh can only be received through His spirit, for the great Creator will not personally leave His throne on high. But what constitutes His spirit today? The answer of Scripture is, the Truth (1 John 5: 6; John 6: 63; Eph. 6: 17)... It was through the Spirit that the Apocalypse was given (Rev. 2: 7). In the verse before us, the Spirit is referred to as being "before the throne" of God, and is likened to His servant, doing His bidding. Yahweh uses His spirit as we do electricity. It becomes our servant by which we can speak to others in distant places, or by which work can be done according to our will.

VERSE 6

"For ever and ever"—This is not eternity, for the reign of Christ will ultimately be given up to the Father (1 Cor. 15: 24-28). Christ's dominion over flesh will last 1,000 years (Rev. 20: 6). "Ever and ever" literally signifies "the ages of the ages." At the end of Christ's millennial reign, when the Kingdom is delivered up to the Father, death will have been eliminated from the earth—and with all mankind clothed upon with immortality (the wicked having been destroyed), the purpose of God in creation will be fulfilled: "The glory of Yahweh will cover the earth as the waters do the sea" (Num. 14: 21). The 1,000 years' reign of Christ will include many smaller ages, even as the Mosaic Age was divided into the epoch of the Judges, of the Monarchy, and so forth. "Ages of the ages" thus defines the period of Christ's reign, at the end of which epoch sin and death will be destroyed, and mortality will cease. The office of Priesthood will then cease, for priesthood is associated with sin, which will have been eradicated.

Among the words in Scripture translated "ever" are the Chaldean "Ahlmas," the Hebrew "Olahm," and the Greek "Aion." The Hebrew and Chaldean nouns are derived from the verb "Ahlam"—"to hide or conceal." Thus an "Olahm" is a "hidden or concealed period." It can be either hidden in the past, or concealed in the future. In prophecy it speaks of a certain period without defining its beginning or ending. The Greek word "Aion" has been used to express the equivalent of "Olahm," but it does not exactly mean the same thing. An "aion" is determined by the matter in hand. Those things relating to God are everlasting, those things concerning man are finite. God's aion is eternal, man's is terminable. "For ever and ever" thus does not define eternity, but the "ages of the ages" included within the period of Christ's thousand years' reign.

VERSE 7

"He cometh with clouds"—In Malachi 4: 1 Christ is likened to the Sun; here his immortalised brethren are compared to "clouds." The "coming" referred to is not his descent from heaven, but his presence before mankind generally. He will come firstly to his saints, unknown to the world; but then, in company with the elect, he will appear before the warring nations at Armageddon. That is the "coming" here referred to. Christ is likened to the "Sun of Righteousness" (Mal. 4: 1-3), the nations are likened to "waters" (Rev. 17: 15). It is the action of this Sun upon these Waters that will ultimately form the Clouds of this verse. In nature, a cloud is formed by evaporation; the heat of the sun separates a minute portion of the waters of the earth, and draws it into the heavens, forming a cloud. This is a very apt symbol to

describe the work of Christ, as the Sun of Righteousness, drawing from the "waters" or nations of the earth those separated for his purpose. In the age to come they will be drawn up into the political heavens, where they will appear with the Lord Jesus. It will be when he is surrounded with the glorified faithful of every age that the world will see him—"Behold, he cometh with clouds!"

"Every eye shall see him"—Cp. Zech. 12: 10; Isa. 40: 5; 66: 18.

"They also which pierced him"—The Jewish people will be forced to recognise and acknowledge their past blindness (cp. Zech. 12: 10; 13: 6; Mat. 23: 39). At Armageddon both Jew and Gentile will be drawn to Jerusalem (Zech. 14: 1), to the city which 1,900 years ago witnessed the Lord's humiliation, to see, this time, his glory.

(To be continued)

"Those who are alive and remain . . ."

In a letter upon this subject, Brother J.B.W. (Qld.), comments as follows:

"Almost no information is supplied in Scripture concerning the method of conveying the responsible to the place of judgment, and therefore none can be justified in dogmatic assertions. However, I think it is quite warrantable in urging upon all, in view of it being a fixed Scriptural policy to gather the living and dead responsible ones to a place, or seat, of judgment, that they do not allow themselves to become unduly perturbed on the score of possible hardship or distress affecting their children. In view of the declared fact that the angels are to come with the Lord (Matt. 25: 31), and will be sent to gather the elect from all quarters (Mat. 24: 31), it impresses me that we should be able to remain quite composed, for such gatherers are fitted to arrange and adjust all matters to a nicety. The angels are quite equal to the occasion, and the fact that they will be in charge should cause us not to worry as to the protection and care of our dependent children.

"It could not be more than speculation as to how the responsible are to be removed to the Judgment Seat, but it does appeal to me as reasonable to think that existing available means of transport may be utilised. Such means will be used to convey Israel's sons and daughters back to the land (Isa. 43: 6). There does not appear to me any support for the idea of snatching away of individuals through the air—such as Elijah, Philip and others. The 'catching away in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air' (1 Thess. 4: 17), seems to me quite inapplicable; the explanation given by Brother Thomas is more conclusive. He regards the 'air' as 'the aerial' (the exalted position in the kingdom). It cannot mean the firmament, for, in the place to which those 'caught away,' they are to be 'ever with the Lord,' and this is most certainly on the 'earth' (Rev. 5: 10; Prov. 10: 30; 11: 31). The question at issue is certainly a touching one, but I would respectfully urge on any who may feel over-anxious for their young children that they remember that all things will be under God's benign Hand, and rest serene in His absolute righteousness."

(Other comments on this subject will be found in earlier issues of "Logos" in the articles: "Things New and Old," by Brother Wille. In regard to 1 Thess. 4: 17, we fully subscribe to Brother Thomas' explanation of "the air," but would point out also, that the verse teaches two things: 1. A snatching away for a meeting with the Lord; and, 2. The establishment of the righteous "with the Lord" in the political aerial of the Age to Come. We feel that if Brother Thomas' words are considered they do not deny this dual action in regard to the saints. But, as in other matters, "let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."—Ed.)

VOLUME TWENTY SIX

THE LOGOS

Upholding the Purity of Apostolic Doctrine and Practice

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Thoughts for the Times

Our Plain Duty

The apostles command all true believers to "fight the good fight of faith," and to "contend earnestly for it as once for all delivered to the saints" (1 Tim. 6: 12; Jude 3). This contention is a matter of duty, the performance of which is not optional, nor dependent on the prospect of success or failure. We have nothing to do with consequences. If no one will obey the faith it is still our duty to contend for it. We are exhorted to save ourselves, and others if we can; and it contributes to this salvation of one's self to "contend for the faith." If others will not be saved, we cannot help it; we shall have done the best we could, and there we must leave it. But as to "converting the world," in the popular sense, by preaching, such a result is not contemplated in the scripture. The gospel was not preached for the purpose defined by the clergy; but as a call or invitation to glory, honour and immortality in the Kingdom of God. That is to say, God intends to set up an indestructible kingdom among the nations which shall rule over them all. The king and peers of its realms are to be holy, just, and immortal, which naturally the sons of men are not. They are to be "equal to the angels,

and the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." This is a high and holy degree, and a requirement which necessitates the postponement of the setting up of the Kingdom until God has provided "such a people for His name." To collect this people, He sent an invitation to the Jews first, and then to the Gentiles by Jesus and the apostles. As they were invited to this holy degree it is styled "a holy calling;" and the degree itself the subject of "the one hope of the calling;" and those who accepted the invitation are said to be "called to God's kingdom and glory" (1 Thess. 2: 12), and sometimes simply "the called." The time allotted to this work of collecting together the future rulers of the nations (Rev. 2: 26-27; 5: 10; 20: 4; 22: 5) to the gospel invitation in the name of Jesus Christ, is from the day of Pentecost till his return. The work is almost accomplished, and will be entirely finished when the few who are still needed to fill the Lord's house shall be brought in (Luke 14: 23).

—J. Thomas

"Eureka" in the Light of Today

Why Few Accept the Truth!

"The nearer we approach the apocalypse of the Lord Jesus, the less influence will the word be found to exercise over the mind of the general public. We ought not to be discouraged at the fact . . . Our contemporaries despise 'the goodness of God' exhibited in the gospel preached by Paul. They respect nothing which is not sanctioned by human authority. They will crowd to a pantomime of a Spurgeon, the impudence of a Brownson, the gunpowder declamation of a Beecher, in short, they will glorify the rhapsody of any wind-bag that will prophesy deceit; but for the Gospel of the kingdom they have no more sympathy or taste than their father the Devil, whose original falsehood they believe with pious affection, and whose works they delight to do. Shall we be discouraged at this? Nay, verily. It is a great sign of our times indicating that the Lord is certainly at the door. . . ."

—J. Thomas



Difficult Days

Why is it that the proclamation of the Truth does not attract the attention the message deserves? Why is it that so few are prepared to embrace such a hope as is there set forth?

These are questions which every ardent Gospel extension worker asks himself. Is the failure due to the methods

of approach? Can we improve the means of proclaiming the Word? Should we try to modernise the Gospel?

In considering these questions, we will delude ourselves, and come to wrong conclusions, if we fail to consider modern conditions, and the state of mind of the general public. We have an infallible guide to that in the words of the Lord Jesus. He cited the experiences of Noah and Lot as typical of those that will be repeated in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. Those times were noted for violence, immorality, irreligiosity. The preaching of both Noah and Lot was received with scorn and derision by those to whom they spake. Yet both those men lived in times of impending crisis, when there was an urgent need for a place of shelter from the threatened destruction. Then, as now, people were unheeding of the signs; they decried the warning of dire judgment as mere sensationalism; they laughed at the appeal for repentance as being unrealistic; and those who had some understanding of the Truth were indifferent to its responsibilities.

Ultimately the flood in Noah's day, and the fire in Lot's day, swept their unheeding contemporaries into the abyss of destruction.

Noah's Days Mirror Ours

Noah lived in days of widespread apostasy. This was found both within the company of believers (Gen. 6: 2), as well as in the world without (v. 12), so that "all flesh" had corrupted the Divine ways upon the earth.

The "sons of God" had lost the power of effectively witnessing to the Truth. Caught up with the material things, the opportunities for personal advancement which were then manifested, blinded their eyes to the requirements of God. Life had much to offer, and with greedy hands they grasped at it. What "they chose" to do took precedence over what God required (v. 2). Home, business, pleasure became the trinity that they worshipped. And they did not like their worship disturbed. They found a sense of well-being and personal accomplishment in the way of life about them, and in the enjoyment these things provided. They doubtless felt uncomfortable in the presence of Noah, with his disquietening talk of impending crisis and judgment. If they spake to their friends at all concerning "the way," it was possibly done in a manner that would not unduly disturb the equanimity of anybody. Such gentle preaching, they possibly explained, was designed to "draw" and "attract" to the Truth, by showing how it could be conveniently mixed with the philosophy and culture of the day!

Noah's preaching perhaps was crude and uncompromising in comparison — and perhaps was decried because he failed to attract a large following.

They were evil, difficult days. To preach the Truth was like trying to plant seed in hard, uncultivated, drought-ridden land. Faith of the highest degree was required to maintain a testimony in the face of widespread apathy. Noah possessed that necessary qualification, and because of it received an honourable mention in the gallery of heroes listed in Hebrews 11.

His times mirrored ours. It was an age of giants, of tycoons; men lifted up in conceit, men great in stature in their own estimation, and mighty in fleshly prowess. The word which describes them ("giants") is from the Hebrew, "nephilim," signifying "fallen ones." They were thus men who had fallen from the principles of righteousness, who gloried in the deeds of fallen human nature. They were also styled "mighty men," or heroes (Heb. "gibbor"), "men of renown," or of "the name." They had a name throughout the earth, but it was a name renowned for wickedness.

As a result, wickedness flourished. "The imagination of the thoughts of men was evil," and was revealed in widespread violence, corruption and wickedness.

That was how God saw it, and how it is reported in the 6th Genesis. But on the surface it did not appear that way. It was an age noted for culture and advancement. Archaeologists are amazed at the high state of civilisation to which it had attained. Scripture confirms this by reporting the building of cities, and the invention of instruments of music and of war. This high state of culture and civilisation was attained at the expense of spiritual values. Professor Woolley, describing the antediluvian graves which he excavated at Ur of the Chaldees, makes the following observation: "In no single grave has there been any figure of a god, any

Study Notes Appreciated

Dear Brother Mansfield,

I have been asked to write you on behalf of the brethren at Pascoe Vale (Vic.), to thank you for the great assistance received in the study of Malachi from the notes obtained from the "Elpis Israel" Classes. Many of us received much help in our contemplation of this book from the notes received. The matter which they uncover has exhibited to us something of what lies behind the writings of those holy men of old.

We have obtained through Brother Hollamby, copies of the notes on Paul's letter to the Galatians. We look forward to many pleasant evenings together in the study of this epistle with the assistance of the notes.

Yours sincerely, L.P.S.

symbol or ornament that strikes one as being of a religious nature."

Religion, therefore, was not popular in those days. This indifference challenged Noah, but he had the faith to effectively meet it. The record declares that his action and preaching "condemned the world" whilst it "saved his own house" (Heb. 11: 7).

It is noteworthy that Noah is commended, not because he gained many converts, or had large assemblies, or attracted a big following, but because he patiently, and in faith, did what Yahweh required of him, without being deterred or deflected by "lack of results."

He saved himself and his house—and that is a task that can well occupy all individual resources in any age.

Noah did not attempt to weaken the point of doctrine, or to make the hard, cold, logic of truth palatable to men of flesh in order to gain converts, he was not discouraged because flesh did not flock to hear him. Yet the fact that he was moved by faith implies that the message he set before his contemporaries was one governed by a warm understanding of the Divine revelation. He was not ignorant of the truth, but rather filled with knowledge and enthusiasm for its message, and bluntly set before men the urgent facts of the case. If a person is not prepared to come to God because God has spoken, and because God's word is true, then God has no future for such a person (Heb. 11: 6).

That is why so few accept the Truth. It demands a standard of knowledge and conduct that few are prepared to accept. It challenges the way of life that so many find so attractive. It requires the discipline of self, and in a selfish age which offers so much in material prosperity the flesh hates discipline.

Because we live in days similar to those of Noah's, his methods of preaching the Gospel should set the standard for today's.

Sodom's Greatest Sin

If our days are likened unto those of Sodom, it becomes profitable to search the record of Scripture to see what was the cause of their gross wickedness. We learn that "the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before Yahweh exceedingly" (Gen. 13: 13). Two words are thus used to describe their state. "Wicked" is translated from the Hebrew "raim," from a root word signifying "to break in pieces, destroy, afflict." It has relation to people who break in pieces the established order of things, who destroy and confound

that which is right, and afflict themselves by so doing. In those directions the men of Sodom were "wicked exceedingly."

The word "sinners" is translated from "chattaim," the plural of a root word signifying "to miss the mark." The men of Sodom did this both in regard to righteousness and their own happiness.

This description fits the state of the world today as it hastens on to a crisis similar to the destruction of Sodom.

When the angels visited Sodom, they found the worst forms of immorality and wickedness rife. But that wasn't the greatest sin. The greatest wickedness was found in the mental attitude of people towards this state. The immorality of Sodom was committed openly, without shame or attempt to hide it. The people gloried in being "broad-minded" in such matters. Isaiah declared that they "declared their sin, they hid it not" (Isa. 3: 9). Jeremiah taught that they "walked in lies; they strengthened the hands of evildoers" (Jer. 23: 14). Peter wrote that "Lot was vexed with the filthy living of the wicked" (2 Pet. 2: 7), and that "his soul was vexed from day to day with their unlawful deeds." The word "vexed" in its Greek original signifies "to torment." Lot was in a constant torment of mind because of the ungodly environment in which he had chosen to live. He was in a state of mental turmoil and frustration, because all his efforts and exhortations to draw his contemporaries to a "more excellent way," fell on deaf ears. Foolishly he had left the isolation and refuge of Abram's camp for the tormenting vexations and frustrations of the city life of Sodom.

No gentle, cultured presentation of principles of morality could make much impact against such bold and flagrant wickedness as Lot witnessed. And we can imagine, that when Lot heard that the Divine wrath was about to blaze forth against the evil city, he would not have wasted much time philosophising with his relatives. The record of Genesis 19 implies that he rushed through the city on that last night of its existence, intent upon an urgent mission; peremptorily trying to awake in his relatives a realisation of the extreme danger they were in. Who listened to his urgent pleading? "He seemed as one that mocked. . . ." (Gen. 19: 14). They doubtless looked upon his words as the hysterical outburst of a fanatic. Only his wife and his two daughters heeded his warning message, and left with him. What must have been the state of Lot's mind during the past few hours? He knew that destruction could not long be delayed. As time

inexorably marked off its minutes and its hours, it brought closer the divine judgment on the city, and his acquaintances. Yet he had a message that could have saved them if they would but listen—but they would not heed. Sick with anxiety and frustration, he was at last compelled by the angel to leave the city. Shortly afterwards, the tremendous outburst from heaven brought to an end that godless civilisation.

Modern Sodom

What was the root cause of Sodom's wickedness? Ezekiel 16: 49 declares that it stemmed from the cumulative effect of "pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness." The sum result was complete indifference to ways of righteousness, and a hardness of heart against which the Truth could not penetrate.

The same trinity of evils exists today, and will no doubt increase in extent as the end draws ever nearer. This is a proud, materialistic age. It is an age in which man has learned to use the forces of nature more, and this knowledge leads him to imagine that he is wiser than his predecessors. Proud in his accomplishments in the scientific field, man lacks the humility to bow before Yahweh and seek His help in the solving of problems that face this godless age. In fact, with the modern "increase of knowledge" (Dan. 12: 3), man almost imagines himself the equal of God, or else repudiates that God exists. Listen to this piece of calculated wickedness and gross ignorance, based upon pride in human knowledge, and mouthed by a man (Julian Huxley) who is recognised as a leader of modern wisdom. At a special convocation at the University of Chicago, recently held to commemorate Darwin's "Origin of the Species," Huxley declared:

"There is no longer either need or room for supernatural beings capable of affecting the course of events . . . modern knowledge is able to define our sense of right and wrong more clearly so as to provide a better moral support and focus the feeling of sacredness on fitter objects."

Here is an example of fleshly pride, of human wisdom arrogating itself against the Most High.

We live also in an age of luxury, of "fullness of bread." Want is not known today as it has been in previous ages—particularly in the Western Democracies. Wages are high, and the demand for more and more comfort is insistent. Things like motor-cars, washing-machines, refrigerators, once considered luxuries and now regarded as necessities, and with minds grovelling in materialistic thought, people think they are cheated if they do not have them. Men work

to satisfy the demand for those things, but there is no true comfort or happiness in the mere possession of them. True comfort and happiness stems from a different source, a Source which men ignore.

Side by side with pride and fullness of bread, there is also found "abundance of idleness." The working week has been lowered, and the constant demand is for greater leisure. But how is the time used? Is it recognised that that time really belongs to God, and should be used in His service? Or is it considered that we are lords of our own destiny, and have the right to do as we like? Undoubtedly that is the attitude usually adopted.

There should not be idleness. Time is too valuable to fritter away. It should be expended objectively and profitably, and in a direction honouring to Yahweh. Idle minds and idle hands find evil work to do. That was the case in Sodom, and it is the case today. Thus the combined effect of "pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness" is found in modern conditions: "Men are lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (2 Tim. 3: 1-7).

Hard Ground to Sow

Thus the conditions in which we find ourselves are not conducive to proclaiming the Gospel-message with any hope of converting large numbers, as was the case in previous ages. The ground is not prepared for the reception of the Gospel-seed. Men do not want to listen to a message that challenges the very conditions in which they naturally find delight. A teaching that would deprive them of their pride, demand that they devote some of their money to its extension, and take from them their leisure time, has little appeal to the flesh which finds its pleasure in these directions.

And as the times of Noah and Lot are said to be typical of our times, we can but expect the conditions to worsen, and the truth to have less and less appeal.

That does not mean, however, that we should stand aside from our plain duty. We have the example of Noah who maintained a faithful testimony in spite of the conditions. They challenged him, and he met the challenge in faith. We need to do the same.

The Gospel is not popular today, but that does not mean that we should modify it to appeal to flesh, in order that we might bring greater numbers to our meetings. It is necessary to ever bear in mind that it is "God Who is taking out of the Gentiles a people for His name" (Acts 15: 14), and that He has said: "No man can come unto me, except the Father draw him." Now, as ever before, the only really effectual way of doing this is by drawing men to the Word of Truth. In that last solemn prayer, prior to his offering on Calvary, the Lord declared: "Sanctify them through Thy Truth, Thy word is Truth" (Jhn 17: 17). Only where the sanctifying influence of the Word is found will true conversion be apparent. That is a challenge to us, because when the stern, demanding, uncompromising truths of God's Word are set before men, there are commensurately fewer prepared to hear or accept what we attempt to set before them. The temptation is to make the truth attractive to the flesh, but it is obvious that where the Truth is set forth as Christ would have us set it forth, there is little in it that will appeal to flesh. We must get beyond flesh in our approach to men.

That is where the Apostles showed a wiser course than that which we are often prepared to follow. They received a commission to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel" such as we have never received. But though that specific commission was given them, they did not trim their preaching to meet the demands of flesh. They did not count the success or failure of an effort by the extent of an audience, or the numbers who were baptised. In fact, Paul is careful to tell the Corinthians: "Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the Gospel, not with the wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect" (1 Cor. 1: 17). The commission delivered into the hands of the Apostles was to preach the Gospel. Once that was done, their duty was completed, and whether any accepted the message was beyond their control. One may plant, another water, but God alone can give the increase. "My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom," said Paul, "but in demonstration of the spirit and power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (1 Cor. 2: 4).

Strangely enough, as it may appear to some of our contemporaries, the hard, uncompromising, direct teaching of the Apostles did bring results. They were men skilled in the Word, and thus competent to speak with power and conviction. That is what needs to be cultivated today. The signs of the times show the sterile nature of the soil in which we

must plant the seed. A heavy crop is not possible under the circumstances, because these are times "like unto the days of Noah and of Lot." But we are convinced that much can still be done if brethren give themselves thoroughly to the Word, and, in turn, give the Word to the public. Because brethren fail to understand the "signs of the times," and therefore fail to recognise that fewer will be prepared to hearken to the message as the time draws even nearer, there is sometimes a hankering after something novel in the way of proclaiming the Truth. Without condemning any specific mode of presenting the Truth, there is a danger in this — a danger that we might be drawn to present the "enticing words of man's wisdom" as a substitute for the demonstration of the Truth with power. We believe there is a place for the old Christadelphian style of preaching in which the speaker presents the Bible to his audience, and seeks to educate them therein. There is a power in the Scriptures that no words of human reasoning or wisdom can equal. And if we fully appreciate the urgency of the matter, as Lot did in Sodom, we will find eloquent words in which to express the Divine invitation to "Come out, and be separate."

—E.P.

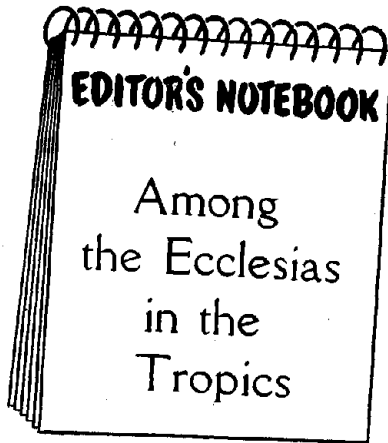
Brother Thomas's Home

We have received from America a photo of the home of Brother Thomas in "N" St., between 33rd and 34th Sts., Richmond, Va., U.S.A., where he lived from 1844 to 1851. The photo is that of a two-storeyed building, and with it comes the following letter from Sister S. V. Malone, of Richmond, Vir., U.S.A.:

"I thought you and others in Australia may be interested in the attached snap. This house was built in 1840, at which time Dr. Thomas and his family were invited to live in it. It was built by the late Brother Richard Malone (no direct relation of mine) some of whose descendants are in the Truth today. I knew one of his daughters personally—Sister Virginia Malone Chiles, who lived to be quite old in the Truth. It was in 1840 that Brother Thomas went to Illinois, which proved to be a bad move, and upon his return to Virginia, he went to live with the Malones. He spent much midnight oil in the upper right-hand room working on material which later was used in 'Eureka.' Sister Chiles told me much that happened at that time. Brother Malone, together with others, took care of the publication of 'The Herald of the Future Age' when Brother Thomas and his daughter (later Sister Lasius) went to England in 1849, the result of this visit being the publication of 'Elpis Israel.'"

Not a Christadelphian

We have appreciated the warning message that has emanated from the pages of "Logos"—particularly in regard to the rejection of plain truth relating to the birth of the Lord. The Phil Wilson whom some in Australia address as a brother is neither a Christadelphian, nor has he ever been associated with us at any time.—D.G. (Scotland).



The imaginary line, marking the Tropic of Capricorn, which is shown on the atlases of the world, passes through Queensland, about five miles south of Rockhampton. North of that line is the Torrid Zone; south of it is the Temperate Zone. Rockhampton marks the beginning of the Tropics, as far as the coastal districts of Queensland are concerned. It was in the tropical region, therefore, that we spent nearly a month among the various ecclesias.

The campaign commenced in the rapidly growing city of Townsville. As I remarked in my notes last month, a virile ecclesia of some 30 members has developed over the past two or three years in this city; and if the experience of past months is to continue, Towns-

ville could become another Macedonia, producing "much fruit" to the glory of Yahweh.

There is keen enthusiasm among the members of the little ecclesia, but the enthusiasm is somewhat tempered by the sense of isolation (Townsville is 1,000 miles north of Brisbane), together with the very natural desire of some to enjoy the fellowship and attractions of a large ecclesia in one of the capital cities.

Isolation has its difficulties, and the tendency of young people today is to gravitate towards the large centres where communal fellowship, and constant excitement of ecclesial activity appears so attractive.

But a far greater service, in every sense of the word, offers in these isolated centres.

It does not seem right that other communities like the Seventh Day Adventists, or the Jehovah's Witnesses, should push out into these country areas, whereas Christadelphians, possessing the Truth, congregate in growing numbers in the popular centres.

In Apostolic times, persecution drove the ecclesia into all parts of the world, there to carry the seeds of Truth with them—seeds that grew and blossomed into virile centres of Truth. Today the ecclesias are not fostering that spirit; the pioneering spirit of serving the Truth, for the cause of Truth alone, is being lost. The drift to the large ecclesias is not a good omen for the future of the Movement in Australia, if Christ's coming is not soon.

The needs of these isolated communities throughout the continent should be considered in the planning of Fraternal Gatherings, Youth Camps, and so forth, and not merely the wants of a particular centre. Whilst such conventions perform a service, they can also result in a sense of dissatisfaction, if they are glamorised too much. It is rather difficult for a young brother or sister to adjust themselves to the isolation and lack of ecclesial amenities in a country district, after enjoying the excitement and pleasure (and often the deluding, false atmosphere)

of a large Fraternal Gathering. Let those who organise such efforts remember the needs of those who labour in difficulty and obscurity, and make provision for some encouragement, some strengthening of their hands in the work they are doing. And this should not be merely by word of mouth, by the uttering of a few platitudes, but by practical interest and assistance in what is being attempted in various centres.

I have found in many places where I have travelled a dissatisfaction with the poverty of ecclesial efforts, or activities, expressed by some, in relation to the small centres in which they labour. They feel a sense of loss, a difficulty in settling down, after having made contact with larger meetings and vast gatherings. Let any who feel that way remember that the greatest work of the Truth over the centuries has been done by individuals very often in isolation, working in the face of discouragement and frustration, but dominated by a will to serve and the faith to see it through. Isolation is a challenge which can be only effectively met in faith. Two things are needful to successfully meet and defeat it: 1: Effective study of the Word; 2: The proclamation of the Truth. This two-fold service can occupy time profitably, and provide the incentive to work effectively for the King in the circumstances in which the Truth called us.

IN TOWNSVILLE: When we had received the invitation to visit Townsville, it had been suggested that the largest hall in the city (the Theatre Royal) be hired for the purpose of the public lectures. We demurred at this because the use of huge halls can destroy the effectiveness of an effort unless sufficient support is found to fill them. In the absence of an international crisis of sufficient dimensions to arouse the public's interest and to capture its imagination, we felt a more modest effort should be undertaken. This was done on this occasion, though I am convinced that Townsville would be an excellent centre for an all-out effort on some future occasion.

The brethren worked well for the effort, and were rewarded by a nice gathering with a plentiful sprinkling of strangers, some of whom evinced keen interest in the message delivered. Brother H. Twine, who was then visiting Townsville, acted as chairman and conducted the meeting very well. As the brethren had assured me that the weather (which I found rather humid) was really very mild and pleasant for the north, I arranged for all electric fans to be turned off, so that there should be no distraction from the noise they made. I felt that those used to the climate should be able to bear the heat if we soft folk from the far frozen (!) south could do so. A question session was provided at the conclusion of the address, and the audience readily availed itself of the opportunity of using the time. At the conclusion many asked for literature to be sent to them, which I arranged to be done through the Gospel Proclamation Association.

On the following week (after a visit to Atherton) the second special lecture was delivered. Again the response of friends was quite pleasing, and the interest shown was keen. Although some questions were asked during the Question Session, the audience was not as ready in coming forward as the previous week, despite the very earnest plea of the chairman on this occasion (Brother Whitehouse), who challenged his audience with almost every known doctrine, asking them did they not have any queries regarding the theory of the immortality of the soul? Is hell the destiny of the wicked? Is the devil an immortal angel? When these appeals did not have the desired result, the audience was directed to the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. "Surely you have some questions to ask regarding the Book of Revelation?" "If you would

like any part of the Bible explained, the speaker will do it for you!" But (to the secret relief of the speaker!) no one took up the challenge.

The extent of the audience, the interest shown by many members of it, showed that good work can be done at Townsville. I made the suggestion that a regular public lecture be delivered every Sunday evening in the city. In the past this has been done only occasionally. I made the suggestion that such an effort would be beneficial for the brethren as well as any visitors who might attend. Even if they did not get an audience of strangers, the work "done unto the Lord" could not fail to reap an ultimate result: the approbation of Christ at his coming. The brethren willingly entered into the arrangements, and I promised that readers of "Logos" would co-operate with the local brethren in the effort, by mailing bi-monthly some 500 copies of "Herald of the Coming Age" to Townsville, in a manner similar to that being done in Tasmania. The first 500 copies have been since sent to addresses supplied by the brethren of Townsville. They bear the advertisement reproduced this month on the back of "Logos." By the time this issue of "Logos" is in the hands of the reader, the second consignment will have been mailed (God willing), and arrangements have been made for a local brother (Brother A. Cheek) to advise the Townsville brethren of any applications for literature that may be received.

The Townsville Daily Bulletin featured the special effort in the city by providing space for a report upon the subject matter of the address.

Nine days were spent in Townsville. Each evening was devoted to an ecclesial meeting of either an exhortatory or expository nature. But the nine days were divided by a visit to Atherton, some 300 miles further north.

IN THE TABLELANDS: We were scheduled to speak at Atherton on Thursday evening, the day following the special lecture in Townsville. But the difficulty was how to get there in sufficient time for that purpose. The main road was closed, and even though we might fly by plane to Cairns, difficulties of transport required two days to get us to our destination. Brother Steele very kindly met the problem, however, by providing us with a car, which would enable us, by a different route, to make the journey in one day. In addition to the car, we also had a guide, for Brother H. Twine offered his services in that capacity. We were very pleased to have Brother Twine with us, because over 12 months ago he had written us inviting us to visit Queensland, promising that in addition to introducing us to ecclesial life, he would undertake to show us one of the wonders of the modern world—the glorious, colourful formation of the Great Barrier Reef, which lies about 40 miles off the coast of northern Queensland. I quite agree that this is a sight that should never be missed by any visitor to those parts, and I am hopeful that on my next visit north (God willing), I may see the Reef in company with Brother Twine!

The journey from Townsville to Atherton is a most attractive one. The scenery through undulating country, broken up by large rivers

Attention Young People!

We have been asked to publish the following notice: "Country or Interstate young people wishing to visit Sydney for holidays or longer periods, and desiring accommodation with Brethren and Sisters should contact the Secretary of the C.Y.C. Advisory Committee, Sis. S. Angel, 285 Willoughby Road, Crows Nest (JF 1555), who will arrange for this."

flowing down to the ocean, is most delightful. This beautiful countryside, with its wooded mountains, its gentle sloping and rich valleys, everywhere exhibits the beauty of the Creator's handiwork. The slopes of the hills were clothed in different colours of green, indicating crops of sugarcane at a different stage of development. Here and there, we passed the narrow tracks of the miniature trains that collect the ripened cane, after it has been burnt and cut, and convey it to the mills.

At Yungaburra, close to Atherton, we were guests of Brother and Sister John Wooldridge. Here, as in Townsville, the local brethren had been very active in advertising the address. These are small country towns, not to be compared in size to places like Townsville or Rockhampton. But the brethren are ambitious in those parts, and not being easily deterred by opposition, had engaged a hall capable of holding some 3,000 people. Fortunately, this hall was capable of being sectionised and closed off, and, in addition, was an extremely fine hall acoustically. We visited the hall in the afternoon, to have everything ready for the evening, and spent some of the time distributing handbills in the main street of Atherton. In the evening, Brother Twine again acted as Chairman, and though (like most country towns in Australia) the audience was slow in coming, we had ultimately about 50 brethren, strangers, and Sunday-school scholars gathered together. As the ecclesia in Atherton only number about 12 strong, I was delighted with this response. At the conclusion of the address, the entire audience was offered light refreshments—tea and biscuits—and most stayed to discuss, until almost midnight, features of the Gospel message. As I write these words, I recall again the scene at Atherton, some 2,800 miles distant from Adelaide—the huge hall, the hard trestle tables, the little company gathered around them in earnest conversation, the sisters ministering to the wants of those assembled with tea and biscuits. There is a drama in the work of the Truth under such circumstances. The voice of Truth is thin and weak today, but it is destined one day to reverberate around the world with compelling force, so that men will have to listen. Meanwhile, "we see our calling, that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty . . . that no flesh should glory in His presence" (1 Cor. 1: 27). In a large ecclesia, in a big effort where the audience is measured in its hundreds, the power and drama of Truth versus Flesh is not appreciated as it is in some small country town, where the Truth struggles for expression. Large communities tend to draw strength from mere numbers, but in small groups each individual is dependent upon himself. The strength is there—in the Word—if he will seek it; but if not, the challenge of isolation with all the temptation it can bring, will weaken the hold on the Truth as Christ warned in his parable of the sower. By that, I do not mean that those in large ecclesias can do without the Word—they need it as much as anybody—but usually there is the opportunity provided for this, which, in isolation, brethren must seek for themselves.

Saturday afternoon and evening was devoted to a Sunday School outing and Fraternal meeting. A nice little Sunday School of some dozen members meets every Sunday morning under the control of Brother Boon. They were gathered together on this Saturday afternoon as a sort of gala day. All were to receive presents after having endured a talk which I was scheduled to give. Whether the presents were a sort of bribe to listen to the talk I gave, I never found out, but the children gathered together were attentive and bright, and answered the questions I put to them freely and without reserve. I promised that I would

arrange with Sister Gore, of the "Story of the Bible," for pen-friends for some of them. In the evening, I delivered an illustrated talk on the subject of the Tabernacle, and, as a souvenir of the occasion, I handed out to all present a printed brochure illustrating the subject.

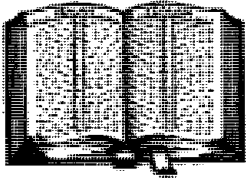
The usual services followed on Sunday. The brethren met in a nice little hired hall, which very comfortably holds the number who gather together. Though small in number, in this very isolated spot, there is a grand opportunity for each member to labour together for his own good, the good of others, and the extension of the Truth. The need here is the same as elsewhere—the Word of Truth in the heart and mind of the believer. Where that exists there is power and virility; where it is lacking there is apathy. The Truth is a very precious thing that must not be held lightly. It is really more vital than life itself, and when we undertake any service of the Truth, only the very best work is good enough. I tried to press this home in the Word of Exhortation, stressing the need of the Word in our lives, pointing out how that Christ was able to help others by this same power. There is a tendency (not necessarily in Atherton—but in all parts) of treating the Truth lightly, of giving it the second-best in our affections—of serving it only when we have time to do so, of refusing to acknowledge any need of self-improvement. Constant self-examination, a ruthless searching of our hearts and motives, is necessary on the part of us all, plus the need to subordinate all other things to that which should take first place in our lives—THE TRUTH.

May Yahweh's blessing rest upon those small communities, may He direct and guide them in strength unto the coming of His son, and may they, in turn, seek that Strength which alone is able to make us wise unto salvation, and fit for His service.

On Monday morning, we left Atherton for Townsville once more, bidding farewell to the little company of brethren and sisters whom I had come to know so well in such a short time. It was with sadness that we left our hospitable host and hostess, and regret that the visit was so short, for I felt there was still much that could have been done. But appointments awaited us that evening in Townsville, and as we proposed to return via Cairns and the coastal road, we had little time to spare. The journey back was a beautiful one. The tropical scenery around these parts is magnificent. Tall palms, elegant mango trees, vast areas of waving sugarcane, steep, wooded mountains, and the sun, of course, streaming down to give exotic colour to the work of creation.

In Townsville, further appointments awaited us, reference to which has been made above, and once more we were bidding goodbye to newly-made friends. We were conveyed to the aerodrome by Brother and Sister Steele, who had wonderfully looked after our needs as far as transport is concerned during our stay in Townsville, and soon were waving to them through the windows of the plane which was to convey us some 250 miles south to the township of Mackay.

—The Editor



Things New and Old .

No. 7—

TRANSFORMING POWER

Breathing God's Moral Atmosphere

I have been stressing the reality of the establishment of the Kingdom, and our hoped-for change to immortality. Last time, we saw how God plans to restamp upon the resurrected bodies of saints, the minds developed by His word, and their God-guided experiences, in the days of probation.

The word makes men clean (Jhn 15: 3). In "Elpis Israel" (section — "A great mystery"), Brother Thomas writes:

"This word is the great instrument of holiness and purification. It changes men's minds; loosens their attachment to earthly things; causes them to place their affection on things above; creates a new and right spirit within them; diffuses the love of God abroad in their hearts; separates them from sinners; leads them into Christ, and develops in their lives, fruit characteristic of that repentance which needs not to be repented of. It is by this word that an individual is renewed or renovated; so as, in an intellectual and moral sense to become 'a new man' . . . Now the 'testimony of God' came by the Holy Spirit, by which God testified in His prophets; and in the last days spoke through His Son and the apostles. Hence the effects of the word believed are attributed to the spirit; and because **THE WORD SETS MEN BREATHING IN GOD'S MORAL ATMOSPHERE**, it is termed 'spirit and life.' These remarks will explain the saying of the apostle to Titus: 'According to His mercy God saved us through the laver of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.'"

I love that phrase "breathing in God's moral atmosphere." It echoes the word "spirit," which in English, Greek or Hebrew conveys the idea of wind, breath, air etc. We breathe God's air and become filled with a new life or spirit in proportion as we sit at Wisdom's feet. Thus while rejecting ideas of orthodoxy that God speaks to men direct in these days by sending His spirit independent of the Word into their hearts, yet in the way explained in our last article, we are called to become temples of the holy spirit. And the more I read the words of the Apostles, the more I see that this is not merely a matter of carrying an impersonal knowledge

in our minds, but is a matter of living personal relationship with God, expressed as "God dwelling in us;" "Christ in us," etc. I have gathered together some of the phrases that emphasise this:

"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Phil. 1: 11).

"For to me to live is Christ" (v. 21).

"For it is God which worketh in you giving you the will and power to achieve His purpose" (Phil. 2: 13).

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4: 13).

"My God will fully supply all your need, from His glorious resources in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4: 19).

"We pray that you will be strengthened with all strength according to His glorious power" (Col. 1: 11).

"Now to Him who by His power within us is able to do far more than we ever dare to ask or imagine—to Him be glory" (Eph. 3: 20).

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, abounding therein with thanksgiving" (Col. 2: 6-7).

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom" (Col. 3: 16).

"It is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Thess. 2: 13).

"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth" (2 Thess. 2: 13).

"Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" (1 Pet. 1: 5).

"Having been regenerated, not from corruptible, but from incorruptible seed, through the living and enduring Word of God." (1 Pet. 1: 23).

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit (i.e., practise habitually) sin; for His seed remaineth in him: and such is incapable of sin" (1 John 3: 9).

"The man who obeys God's commands lives in God and God lives in him" (1 John 3: 9).

"Walk in the spirit, and you will not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5: 16).

"If our lives are centred in the spirit, let us be guided by the spirit" (Gal. 5: 25).

"How tremendous is the power available to us who believe in God" (Eph. 1: 19).

"You are builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit" (Eph. 2: 22).

"Be strengthened with might by His spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith" (Eph. 3: 16-17).

"That ye might be filled with all the fullness of God" (Eph. 3: 19).

"Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1: 27).

"God that worketh in you"

Read and re-read these passages. They demonstrate that God-manifestation is a present fact as well as a future hope for saints who walk in love. The Word is the basis. Without it we should yet be in our sins and die in the ignorance which alienates from the life of God. But the Word does not stand alone; God ensures that it does not return to Him void, but that it accomplishes the purpose whereto He sends it (Isa. 55: 11). It is a **living Word**, not just so much print giving factual information. It projects God's thoughts and ways into us, and it does so because the God whose mind it expresses, presides over its ministration. The host of heaven — God Himself, the Son at His right hand to whom He has given all power in heaven and earth; the angels, those ministering spirits who encamp around those who fear Yahweh — all these work to make His word effective in you and me. Our experiences are guided so that, blended with the Word, we may learn to walk in the paths of righteousness. Our Father pities us; our elder brother is touched with the feeling of our infirmities; the ministering spirits rejoice in our triumphs through the strength we derive in Christ.

And all these are real things — and the daily reading of the Word will make us feel this. But just as God acts towards us each personally, in His good "providence," in addition to the Word He has given all of us, so each of us has the great privilege of speaking to Him about our walk to the Kingdom, as well as reading His word.

The Two Means of Grace

What a mighty power this blessing of prayer can prove. By it we get the feeling of keeping in direct touch with the Father in heaven, and the Son at His right hand. By it we gain power to resist the devil, for we can't go straight from prayer to sin. By it we cast our burdens on the Lord, and find "the peace of God which passes understanding," and "keeps constant guard over our hearts and minds as they rest in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4: 7).

These two: (a) the reading of the Word and meditating on it, and (b) praying to the Father on the basis of this meditation — are the only things that we can do in order that the living spirit of Yahweh may enter our hearts and minds, and remain with us. They are our part in the work of being sealed in the forehead, and written in the book of life. They require perseverance and discipline, but how rich the blessing that flows from them.

The reading — nay study — of the Word is the constant

theme of "Logos" and its sister publication "The Story of the Bible" (It is for children — I am just reading through all the back numbers with great delight!). I want to say a little on the other work we have to do — prayer, because it is even harder to pray effectually than to read with understanding. This subject fits in to my general theme in that I am seeking to show in a discursive manner what we hope to be and do in the day soon to dawn, and how it links quite clearly with what we are called to be and do in this the day of opportunity.

Pray Without Ceasing

Here are a few thoughts from the Epistles on prayer:

"Be not overanxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" (Phil. 4: 6).

"Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of His son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4: 6).

"Thank God at all times for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 5: 20).

"Pray at all times in the spirit, with all prayer and supplication to that end, keeping alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints" (Eph. 6: 18).

"We do not cease to pray for you" (Col. 1: 9).

"Always maintain the habit of prayer; be both alert and thankful as you pray" (Col. 4: 2).

"Pray always; be thankful for all things" (1 Thess. 5: 17-18).

"Be sober-minded, disciplined, giving yourself to prayer" (1 Pet. 4: 7).

"If any of you is in trouble, let him pray" (James 5: 13).

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5: 16).

"And 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 petitions that we desired of Him" (1 John 5: 14-15).

"Men ought always to pray and never lose heart" (Luke 18: 1).

Prayers of the Moment

There are several kinds of prayer. One of the easiest and most satisfying is the prayer of the moment, wrung from us by a difficult or joyous situation. We are in dire distress, and know that only God can undertake for us; or our heart is made glad because the Lord has done great things for us; and our prayer speeds its way heavenward like an arrow from a bow. Such a prayer finds few words yet is full of expression. Of this kind was the prayer of Nehemiah when the King said: "For what dost thou make request?" "So I prayed to the God

of heaven and I said . . . " (Neh. 2: 4). No time there to get on his knees before God and beseech His guidance. His thoughts flashed toward the throne of Grace, and he was strengthened.

We ought frequently, in the course of every day, talk to God like this. It is the way in which we put our hand in His. We are faced with a problem, and we say like Jehoshaphat: "Lord we know not what to do, but our eyes are upon Thee" (2 Chron. 20: 12 — but always meditating to make sure that we are not neglecting what we could do, lest God answers us as He answered Joshua: "Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon they face" — Josh. 7: 10). If we keep in touch with God like this, our very lives will become prayers. "They are my adversaries: but I — prayer!" (Ps. 109: 4 omitting italics). Adopt this attitude of mind and we shall know a little of the fellowship of the spirit.

Set Prayers

Yet there is a place for set prayers when we definitely go into the fields apart, or enter into our closet and shut the door. Formal, regular, private prayer is indispensable. Daniel illustrated it when "his window being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks before God, as he did aforetime" (Dan. 6: 10). A reverent posture (not lying in bed), and a careful concentration of the mind. David speaks of "evening and morning and at noon will I pray and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice" (Ps. 55: 1), and of seven times a day praising God (Ps. 119: 164). The "crying aloud" suggests the actual saying aloud of the words as an aid to well ordered thought, and as a preventative of the mind wandering.

Nevertheless, it is this regular daily prayer that we find so difficult. Paul acknowledged this in Romans 8: 26-27 where he declares that God recognises the inward spirit of the saints' inarticulate groanings. I know that for years I was very conscious of mind wandering in prayer. I was very much like the little boy in the nursery rhyme who thought of a hundred other things in between each phrase of his prayer. I felt that prayer hadn't got the vital place in my life that it ought to have. How could I find the secret of that orderly, well-disciplined communion with the Father which can alone give true satisfaction. I found myself saying: "Lord, teach me to pray" — and then I saw the answer and wondered why I had missed it for so long.

The disciples asked my question in Luke 11:1, and the answer was what has been known down the centuries as the Lord's prayer:

"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen" (Mat. 6: 9-13).

—E. Wille (Eng.).

CORRESPONDENCE

Thoughts on Ruth

Dear Brother Mansfield,

Greetings in the Hope of Israel. I wish to thank you for the issue of "Logos" on "Ruth"—both for the pleasure I have so far had in reading it, and for your service in sending it to those members of the Woodville Young Folks' Class who applied for it. I cannot but feel that Yahweh has blessed the amount of toil that has gone into this issue and the "Logos" generally over the past years.

Many will now see the beautiful Ruth in a new and revealing light. She was not a colourless girl of little character, but a woman with a correct sense of values, and the courage to match it. She bore the heat of the day, with no other motive than love for the Protector of Israel, and manifested the true qualifications of a virtuous woman in distress. Love's resolve, response and request will yet return a far greater reward than she has so far received.

In the past 25 years, "Logos" workers have done well in emulating some of her characteristics. There has been little resting in the shade while corn waits to be gleaned! My only regret concerning "Logos" is that I only started to receive it in 1956, and did not, at first, realise its value! Do not, on my account, make the cover more attractive as you appear to be hinting at doing lately. Too much time spent on pictures of nature and such like will adversely affect the magazine.

Your argument concerning the law's relationship to Moabite women (pp. 17, 30) is a little weak, I feel. You state that Deut. 23: 3 is in the masculine gender, and indicates only men. What gender would you use if both men and women are referred to? I know of none! We commonly say "man" when we refer to the whole of mankind, and "brethren" when we include sisters. I explain the matter this way. Ruth had been a Moabitess, but became an "Israelite indeed." She would have been classed as a "sojourner" in the land, and thus controlled by the "one law" for the stranger and for Israel. If Yahweh was no respecter of persons in the days of Peter, when all those who sought Him sincerely were accepted, this would also have been the case in the days of Ruth. I sincerely believe that a Moabite male who renounced his former ideas and followed Ruth's pattern would have been accepted in the Ecclesia of God. I feel that the Jewish Targum is "straining at a gnat," in its comments here.

My prayer is that Yahweh may continue His blessing and guidance in your work until the Prince of Princes, the Strong One, returns, and

the Redeemer of Israel is manifest in our midst. Your brother in Christ—R.S. (S.A.).

(It will be noted that on p. 30 of "Logos" we stated that "Yahweh has the right to vary His laws if He sees the need." This was, in fact, done in the case of Rahab (as well as Ruth) whose faith in Yahweh (cp. Josh. 2: 9, Heb. 11: 31) saved both herself and her family (Josh. 2: 18) from the destruction decreed on all the inhabitants of Jericho. Here both males and females were saved, supporting the contention advanced above. At the same time, the Law not specifically repudiating Moabitess women from entrance into the congregation, did leave the way open to Ruth to be more easily accepted. It is true that the appellation "man," when used in a certain context includes both sexes, but it is also true that when the Law wished to specify both man and woman it did do so emphatically as "both male and female."—Editor).

Thoughts on Public Speaking (by R. Roberts)

"It is a trying ordeal to lecture to empty benches. However, this is the time for ordeal. When shall we be tried, if not now? The task before us was a difficult one—made so by the large, unsympathetic hall, and the extremely meagre audience. We persevered through it, however, in spite of the ringing echoes of an empty house, and the clamour of children outside, deafening at times. . . ."

Those who do not read cannot know the unsearchable riches of Christ. Those who read and do not reflect upon what they read are little better off. Under the Law, the clean animals were those which chewed the cud—those which in zoological language are called ruminant animals, which not only take food, but afterwards bring it up again for re-mastication, deriving additional pleasure and enjoyment and nutrition from the process.—R.R.

Proverbs 29: 16: "When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increaseth; but the righteous shall see their fall."

"Everybody does it." This is a common apology for doubtful ways. Sinners take courage from sinners, and when there are many of them, the bands of iniquity are strong. But numbers do not alter principles. "Though hand join with hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished." The transgressors were numerous at the Flood; and again in the wilderness under Moses; and again, in Jerusalem in the days of Christ. And they are in the overwhelming ascendant at this closing hour of Gentile times. Let us not be deceived by their numbers. It is their destiny to "fall," and the righteous shall "see it," as they have repeatedly done in the past.—R.R.

BORN OF THE SPIRIT

"It is sometimes claimed, even from the platform, that believers, after baptism, are now, in this life, subjected to the birth of the spirit in accordance with the statement of the Lord in John 3: 5. What is your opinion?" (A.R., Qld.).

Answer: We believe that brethren need to re-examine the very sound evidence of Scripture, advanced by Brother Thomas and others, to show that whilst we are now subjected to the birth of water, we await the birth of spirit, which will take place at the second advent of the Lord.

In his discourse to Nicodemus, the Lord stated that "Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (v.3 - margin), and again, and more specifically: "Except a man be born of water and of spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (v.5).

In explanation of his teaching, the natural illustrates the spiritual. Natural birth is preceded by conception, or begettal, which is followed by a quickening, without which birth cannot take place. This is true also of the spiritual. The conception, or begettal, takes place when a person's attention is drawn to the word of truth, and his interest is aroused; the quickening takes place as his knowledge grows, and he realises that he must do something about it; birth of water follows when his understanding demands: "What shall I do to be saved?" and he accepts the Apostolic answer: "Repent and be baptised for the remission of sins" (Acts 2: 37-38). As Paul shows in Romans 6: 1-3, the act of baptism symbolises death, burial and resurrection, or the manifestation of a new life in Christ Jesus.

But it is only the beginning of a process leading to complete regeneration. This birth has developed through lodgment of the incorruptible seed of Truth in the mind of the believer, and can lead to bodily incorruption at Christ's return. As this birth of water gradually came through the developing stages of conception and quickening, so also must the birth of spirit. In this case, baptism is but the beginning of a process. It can be likened to the conception, or begettal, of the spirit, which must develop to a quickening if the new life is to come to the birth. This quickening is the manifestation of the mind of Christ in the believer through the influence of the Word. It demonstrates that the begettal has not become abortive. As in the natural state of things,

there can be a miscarriage, so in the spiritual. Many who have been subjects of the birth of water, never reach the quickening stage of the spirit, never develop the mind of Christ. The promise of life dies, the seed though planted, never grows, and the candidate for life eternal, through neglect of the very means that Yahweh has put within his reach, drifts back into the beggarly elements of the world from whence he had been called.

On the other hand, those who having been baptised, respond to the influence of the Word, are subjected to a spiritual "quickening." The process commenced at baptism will be consummated at Christ's return when such will be "clothed upon" from above that "mortality may be swallowed up of life" (2 Cor. 5: 2-5). Mortality (flesh) is swallowed up of life (spirit). Accepted saints will be "changed," that their bodies of mortality might become bodies of spirit, or "spiritual bodies" (1 Cor. 15: 44). It will then be demonstrated beyond all doubt that they are sons of God in very fact. The birth of the spirit will be complete, and will reveal them as such.

The Lord himself was subjected to this process through three distinct births. By virtue of his divine paternal parentage he was proclaimed Son of God at birth, as was also Adam (Luke 3: 38). A similar proclamation was heard at his baptism, for the Voice from heaven declared: "Thou art My beloved son; in thee I am well pleased" (Luke 3: 22). He had been "born again," this time of water. But the process by which he was really to stand forth completely as Son of God was not then manifested. It was made so by his resurrection to life eternal. This testified to all the world the fact of His Divine sonship. Before this event many disputed his claim. Accepting the fact of his resurrection, they could no longer do so. And that is the great difference between birth of water and birth of spirit. After baptism it may be claimed that one is a true Son of God, but the validity of the claim will only be known when the birth of spirit takes place.

Thus Paul taught that Christ was "declared the Son of God with power . . . by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1: 4). At that stage he had been subjected to three births: he had been born of flesh, born of water, born of spirit. This is a process which all must follow if they would attain unto the Kingdom of God.

It is therefore incorrect to say that we are now born of the Spirit. If we were, there would be no doubt about our standing in the sight of God, it would be clearly obvious to all. But, in contradistinction to that, Paul warns: "Let him

that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10). Birth of spirit is the final process that will make certain for us the Kingdom of God.

Our attention might be drawn to such Scriptures as Gal. 5: 16-17: "Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other . . . but the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith . . ." It might be asked, Does not this Scripture apply today? The answer is an emphatic affirmative. It does apply today. We need be careful, however, to ascertain from Scripture, what is meant by "the spirit," in such places. We will then avoid the mistake of speaking of the present "birth of the spirit," of referring to the "possession of the spirit" as something independent of the Word.

In Galatians 5: 22 we learn that one of the fruits of the "spirit" is faith. Does faith come upon us independent of our own action, or has Yahweh put within our reach the means whereby we can help ourselves to that which will produce faith? Undoubtedly the latter is the case, for Paul in Romans 10: 17 says that "faith cometh by hearing the Word of God." One scripture-says that faith is a fruit of the spirit, the other says it comes by hearing the Word. Did Paul teach the Romans something different to what he taught the Galatians? By no means. As other Scriptures show, the Word constitutes the Spirit, and it is to the extent that we walk according to the Word that we are led by the spirit; by so doing we will subordinate the desires of the flesh. "Spirit" and "Word of God" are used almost synonymously in Scripture, because the latter came by the former (Heb. 1: 1). Christ taught: "The words I speak are spirit" (John 6: 63), which he explained in another place by teaching: "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me" (Jhn 7: 16). He showed the power and influence of that spirit-word in his wonderful prayer of John 17 in which he asked: "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth" (v. 17). Thus the Word is the sanctifying power or influence, designed of Deity to change a man's mind, heart and character. By its means, the spirit becomes a power within us, laying a foundation for the great change that will come when the birth of spirit takes place at Christ's return. The Apostles used "Word" and "spirit" almost interchangeably. Paul referred to "the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6: 17; John declared that "the spirit is the truth" (1 John 5: 6 - Diag.).

"Spirit" and "Word" are used in such a way in Scripture because the one came through the other. God spake "in" the prophets and "in" His son. He put His Holy Spirit in Moses (Isa. 63: 11), that He might "instruct the people" (Neh. 9: 20). When the people turned against Him, He "testified against them by His spirit in the prophets" (Neh. 9: 30). In like manner, the Holy Spirit was given to the Apostles to guide them into all truth, to "teach them all things, and to bring all things to their remembrance" (John 14: 16, 26). When we take the Bible in our hands, therefore, we have in our hands the Holy Spirit in a codified form; and when we allow its truth to mould our thoughts, we are being "led by the Spirit," and the result will be "love, joy, peace, goodness, FAITH . . ."

In other words, we can draw upon the Spirit whenever we desire to take that Word into our hearts, so that Paul exhorted: "Let Christ dwell in your hearts by faith . . ." The spirit is more than the word, of course; it is the word understood, accepted, acted upon. It is the mind generated by the word, which the Apostle describes as "the mind of Christ." In "Clerical Theology Unscriptural," Brother Thomas shows how that the truth concerning this matter was gradually perverted in the early ecclesias, and the clergy came to teach that "a physical spiritual agency" was the means whereby individuals were regenerated, instead of the "intellectual and moral" means that God has set forth in the Word. He wrote:

"The Holy Spirit renews or regenerates man intellectually and morally by the truth believed. 'Sanctify them by thy truth,' says Jesus; 'thy word, O Father, is truth' (Jhn. 17: 17). 'Ye are clean,' said he to his apostles, 'through the word which I have spoken to you' (Jhn. 15: 3). . . . This knowledge becomes power when received into 'good and honest hearts;' and because God is the author of it, it is styled 'the Knowledge of God' (2 Pet. 1: 2), or 'the word of truth' (James 1: 18), by which He begets sinners to Himself as His sons and daughters. . . .

"Regeneration is not an instantaneous mesmeric action, but a process beginning with the truth understood and believed, and ending with the resurrection of the believer from the dead. The order of the process is to HEAR the truth, UNDERSTAND the truth, BELIEVE the truth in baptism, WALK in the truth, and INHERIT the truth by obtaining possession of its promises at the resurrection. When the process is completed the believer will then have been 'born of water and the spirit' (Jhn. 3: 5), and be a fit and proper person to inherit the kingdom.

"The Scriptures record the GENERATION of things and their DEGENERATION; and predict also their REGENERATION. The order of the degeneration is revealed as the order of the regeneration, and may be stated thus:

DEGENERATION

1. The understanding darkened—
Gen. 3: 1-6.
2. The moral sentiments or heart defiled—Gen. 3: 7-10.
3. Disobedience, or sin, the fruit of lust and unbelief—Jas. 1: 14-15.
4. God's displeasure incurred —
Gen. 2: 16-19.
5. Death and corruption the consequence—Gen. 3: 16-19.

REGENERATION

1. The understanding enlightened —
Acts 26: 18.
2. The heart purified—Acts 15: 9.
3. Obedience the fruit of faith—
1 Pet. 1: 22.
4. The favour of God regained—
Acts 2: 38; 10: 43.
5. Life and incorruptibility the result—Rom. 6: 22.

Thoughts on the Judgment Seat

How Will We Be Gathered to Judgment ?

"We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him . . ." (1 Thess. 2: 1).

A great deal of speculation has arisen as to the precise manner in which the saints, both living and dead, are to be summoned before the Judgment Seat of Christ. Many ideas have been expressed, varying in degrees as to the probable order of events, but harmonising basically in the purpose and final result of that great assembly. When the time arrives for each of us to individually appear before the presence of His glory, shall we be informed of the time by Christ personally? Will angels be employed to announce to the living that their presence is required before the Judge of the whole earth? Will the sudden appearance of recently resurrected brethren in Christ proclaim this momentous fact? Do the Scriptures throw any light on the exact method God will use in the last day, to inform the living, that their beloved Master has returned to distribute rewards and punishments to the responsible?

It appears, to this writer, that there is an abundant supply of information on the subject, clearly revealed in the teaching of Christ and Paul. Before entering into an affirmative presentation of the divine order of the Judgment, let us consider some suggestions that have been made.

One popular suggestion is that one of the saints will be

resurrected (one known to those to whom he is sent) and, in the role of an emissary, will solemnly proclaim to his surviving friends that their presence is required before Christ. This unexpected appearance of one whom they had laid to rest some time before is intended to have a profound and sobering effect upon them, which indeed it would have. It would be, I suggest, not only sobering, but frightening as well. To suddenly be confronted with one who has died would be an experience which the saints will undoubtedly be spared*

There are many reasons why the writer does not believe a resurrected saint will be used in this respect. For one thing, the appearance of one from the dead upon such a mission would presuppose his acceptance at the Judgment Seat of Christ. It may be argued that the resurrected saints will be judged before the living ones, and then sent on this mission. But the Scriptures do not suggest this (cp. Heb. 11: 39-40). The Lord indicated that the rewarding of both living and dead will take place at one and the same time, which seems to preclude the idea of a dead saint raised to life, being used by God to summon the living saints to judgment.

Another thought sometimes expressed is that the rejected from among the resurrected will be sent back into the world to wander among the mortal inhabitants until they finally die, and it will be their presence there that shall inform the living responsible that the judgment of sleeping saints has been completed, and their presence is now required. But in all references to the judgment, where both faithful and unfaithful are mentioned, it is emphatically taught they are to appear side by side. Part of the punishment to be inflicted upon the rejected will consist in their seeing the righteous adorned with immortality. The Lord indicated that the sheep assembled on his right were to inherit the kingdom, in the sight of, and preceding the punishment of those on His left (Mat. 25). He warned the Jews of His day: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of

*We suggest that the writer means spared in the manner suggested in his previous sentences. At some stage, of course, the living must suddenly be confronted with their dead friends, again raised to life. 1 Thess. 4: 16-17 teaches that the resurrection shall take place first, then both living and resurrected saints will be "caught away together" for a meeting with the Lord in the aerial. The whole process of Christ's sudden return, the resurrection, and the gathering to Judgment, possibly will be so quick, as not to give scope for the frightening effect which would otherwise be the case, as the writer suggests.—Editor.

God, and you, yourselves, thrust out" (Luke 13: 28).

The appalling realisation that they could have had part in the glorious order of things which they behold, and might indeed have been granted the blessing of eternity had they but proved faithful, will be torment of a kind well symbolised in the Apocalypse as "fire and brimstone." They will be subjected to this sad state of affairs "day and night for the aion of aions," a time terminably bound by their mortality. When they have, at last, suffered divine retribution sufficient to their guilt, they shall be subjected to "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power" (2 Thess. 1: 9). It is quite apparent that this final end of the wicked leaves no room whatsoever for the theory that they shall be turned back into the world to wander indefinitely, tormented with the thought, perhaps for years, that there is not a thing they can possibly do to alter their destiny.

This Divine arrangement is borne out in all references to the Judgment Seat of Christ, where specific reference to the rejected is made. Both in the parable of the pounds (Luke 19) and in the parable of a man travelling into a far country (Mat. 25), the wicked are declared to be destroyed immediately after the rewarding of the faithful.

If neither accepted nor rejected saints are to announce to the living that their presence is required before Christ, who will be employed by God for this momentous occasion? Christ made specific reference to the gathering of the saints several times during his ministry, in which it would seem that he left no doubt whatsoever as to the manner in which he would summon the responsible to the Judgment Seat. In the parable of the sower (Mat. 13), he specifically outlined the great harvest that was to take place in the "end of the world." In his explanation (vv. 37-43), he declared that the reapers who are to gather in the wheat and tares are the angels. "The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend" (v. 41). In the same chapter, the Lord relates the account of the net cast into the sea, and the bringing in of all manner of fish. In explanation, he declared: "So shall it be at the end of the world; the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just" (v. 49).

It has been suggested that when the saints are advised that Christ has truly returned, and is now awaiting their presence at Sinai, the manner in which they respond to the news will be a test of their faith. In other words, if they

gladly go about the business of making arrangements to join their Master, it will depict a heart that is sincere and faithful; whereas those who have to be forced, or persuaded, to go will be lacking in faith. However, when the angel of the Lord appears to the living saints, and summons them to the great tribunal, the time of their departure and the mode of their transportation is not going to be left to them! It has been suggested that time will be given to make final arrangements, even to the extent of bidding some farewell, and handing in their resignations at their various places of employment! I realise that there is not that clarity of statement relating to this matter as there is in other features of the Divine revelation, and some of the fine detail is almost a matter of speculation; still, it appears to the writer, that the suggestions set forth above do not harmonise with what the Lord revealed concerning the call of saints to judgment. In Matthew 24 he warned the household against impostors who would arise, proclaiming themselves to be the Christ, and deceiving many. The defence against such a deception was to be a stalwart unbelief: "Believe it not! For there shall arise false Christ's and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold he is in the desert; Go not forth! Behold, he is in the secret chambers; Believe it not!" (vv. 23-26).

Obviously, if the saints were not to believe any report that Christ is in the earth (or desert, such as Sinai), their reluctance to follow a stranger (whether angel or not) who insists that he has come would not be evidence of a faltering faith. Quite the contrary, for the faithful child of God will remember and obey the Master's admonition set forth in these verses. The truth of the matter is that the presence of the saints at the Judgment Seat is not a matter of choice. They are not going to be invited to follow the angel. They are going to be commanded and forced to go, whether voluntarily or involuntarily. At the time of the command, there will be no doubt in their minds as to the authenticity of the angel's words, no uncertainty as to the truth of the matter, because the presence of Christ in the earth will be manifested in a way that will put it beyond all doubt (cp. vv. 27, 31).

Will there be opportunity, at such a time, for the saints to make last minute preparations? The note of urgency expressed in Christ's words relating to judgment leaves no room for this idea (cp. Luke 17: 34-36). We are reminded

of the parable of the business man who determined to build bigger barns to store his goods that he might then spend the rest of his days in ease and luxurious living, only to hear the words: "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee!" (Luke 12: 20). There will be a finality and urgency about matters at Christ's return that will provide no time to do anything but proceed to the place of Judgment by the means provided.

The consideration of matters leading to the Judgment Seat should be a source of spiritual stimulation. This is the great event that will determine our eternal destinies, and if we are faithful, we can look forward to it with eager and hopeful anticipation. Unfortunately there will be some to whom Christ's coming will be unexpected and inopportune. But to those who look at the matter aright, it can be truly a time of refreshing; the commencement of an era when pain, sorrow, unhappiness, and all other calamities attendant to this mortal life, will be completely swallowed up in the great joy that awaits those who have remained faithful unto the end.

"BE YE THEREFORE READY! . . ."

R. R. Stone, California, U.S.A.

NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE

(continued from page 120)

☆ ☆

VERSE 8

"I am Alpha and Omega"—Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. The Lord is the "Author and Finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12: 2). He not only "begets faith" in us, but keeps it alive to the extent that we maintain contact with him through the Word. There are twenty-four letters in the Greek alphabet, answering to the "four and twenty elders" (Rev. 4: 4) who, with the four beasts, acknowledge their dependence upon the Lord Jesus (Rev. 5: 9-10). He is the Alpha and Omega of these "twenty-four" who are "in one" (the Lord Jesus) as the twenty-four letters of the Greek form one Alphabet.

"The Beginning and the Ending"—Yahweh has no beginning or ending, but His manifestation in man has. It "was" or "began" in the Lord Jesus, and "is" now manifested in him. It "will be" manifested in sons of Adam over whom Christ is "alpha and omega" (1 Tim. 3: 16; Col. 1: 14).

JOHN'S INTRODUCTION—vv. 9-10

VERSE 9

"I, John, your companion in tribulation"—John was brutally persecuted in the time of Domitian, A.D. 95, and was banished to the rocky, lonely isle of Patmos. There he received this message we style the Revelation.

VERSE 10

"In the spirit"—The meaning of this phrase is illustrated unmistakably a little further on. At the close of the first series of things shown to him, John heard a voice addressing him thus: "Come up hither and I will show you things which must be hereafter" (Ch. 4: 1). "And,"

says he, "immediately I was in spirit, and behold, a throne," etc. What this means exactly is shown in the case of another prophet, Ezekiel, who, being addressed on the occasion of being about to receive visions, says (Ezek. 2: 2): "And the spirit entered into me when he spake to me," and again, "So the spirit lifted me up and took me away, and I went in bitterness in the heat of my spirit, but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me" (3: 14). To be "in spirit," is to be seized, covered, or held by the spirit of God for the particular purpose in hand, generally a purpose of vision and revelation. The spirit was John's constant companion, as Jesus had promised (John 15: 26; 16: 13). It was a Comfort, an Instructor, a Revealer of things to come.

"On the Lord's day"—This is not Sunday, but "the day of the Lord." That is a day when the Lord will be manifested in power, and is referred to in Malachi 4: 1-2; Isa. 2: 12; Acts 17: 31; 1 Thess. 5: 2; 2 Thess. 2: 2; 2 Sam. 23: 4. To that day true Israelites were always taught to look. The Tabernacle and Altar always faced east—towards the rising sun; the Passover was celebrated at night, anticipating the deliverance of the coming day (Deut. 16: 1-4). Though John was bodily in Patmos, he was mentally in the "day of the Lord," beyond the time of the resurrection of the dead, which will introduce the great and terrible day of Yahweh. John was thus present, in spirit, at the day of the Lord.

"Heard behind me"—The voice caused him to turn and look back, and what he saw when he did so had relation to the resurrection and glorification of the one Body of Christ.

"Voice as a Trumpet"—The Trumpet was used to gather the people together (Num. 10: 3). It here speaks of the gathering of the people together for judgment prior to the manifestation of the great day of the Lord when all nations will be brought into subjection to the Son of God (cp. 1 Thess. 4: 16).

The 1st Vision—THE MULTITUDINOUS CHRIST—vv. 12-20

VERSE 12

"Seven golden candlesticks"—Faith and light combined, and representative of the Ecclesias—cp. v. 20; Mat. 5: 15-16.

VERSE 13

"In the midst"—John saw "one like unto the son of man." The vision was not of Christ himself, although Christ was part of it, but one "like" him. What he saw was the multitudinous Christ, of which the Lord Jesus is the head (Eph. 4: 13). The glorified body of Christ is developed out of the Ecclesias, and is here represented as being "in the midst." It reminds us that all who claim association with the Ecclesia, will not necessarily be found members of the true Body of Christ.

"One like"—Each member of the perfected ecclesia in the age to come will reflect or manifest Christ, every individual that makes up that glorious, multitudinous Body will be "like him" (1 John 3: 2).

"A garment"—Nakedness is symbolic of a state of sin—Rev. 16: 15, teaching that we must be figuratively covered with the "garment of salvation" (Is. 61: 10). The nakedness of Adam and Eve was covered with the skin of a slain animal (Gen. 3: 21), pointing forward to Christ (Rev. 13: 8), whom we "put on" in baptism (Gal. 3: 27). Israel was taught the need of a covering on the Day of Atonement, or Coverings (Heb.—"kaphar," signifies "covering")—Lev. 23: 27 — when their sins were covered over, or hidden from view by being forgiven. When we put on Christ, we put on this garment (Rom. 4: 7). We must keep it unspotted (Rev. 3: 4), and if so we will be permitted to wear the linen robe in the Age to come—the robe of righteousness (Rev. 19: 8) and immortality (2 Cor. 5: 3).

(To be continued)

VOLUME TWENTY SIX

THE LOGOS

Upholding the Purity of Apostolic Doctrine and Practice

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Thoughts for the Times

Why Murmur ?

What unsatisfactory scholars we sometimes are in the school of affliction — so slow to learn, and so slow to remember what we have learned. When the dark clouds of adversity make their appearance, instead of showing calmness and patience, we too often become irritable and angry — pout and scowl like children — and altogether ignore the divine teaching on the subject, and the many beautiful examples of wise resignation set for our comfort and guidance in the lives of Bible worthies. When in trouble we do well to recall the words of Eliphaz: "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty;" or the rebuke of Job to his faithless wife (Job 2: 10); or the great trust of Habakkuk (Hab. 3: 17-18); or the admirable mind of Paul, who even went so far (through enlightenment and faith) as to say: "We glory in tribulations." In our cool, reflective moments, after trouble, have we not often been able to say with David: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy precepts." Yes, our ways are seen and controlled by God (disastrous, indeed, would it be if such were not the

case — Heb. 12:8), therefore let us determine, when experiencing evil, not to complain, even though at times we are severely tried. If health, strength, or friends, are obstacles to a faithful walk; if a flourishing business, an exceptionally lucrative berth, or goodly possessions, are likely to lead us to perdition; if tranquility in the ecclesia is fostering supineness and laxity; is it not kind and wise on the part of God that He should deprive us of these things?

—A.J.

"Eureka" in the Light of Today

No Peace from Geneva

"The way of peace they know not" (Isa. 59: 8). When the Image stands in the time of the end, the crisis will be of the most troublesome and exciting character. "The nations" will have been "made angry" (Rev. 11: 18); nor will their anger subside henceforth until the Image shall be utterly broken, and all its fragments ground to powder. This result, however, will be beyond their power to accomplish. No combination short of the mighty angel clothed with cloud and rainbowed (Rev. 10: 1) can shiver it to pieces, reduce these to chaff, and sweep them away that no place shall be found for them—Rev. 2: 27; Ps. 2: 8-9; Dan. 2: 35.

—"Eureka," vol. 3, page 8



Goodbye to 1959

The 1950s are now history. They slowly faded to their close amid an orgy of Christmas spending that broke all previous records. The singing of carols proclaiming "Glory to God in the highest; on earth, peace and goodwill towards men," competed with the harsh, metallic tinkling of cash-registers — a music more appealing to this materialistic age.

These carols of peace were heard against a background of threats and violence.

As so-called Christians relaxed, and as the music of Christmas filled the air, the disturbing news was broadcast on Christmas Day, that the Holy Land did not yet offer peace but trouble. The Israeli-Syrian border had flared up, loss of life had resulted, a grim reminder that "peace and goodwill towards men" were as far off as ever.

At the same time, in the north-east, the Iraqi Prime Minister (Gen. Kassem) made accusations of imperialism against Persia, and threatened military action if Persian troops were not withdrawn.

Christmas Day was also celebrated by the Chinese. A report dated 25th December announced the disturbing news that heavy concentrations of Chinese troops were massing along the 2,500 miles border of India, and that they they had occupied strongly fortified positions in the Himalayas.

To people who think, who realise what world war 3 will bring, these reports took the edge off the platitudes of hope that were bandied about as the New Year commenced.

But to Christadelphians, people educated in the Divine purpose, to whom Yahweh has revealed His secret, these reports were as straws in the wind, making the prospect of the coming year a most exciting and interesting one.

A Gentile Prince of Peace

Humanity is not without its prince of peace, however. President Eisenhower, fresh from a triumphant tour of Europe, during which he was feted and flattered, stepped into the breach, to set before mankind a platform of hope. To the fanfare of the American Press and Radio he proclaimed his international aim: "A world in which all nations may prosper in freedom, justice, and peace, unmolested and unafraid."

Brave words these, but, oh, how empty! How often they have been uttered before! What hope can the American President give of implementing the policy? Has he forgotten Hiroshima and all that it means? Does he not know that America itself has not yet paid the penalty of being the first nation to drop an atomic bomb on defenceless men, women and children? Does he imagine that the scars of hate that world war 2 left have been completely healed, and people are now prepared to forgive and forget for the benefit of American Big Business? Though he may be ignorant of Scripture's warning, cannot he read the lesson of history?

The Bible has the answer to the hopes of politicians: "The way of peace they know not . . . they have made for themselves crooked paths; whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace" (Isa. 59: 8).

"Crooked paths" is the emblem of dishonesty, fraud, deceit; "straight paths" is the emblem of sincerity, truth, honesty, uprightness (Ps. 125: 5; Prov. 2: 15).

It is only by walking the "crooked paths" of compromise with God - dishonouring Communists, Bible - defying Catholics, materialistic Democrats, that the President has any hope of offering peace, but, as the Scriptures show, "those who walk therein shall not know peace."

Before this troubled world can know true peace, "the crooked must be made straight" (Isa. 40: 4). There is but One who can do that.

A Frightened Audience

A week before the President made his announcement, the world premiere of the film "On the Beach" was screened in Melbourne. Widespread publicity had been given this film. Based on the novel by Neville Shute, its theme is the terrible future facing the world when "push-button warfare" becomes a reality. It claims that the world has little time to prepare for this grim eventuality, and the only alternative is to avoid war completely. According to reports, so realistic is the presentation of the dreadful results of war, that the audience of 3,200 people that witnessed the film, filed slowly out of the theatre at its completion, thoughtful, shocked and silenced by what they had seen.

And yet the same audience would reject God's way.

What must have been the reaction of this audience to the "shock" reported by the world's press three days later. It took the form of a secret intelligence report that Soviet military might is growing "at an enormous rate."

Among the things claimed were:

The Russians have a missile which can fire an atomic warhead weighing 1,800 lbs. up to 5,000 miles.

They are stockpiling inexpensive missiles of relatively short range which can be fired from submerged submarines.

While Russia is preaching peace, disarmament and relaxation of tensions, the Soviet military machine is being built at an ever-increasing rate.

Human nature being what it is, the audience that was frightened by the film would probably imitate the action of the proverbial ostrich by this report: hiding its head in the sand, it would find a way of escape in the excitement and pleasures of the moment.

World leaders know, however, how real and frightening are the possibilities of nuclear warfare. They realise that some sort of limitation to the stockpiling of terrifying weapons of war is imperative. Thus the desire, on the part of Western politicians for the Geneva Summit Conference in May.

But the West meets the East, not on terms of equality and strength, but in weakness, failure and misgivings. They are not sure of their allies in Europe — Western Germany and France; they obviously lag behind Russia in the perfect-

ing of interstellar missiles and other scientific developments; they are not geared for war as is a dictatorship such as the Soviet; and, above all, there is a growing dread of what China might attempt, and a realisation of the tremendous growth of Communism throughout the world.

They hope for peace — and they listen avidly to the promises of peace from the Russian dictator, but can they trust him?

They feel they have to trust him, because they have confidence in no other.

Two thousand five hundred years ago, however, the prophet Daniel warned that the power destined to be broken by the Lord Jesus at his coming would, prior to that event, "by peace destroy many" (Dan. 8: 25).

That is the present policy of Russia today.

The Scriptures warn that there is "no peace to the wicked" (Isa. 57: 21). The hopes for peace by an unholy alliance of Communism, Catholicism and Democracy can only bring greater trouble to those who place their confidence in the flesh.

Only the "Prince of Peace" can bring about that righteous state that must precede peace (Heb. 7: 2).

And peace can only come by disciplining the flesh, by forcing the nations to submit to the righteous decrees of heaven. The prophet declared: "The zeal of Yahweh of Armies shall perform this" (Isa. 9: 7).

A Challenge to the USA

Just prior to Christmas, as men deluded themselves that they serve God by singing a few carols and handing one another presents, key USA Government officials issued a series of surveys calculated to place clearly before people the true facts of relations between the U.S.S.R. and U.S.A. All the reports agreed "that the U.S.A. has failed to meet the Soviet challenge and may be confronted with the grim choice of surrender or annihilation. One report stated:

"The military position of the U.S. has declined within the short space of 15 years from one of unchallenged security to that of a nation both open and vulnerable to direct and devastating attack."

The reports rejected the theory that Russia will not dare risk a nuclear war. On the contrary, they state that Russia has been preparing for such a war for the past decade, and that "Mr Khrushchev did not hesitate to threaten a nuclear holocaust over Suez and Berlin."

In view of such facts, world leaders see the need of making the forthcoming Summit meeting a success. On it they pin their hopes. An article in the Adelaide "Advertiser" underlines the need of taking advantage of the current attitude of moderation and desire for peace on the part of the Soviet.

But the olive branch that Mr. Khrushchev extends today, looks suspiciously like that extended by Hitler at Munich. On that occasion, Mr. Chamberlain returned home to Great Britain with an agreement which he told Parliament constituted "peace in our time."

A very short while afterwards the greatest war in history thundered forth.

The Bible speaks of a time of "peace and safety," which will be shattered by "sudden destruction" (1 Thess. 5: 1-3). It speaks of men being taken off their guard by such a cry, of being lulled to sleep by the sweet assurances that all is well, of giving themselves over to pleasure in the belief that the problems of war have been solved, of setting aside the warning note of prophecy and of the inevitability of Armageddon (vv. 6-8).

And the same writer warns the brethren not to be lulled into a spiritually sleepy state by these conditions. The very fact of his exhortation implies that some will be found in that state. Taken off guard by the apparently endless vista that is before them, immersed in the business or pleasure of life, they feel that Christ's coming is not at hand, with fatal results.

Paul exhorts us to "watch and be sober" (1 Thess. 5: 6). The former word is translated "awake" in other parts. It signifies to be in a state of vigilance and expectancy as contrasted with laxity and indifference; it implies having one's eyes attentive to what is going on about, so that we discern the true meaning of the signs of the times. To be "sober" implies abstinence from the intoxicating excitement that the world provides in what it offers. There are opportunities of great material advancement today, and if we indulge too much in these things we can become inebriated by them. This will blind our eyes to the need for the quiet waiting for Christ that the truth demands.

What are the Prospects of Peace?

Mr. Churchill once wrote: "To remove the causes of war we must go deeper than armaments—we must raise human thought to a higher plane and give a new inspiration to the world."

Mr. Churchill said: "WE must do it."

The Bible answers that we cannot.

Such an ideal will never be reached by human effort. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10: 23).

Christ will force such a state upon mankind ultimately. After being thoroughly humbled by trouble (Dan. 12: 1), the nations will be "taught his ways, and will walk in his paths" (Isa. 2: 3).

He, alone, has the capabilities of raising human thought to a higher plane, of giving new inspiration to the world.

In measure he does that now—for us. The gospel call is a call to peace. "Come unto me . . . I will give you rest," is his invitation.

To his disciples, he declared: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

That is his advice to us as 1960 develops.

Peace can be ours.

It will come as we immerse our minds in the Word, as we seek the things of God, as we allow the Truth to dominate our ambitions.

But let us give a perfunctory service to the Truth—let us give Yahweh the second-best in our lives and devote our main energy to serving of self in the way the world demands—and we will lose that peace. We will be filled with trouble and concern as much as the world about us, and as the great drama of the ages unfolds to its predetermined end, it will find us in an unfit state to receive the Lord. Then, in that day, we will be of all men most miserable.

That is 1960's challenge to us.

"IN AN HOUR YE THINK NOT! . . ."

—W. Gurd, Cumberland, S.A.

The Story of Ruth Enjoyed

"I did enjoy the articles in 'Logos' on 'Pleasure and Profit from Bible Study' and found them of the greatest assistance. I was sorry when they finished. I think the special issue 'Logos' on the Story of Ruth was a beautiful number" — I.R. (W.A.).

(We can supply further copies of the Story of Ruth at a cost of 3/- each plus postage.—Editor).

At a Sth. Brisbane (Qld.) Fraternal

The Consistency of Christ

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever"—Heb. 13: 8

In the original, "forever" does not relate to eternity, but denotes a particular portion of eternity termed "the Age." We refer to it as "the Millennium," or "the Kingdom," that is, the 1,000 years' reign of Christ on earth.

Our attention is thus directed to the Millennium. We conjure up in mind a mental picture of the activities of the Lord in that era. He comes: raises the responsible dead and gives immortality to the faithful; judges the nations; re-builds the Temple; reigns as king; elevates his friends to positions of prominence; restores Israel; blesses the nations; punishes Sin.

In this transformation of the world, Christ will fulfil the promise to:

EVE: (Gen. 3: 15)—Sin will be in full retreat during the Kingdom Age, the final great drama, when the 1,000 years draw to its close, will be the deadly crushing of the serpent's head, by which sin will be finally eliminated, and death abolished.

ABRAM: (Gen. 12)—Israel will be a great nation, and all nations will rejoice with joy unspeakable in the blessings of the covenant.

DAVID: (2 Sam. 7: 12)—Christ will reign on David's Throne from Jerusalem, and David himself in resurrection glory will rejoice in the majesty of his greater Son.

THE ECCLESIA: (John 11: 25)—The promise that because Christ lives the redeemed will live also will have been fulfilled, the resurrection promise will be a glorious reality.

In all this the consistency of Christ will be revealed.

No Change in the Coming Christ

In Christ's coming struggle with the sinpower there will be no compromise, no coming to terms with political parties, financial institutions, religious systems. His word today condemns them, and his actions tomorrow will destroy them. In his reign "the vile shall no longer be called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful" (Isa. 32: 5).

Secondly, Yahweh will faithfully remember the lonely pilgrim Abram, and by-passing all the pompous flesh of Gentiledom, will call this largely unknown Hebrew to a position of supreme honour.

Thirdly, despised Israel will be elevated over mighty Britain, Russia, America; and Jerusalem, exalted from the dust, will have the honour of displaying Yahweh's glory in His son. Christ is consistent. He will not choose New York, London, Moscow or Rome merely because men have learned to glory in these centres of wickedness and folly.

Finally, the Ecclesia will not find that Christ will pass it by in favour of the Pope of Rome, the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the Billy Grahams of modern evangelism — all of whom dedicate their energies to the implanting of the principles of a perverting apostasy in the minds of men. No, Christ will remain true to His Bride, and will not seek the company of the Roman adultress and her protestant daughters. The day of oppression, of obscurity, of small things for the Ecclesia will end. Why? Because of Christ's unalterable consistency.

Competing for the Mind

There is a powerful exhortation flowing from these thoughts. What is the Kingdom? It is the mind of Christ universally extended on a national basis. 1900 years ago, a man walked the dusty roads of ancient Palestine. He had the mind of a Divine outlook. He had fixed views that honoured the Creator's will. Because he honoured Yahweh, Yahweh granted him power over the nations in a coming day. The thoughts that governed the mind of that lonely man will become the rule of life of all mankind. The Kingdom is the extension of the mind of Christ. If we now have the mind of Christ, the mind that seeks to honour God, then we will be given places of honour with Christ. But Yahweh will not give the powers of the Age to come into our hands if, today, we withhold our hearts from him, if today we glory and rejoice in the system of things that Christ comes to deliberately destroy. Christ is consistent, so must also be his Bride. Paul sets forth the principle in Gal. 2: 18: "If I build again the things that I destroy am I not a transgressor?" We can apply this principle to our relationship to Gentile civilisation in 1960. Christ is coming to build a new world — are our hearts in the old world?

The Truth is really a competition for the mind. Yahweh seeks our obedience, sin claims our servitude. Down the ages this competition for the mind has been set out in graphic pictures that describe the everlasting struggle between sin and righteousness.

It is seen in the Exodus, for whilst the feet of the Israelites carried them away from physical slavery in

Egypt, their hearts were still ensnared, their thoughts were with Egypt, and they longingly wished to return to the old sinful state of ignorance. In this competition for the mind of this generation, sin won.

Eight hundred years later, the same competition was still in evidence. Jer. 32: 28-29 records: "Therefore thus saith Yahweh: Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, and of Nebuchadrezzar, King of Babylon, and he shall take it; and the Chaldeans that fight against this city, shall come and set fire on it, and burn it with the houses, upon whose roofs they have offered incense unto Baal, and poured out drink offerings unto other gods, to provoke Me to anger."

In the competition for the minds of this generation, sin had won, and Jerusalem was destroyed in consequence.

Even the presence of the Temple was no protection. Ezekiel records that the very elders of the people (both men and women) indulged in gross worship of the sin-provoking deities of the heathen. In the competition for the religious mind of this age, sin won, and the Temple became a mere empty shell, for Yahweh withdrew His glory.

The literal Temple of the Age to come will be of purposeful significance only because the glory will return in the presence of the immortal ones who will dwell and minister therein.

We are now a living Temple, and only those who do not defile the living Temple will be in the literal Temple. Consistency is the keynote. Christ is consistent. Yahweh has exalted him. Christ will exalt us if we are consistent to the demands of the truth in the competition for the mind.

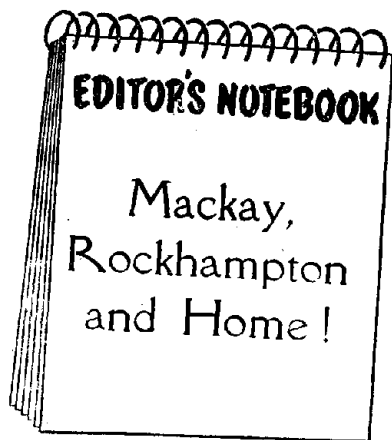
Waverers in the Ecclesia

Why did Paul emphasise the consistency of Christ? Why did he write: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever?" He gives us the answer (see Heb. 13: 7-9). Some were wavering, and the Apostle strove earnestly to preserve the faith in doctrine and conduct. Realising the weakness of the flesh, he pointed them to the great Example — Jesus Christ the consistent one. The Apostle knew that if that great Example became inscribed upon the fleshly tables of their hearts, it would hold them back from destruction, would keep them from wavering.

Are we wavering? Let us then behold the example of the Lord. Furthermore, think beyond. The Apostle shows that the Millennium is only the beginning of endless joy. He con-

tinues (v. 21) concerning Christ: "to whom be glory forever and ever." Here is eternity — unto the Ages of the Ages. Think of the eternal glory to be revealed. Can you imagine yourself as enjoying it? If not, why not? What holds you back? What are you allowing to stand between you and Christ? Whatever it is, break with it! Enjoy now the full measure of communion with the Father and Son, and make the future a reality in which you can mentally revel. Remember, there is a competition going on for your mind, and you are the one who can determine to whom you will give it. Remember the great example before us, the example of Christ's consistency. Lay hold on that, and do not waver.

—B. Philp (NSW).



About 250 miles south of Townsville, 600 miles north of Brisbane, and situated in the midst of a large sugar-growing district, is the very prosperous and well-laid-out city of Mackay. It is noted for the huge storage shed (or terminal), one of the largest in the world, in which the crushed cane is stored awaiting transport to various ports of the world. An automatic loader sucks the cane from the shed directly into the cargo vessels without human handling. This huge loader, the machinery of which towers high above the wharf, has disposed of the need of the army of wharf labourers that once used to dominate the port. It is a monument to the ingenuity of man, for it is fitted with a television

device that enables the operator to see inside the depths of the ship's hold, and so direct the stream of sugar to whatever part it is needed, without leaving his station on the loader.

Mackay is also served by a very wide tidal river, which adds beauty to the town. But it is a river that when roused is hard to handle, and has never been properly tamed. Because of its size it is able to cope with most of the heavy rains that are a feature of the tropical north, but on occasions the downpour has been too tremendous even for this wide river. A few years' back, a fall of over 25 inches in a night was recorded, and the river, roused from its slumber, smashed through portion of the town like a beserk giant, sweeping portion of it to destruction.

The aeroplane flight from Townsville to Mackay is interesting, despite the stormy weather we passed through. It follows the rugged coastline of Queensland, and when the clouds did not hem us in, we

could see below a constant vista of mountain, plain and sea, with rivers, forests and occasionally towns thrown in for good measure.

We were met at the Mackay aerodrome by Brother and Sister E. Bundesen. Although we had never met Brother and Sister Bundesen before, we could see that distinct "Christadelphian" appearance about them, and had no hesitation in going immediately up to them to make ourselves known.

There are very few Christadelphians in Mackay—the Bundesens, Sister Price, and two brothers Smith. We were there for three days—Friday to Sunday, and in addition to the Sunday School and Memorial Meeting on Sunday morning, we conducted meetings on each evening. Friday evening was in the nature of a Fraternal evening at which we spoke on methods of Bible Study. Saturday evening was rather unique. The little community gathered together in the home of Sister Price, together with the children of the families—some seven or eight in number. This is a regular meeting in Mackay, in which adults and children study together the things of the Truth in the spirit of Deuteronomy 6: 7. The "Story of the Bible" is used on these occasions, one of the adults reading a section of it, which is then discussed with the children. On this occasion, I was asked to do the reading. This was interspersed with questions, mainly from the younger members of the audience, and I took the opportunity of asking them questions also. They showed a keen interest in the matter under discussion, and were able to answer the questions we directed to them very well indeed. It was most encouraging to me, to find the book used in that fashion, and to see that the labour seems not altogether in vain.

What a wonderful privilege it is to thus gather together with our children around the Word of God! We need to bring the Truth into our homes. Too often the tendency is to leave the teaching of our children to others. That was not the Divine method. Israel was commanded to "teach diligently thy children when thou sittest in thy house" (Deut. 6: 7). The home should be the centre of the Truth's activities, a spiritual oasis in the wilderness of life.

I often think of that little company in Mackay gathered together of a Saturday evening for such a purpose. Obviously the children did not find the discussion dull or uninteresting, but really were thrilled to be drawn into it. They were encouraged to be vocal in relation to the Bible, and did not hesitate to take the Word of Life upon their lips. Thus, although small in number, though the Truth has not made great headway in Mackay, a valuable work can be done in this direction. He Who has invited us to address Him as our Father, reminds us through His servant that "if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. 5: 8). These words apply, of course, to temporal needs, but are by no means limited to those. They can apply equally to spiritual matters, and very shortsighted is the parent who is attentive to the material wants of his children, but ignores the need of more important and more enduring things.

A very nice little company gathered on the Sunday morning in the attractive little hall in the centre of Mackay, where the meetings are held, for the all-important memorial meeting. Besides the local members, there were others from outlying districts, who had travelled many miles to be present. The attendance of these visiting brethren was most encouraging to the local members, and we feel sure, too, that they were mutually encouraged in return. In such isolated districts, regular attendance at the meetings can assume an importance greater than in

the capital cities. Every member contributes some value to the meeting, so that all are "comforted together" by this evidence of "mutual faith" (Rom. 1: 12). We meet to remember one who gave up his life that we might live, so that we should sacrifice our lives in turn in his service. I realise that it demands a lot. Some of those who assembled on that Sunday morning in Mackay had travelled over 120 miles to be present. It is a sacrifice—both of time and money. But with such sacrifices, God is well pleased. Two features I find quite vital in these small ecclesias: (1)—The need to build one another up in the knowledge of the Word; (2)—The need to draw stronger the bands that hold us together in the Lord.

To proclaim the Truth in season and out of season in such a restricted community makes heavy demands upon time, zeal and patience. The Truth seems so pitifully weak when so few embrace it, that the temptation is to drift into a state of mind where we say, Does it matter? or Is it of value? Look over the history of the Truth from the days of Abel! See the numbers of small groups that have laboured—not in vain—during that time! Noah, Moses, the Judges, the Prophets, the Apostles—men who worked in ones and twos, who were everywhere in the minority, who fought against seeming overwhelming odds, that kept going by sheer determination created by the Truth believed and loved. We are in the line of such as those. Let us maintain the faith and the fight.

And those in larger communities, think of these smaller groups. The hand of help and assistance should be extended by such wherever it is possible.

We were pleased to see a few friends attend the lecture in the evening, and listen attentively to the Gospel address. We obtained a few names for further literature afterwards, and these are being attended to by the Gospel Proclamation Association.

Rockhampton

We left the very pleasant town of Mackay, with very pleasant memories of the community there, on Monday afternoon, and were soon flying low over a large, well-laid-out city, on the banks of a noble river, which tortuously turned and twisted its way to the sea beyond. The city was Rockhampton, and the River—the Fitzroy.

We were surprised at the size and the beauty of Rockhampton. A well-planned city of 45,000 people, not far from the beautiful coastal district of Yeppoon, and, like Adelaide, with a background of "everlasting hills" that seem to overshadow the city like a friendly sentinel.

We were the guests of Brother and Sister O'Toole for the week we were in Rockhampton, and from them received every attention. But what delighted us even more, was the programme that had been mapped out. With characteristic energy, Brother O'Toole (the Recorder) had outlined a series of fraternal, study and devotional evenings, interspersed with three public addresses, and the Ecclesia had co-operated in a wholehearted effort to make a success of the week's activities.

Rockhampton Ecclesia has its own hall, which though small is adequate for its needs, and is an excellent hall to speak in. The Ecclesia is between 30 and 40 strong, with a blending of age and youth. Printed circulars and newspaper advertisements drew attention to the public addresses to be given, and as it was feared that the Ecclesial hall would not be big enough for the number that might attend, a larger hall (the commodious Y.W.C.A. Hall) had been hired for the public addresses. This proved a wise provision, as the attendances on each

occasion could not have been accommodated in the normal hall.

Though every night was thus occupied some way or other, the brethren and sisters rallied around exceedingly well. Sunday was particularly strenuous. It involved addressing the Rockhampton Sunday School at 9.30 a.m., exhorting at 11, travelling some 20 miles to address the Bajool Sunday School at 3 p.m., returning to give the final public lecture at 7 p.m.

During the talk at the Rockhampton School, one young gentleman was sick in somebody's hat, which fortunately or unfortunately (whichever way you look at it!) had been left conveniently near! The children had been warned to listen quietly, and he rather stoically made no complaint as he vomited, and neither did anybody near him. The whole matter might have passed off without comment except that the children on either side edged away from their companion. At last I noticed his white face and distressed appearance, and realising that my talk had little to do with this, ministered some relief! Such things are mere incidentals.

At 11 a.m., the Memorial Meeting was held. As we addressed the gathering at Rockhampton, we thought of the other meetings commencing a similar service, in different parts of the State—at Yungaburra, at Townsville, at Mackay, at Brisbane, further south in Sydney, in Melbourne—a chorus of praise from different parts of the land ascending to the Throne on high. A half-hour later (for the huge distances in Australia means that time varies in different parts of the continent), the Ecclesias in Adelaide commenced their service. Two hours later, a chorus of praise ascends from Perth. Later still, those of like precious faith beyond the seas, lift up their voices—until a girdle of sound encompasses the earth, as the faithful set about the main duty and privilege of their lives.

At the conclusion of the Memorial Meeting, and after dinner, we commenced a trip to the Bajool Sunday School, 20 miles distant from Rockhampton—a journey of 40 miles each Sunday, for those who labour in this area. Like the school at Yagoona, N.S.W., the Bajool Sunday School comprises students who have no connection with the Christadelphian Movement. We were appointed to address the combined school, and found a nice group of some 40 children assembled together, obviously enjoying the exercises and the studies set down. The existence of such a school is a great credit to the Rockhampton Ecclesia, but it is one involving a great deal of work, lovingly undertaken. Let members of larger Ecclesias remember the work entailed by such a small company in Rockhampton. Two schools must be catered for, a journey of 40 miles each Sunday undertaken, exhorting, lecturing, presiding, teaching brethren must be found. And all this labour rests upon the shoulders of a few. Well might such Ecclesias "pray the Lord of the harvest that he send labourers into the fields." It underlines the point I made last month, that a great service exists in these centres for those who have the knowledge, the faith, the courage, and the patience to undertake it.

We returned from Bajool to give the final public address in Rockhampton, afterwards to gather with some of those of like precious faith at the home of Brother and Sister O'Toole, for a final hour of fraternal enjoyment.

A pleasing feature of the public addresses in Rockhampton was the number of brethren from outlying districts who took the opportunity to attend. This is encouraging to those who labour, as we remarked in regard to the effort at Mackay. Brethren do themselves a benefit,

and the Truth a service, by doing this sort of thing more often. We are comparatively "few in number," and need to "strengthen the things that remain" as this evil and materialistic age nears its end. The Apostle sets the Ecclesial ideal: "I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1: 27). "One spirit," "one mind," "striving together." What a glorious ideal, and what a wonderful picture of Ecclesial unity and co-operation it implies. All can contribute to that end. Each one can help, and in helping, work effectively in the service of the King.

There are many good features in Rockhampton. There is a small but very promising nucleus of young people. There are also, as in all places, many problems—but none so great that the Truth itself cannot provide the answer. All Ecclesias have their problems, the small as well as the large; the isolated as well as those in more populous centres. Ofttimes we are inclined to magnify our own difficulties, to view with envy the state of others, but a closer view shows that the troubles of one are not much greater than the troubles of another. And these troubles and problems are the means whereby we can show our willingness to subordinate ourselves to the will of the Father. Christ walks in the "midst of the Ecclesias" (Rev. 2) today as in the past. He could solve all problems, remove all difficulties, if he desired to do so. But he does not. Instead he leaves them there, for they are our opportunity. How do we react to these matters. In wisdom, according to Truth? Or do we allow the flesh to dominate? That is the real question everywhere. The man of wisdom will answer it only one way, realising that the time is soon at hand when all present efforts for the Truth will be rendered unnecessary by the personal presence of the Lord in the earth again. The "days of small things will be over" (Zech. 4: 10). The day of glory will have dawned. No longer the need to proclaim the Truth to small audiences then, for "all men shall know Yahweh from the least to the greatest;" then the "knowledge of the glory of Yahweh will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2: 14). Men will be honoured to be associated with the King and his Truth then—but our privilege will be to be part of the aristocracy of his realm when he comes to be "glorified in his saints" (2 Thess. 1).

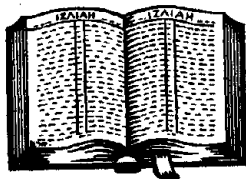
Our prayers go out that Yahweh might bless these communities in the west and east of Australia, that we visited towards the close of last year, that He might cause them to solve their difficulties, build up their faith, stimulate their zeal, cause them to recognize that their work is not vain in His service.

We bade farewell to our hospitable host and hostess (Brother and Sister O'Toole) on the Monday morning, and boarding a plane, soon covered the 300 miles to Brisbane. Later that afternoon, we landed in Sydney. We stayed in Sydney overnight to complete a speaking appointment, and next day completed the final step of our journey back to Adelaide. As the plane banked and wheeled over the familiar sight of our hometown, it seemed impossible that so much had happened in so little time. It seemed as though a year had passed since we left for the campaign in Perth, before proceeding to Queensland.

Thus concluded some seven weeks of intense activity, involving over 10,000 miles of travel, and some 50 addresses. Such a trip provides one with a greater insight into some of the difficulties of small ecclesias, and also provides something of the drama of the Truth in this age of "small things." How truly the exhortation of Zechariah applies today:

"Who hath despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel" (Zech. 4: 10). Zerubbabel was of the royal line of David, a leader of the post-exilic community of Israel who laboured to build the Temple. In this verse he stands as a type of Lord Jesus. Many despised his efforts, and thus the point of the exhortation. But it applies also to our day. Let us not despise the humble efforts of brethren and sisters in the service of the Truth, for the seeds of real greatness are found in these things.

—Editor



Things New and Old

No. 8—

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Re-discovering the Prayer

Last time, we briefly considered the privilege and blessing of prayer, and the tremendous spiritual power derived from it. We saw that effectual fervent prayer does not come easily and naturally to us; it is a habit that has to be cultivated with great perseverance.

Discipline is needed—a guide to prevent the mind wandering. When the disciples felt this need, Jesus gave them what we know as the Lord's prayer: "When ye pray say . . ." "After this manner pray ye . . ." In my own experience I had been saying: "Lord teach me to pray;" and there, in the Word, was the answer. Yet, at first, it didn't seem to help.

The prayer has been so misused that it needs re-discovering. It has been gabbled by schoolboys; monotoned by church congregations; counted off on beads by superstitious Catholics. The very familiarity of the words hampers our appreciation. Yet I have found that it has revolutionised my prayer-life, and brought me into contact with a new power altogether. It has been almost like another conversion. It has certainly taken me, in all my weakness, several steps nearer the Holy One. You may have discovered it long ago, but I feel under compulsion to share my joy.

I came to appreciate that the Lord's prayer gives a summary of all the things we could possibly wish to mention

to God. When we give an address we have some notes—our headings to keep us to the point and discipline us to our subject. So in prayer, Christ has given us our notes—we have grasped the fullness of each phrase we can, in deep concentration, use it as it stands—but more generally I think the prayer is better used as “notes.” It covers every experience, whether we are old or young, married or single, “strong” or weak, worried or in great joy. Whatever our problems—deprivation, business, persecution, family, friendship, sex, the call of the world—it is all in the Lord’s prayer.

Approaching God

It provides a wonderful discipline. If we carefully follow its order, we shall be prevented from rushing into the Divine presence with a lot of petitions only. We shall be encouraged to firstly think carefully about who we are and Who it is we are approaching. We shall be humbled, made thankful, brought into a contrite state of mind. We shall think about our eternal hopes, and will glorify God’s name—before ever we ask for daily necessities or plead forgiveness or deliverance from evil. The prayer sets out our priorities for us—the things that seemed so big assume their rightful proportion; they are among the “seen” and “temporal” things of life.

The method I have come to use is to take each phrase of the prayer, utter it slowly, and then think all round it—yet addressing my reflections to God. A chain of Scripture comes to mind, and is wedded to the experiences of the moment which are to the forefront of the mind. Thus, for the prayer to be effective, and the material to be available, dally diligent attention to the reading of the Scriptures is vital. To ensure this regular flow of spirit-ideas, I have found it necessary to get back to the “Bible Companion” plan of reading, rather than my own less comprehensive plan. I am using the Lord’s prayer in concentrated form more or less as it stands, as a short prayer when I rise and before bed at night, but the high spots of the day are using it during a six-mile cycle ride to and from work. The 35 minutes gives opportunity to consider each phrase carefully in relation to the needs of the particular day, and wing the results of each meditation heavenwards. I would not recommend this to the motorist who has need of greater concentration on his driving; but I know several brethren who do similarly when walking to work, even dodging down a side street to avoid the company of colleagues who would disturb the communion. Another brother has found his life

transformed by quietly sitting in the corner of a train — asleep to the onlooker, but in fact praying with all his faculties. Let us, then, consider each phrase of the prayer, and see how they cover all our needs, powerfully leading us nearer to God.

Our Father

What a privilege—the great Creator of the Universe as “our Father.” How wondrous that Jesus should invite us to commence our approach from this angle: not “Almighty God,” “great Creator,” but “our Father.” How close it brings us. As we take the phrase on our lips, those of us who are parents will be thinking of how we feel towards our children; how we love, how we plan, how we grieve when they walk in ways displeasing; the spirit in which we chasten them; our hopes, fears, disappointments. That is how God feels towards us! “Like a Father pitieth them that fear Him, for He knoweth our frame, He knoweth we are but dust” (Ps. 103: 13-14). “If a son ask bread of any of you that is a father will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he ask an egg will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy spirit (or good things—Matt. 7: 11) to them that ask Him” (Luke 11: 11-13). Whether our prayers touch on material necessities, or direct spiritual needs, the whole object of God is so to answer that we might stand approved before Christ. Prayerful seeking with the Word will produce spirit-minds, and therefore ultimately, spirit-bodies. This is walking in the spirit.

As we try to act towards our children, so is God with us; and as our children at their best act towards us, so ought we towards Him. Remember how much your father meant to you when you were 4, 5, 6 years old! He seemed big, strong, knowledgeable, confident and rocklike. Around him such a stability of life centred (not forgetting mother as well). How lovely is the innocent trust that shines out of a little one's eyes as he or she says as we start out on a walk: “Daddy, hold my hand!” And I am not being needlessly sentimental; the Word wants us to feel like that about God. It speaks of God holding the hand of the Lord (Isa. 41: 13; 42: 6—“I will hold thine hand and keep thee”), and the Psalmist says words that we can share with him and the Lord: “Nevertheless I am continually with Thee; Thou hast holden me by my right hand” (Ps. 73: 23). Paul adds to this thought in teaching: “We have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, “Abba! Father!” (Rom. 8: 15).

According to some Hebrew scholars, "abba" is the equivalent to "daddy."

Thus, right at the start of our prayer, a deepening of our relationship with God is experience, and we draw "near" to the throne of grace. We feel right in His family circle — and warm feelings are evoked from us. When in trouble, through our own fault or not, we marvel that He feels just like a human father—only more so. "In all their affliction, He was afflicted . . . He bare them and carried them all the days of old" (Isa. 63: 9), and "His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel" (Judges 10: 16). Our God is, indeed, a consuming fire, but all terrors fade as we address Him as our Father, without presumption: "Fear not little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." Even if we have sinned and "let Him down," then we remember the son who said: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee" — and the Father who had been daily watching for his return, and who, when he was yet a great way off, saw him, and had compassion and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him (Luke 15: 20). If we develop the right Father-son relationship, I do not think we shall forget the severity of God, and think we can take advantage of His benevolence. Indeed, how could we go straight from thinking of Him, and talking to Him as our Father, and immediately do evil before Him! Thus even the first phrase of our prayer causes the devil to flee.

Sonship

I must resist the temptation to extend this consideration. In two or three months of meditation on "our Father," I have scarcely duplicated my thoughts, so vast is the range of scriptural material. I have sometimes reflected on Israel as God's firstborn, and of our induction into Israel; sonship; the name of Yahweh—"I will be"—what is that but an expression of fatherhood; whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, dealing with us as sons (Heb. 12: 5-11). And as I have meditated, thanksgiving and praise have been spontaneously wrung from me—without any question of trying to be thankful; and beseechings have gone forth for help to live in the spirit of these meditations.

Wondrous, sanctifying trains of thought have been started by this phrase alone. Am I towards my children as my heavenly Father is towards me? Do I show the same care? Have I a true sense of brotherhood with those who also call upon him as their Father? Father help me in this! Perhaps specific happenings will come to mind in

such a context, and this will be the appropriate time to mention them to God. The identification of our problems and failures in the atmosphere of calling God "our Father," will be half-way to solving problems and overcoming failure. How wise was Christ in giving us this prayer. How the opening two words set the tone of the rest.

Again, how did I become His son, and He my Father? Because "He spared not His own son." Oh, what it cost God, after the type of Abraham and Isaac (Rom. 8: 31-32). It is all in and through Jesus, the lamb of God, in whom the sins that hid us from God have been taken away; in whom we have been born again of incorruptible seed (i.e., given a new Father); in whom, though still weak, we have been led to crucify the old man. Once afar off, we are now made nigh.

Then, further, I have thought of those who are still outside the family, and have found this the right moment to pray that certain people with whom I am talking, may even yet respond to the call of Him who does not desire the death of the wicked, but rather that they should repent. And so we could go on, but I think enough has been said to suggest how this first phrase of the most wonderful prayer, can act as a beacon to guide us Godward, can suffuse all our prayers, can be the heading under which our meditations of Him can be sweet indeed. Often I have been half way to work before getting past "our Father"—it is all so embracing. And each meditation is not just a piece of abstract thinking, but a petition towards God. When we speak to men we should first think. With God, He hears both the thinking and the speaking, and accepts it all as sweet-smelling incense.

"Who Art in Heaven"

"Our Father" — intimate, close, near and dear. But then comes "Who art in heaven" to act as a guard against unseemly familiarity with One Who is "from everlasting to everlasting" and Who is high above our ways. This phrase prevents us from being flippant or easy-going in our approach. It emphasises the need for reverence and respect. In the ideal, any father is deserving of that, but the heavenly abode of the Father is stressed to emphasise His superiority to earthly fathers to whom we give reverence (Heb. 12: 9-10).

It makes us conscious of our own littleness and His tremendous condescension. He has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out heaven with a span. To Him the nations are as the drop of a bucket—as

nothing, mere vanity. He sitteth on the circle of the earth, He stretcheth out the heaven as a curtain and spreadeth them out as a tent. Lift up your eyes on high and behold who has created the stars, that bringeth out their host by number. He calleth them all by names, by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one falleth" (Isa. 40).

Yahweh displayed His greatness to Job, who cried, "I am vile," and "abhorred himself." He realised he had spoken about things he understood not (Ch. 42). We all do often, and in our approach there should be a deep sense of contrition and an awareness of His ineffable purity by the side of which we are indeed unprofitable servants. Although with Noah, Abraham, David, Paul and Peter we are "under grace," as all true saints have always been, yet we must not forget the lessons of the Mosaic law with its emphasis on the gap between God and man naturally. The smoke on the mountain, the carcasses in the wilderness, the awesomeness of the High Priests' annual approaches to the mercy seat—only one man and once a year—so great is God. Of course, faithful Israelites also had the same privileges of approach as we have. He has always been "Abba" to those who have approached him by the blood of the lamb—even in prospect, as under the law.

"Who art in heaven!" How sinful we seem in comparison. His eyes are too pure to behold evil (Hab. 1: 13). The Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him (Hab. 2: 20). We live in a world which makes light of sin, and treats God as existing for man's convenience instead of mankind being for His pleasure. We must never become tarnished by this idea. Although He has come so near to us, yet He is in heaven, and we on earth; He is full of mercy, but He is also a consuming fire to those who treat Him with disrespect. Only through Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life may we approach Him—that is by observing what Brother Roberts called "heaven's etiquette," by recognising that the "flesh" of itself profits nothing, needs to be crucified.

When we repeat: "Who art in heaven," we are reminded that Christ is at the right hand of the Father. He who was tempted in all points like us is there. This helps us to know that God understands, He has graciously called into His inner counsels one who has trodden the path of human existence, and knows all its pitfalls. As our High-Priest, he can bridge the gap between us and God, and lift us up to fellowship with the Father.

Innumerable features of the Truth will come before us as we use this phrase. Our minds can run over the various prayers recorded in Scripture. Of Solomon: "The heavens and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee" (1 Kings 8). Of Daniel: "The great, the dreadful God" (Dan. 9). Of Nehemiah: "Thou, even Thou, art Yahweh alone; Thou hast made heaven . . ." (Neh. 9).

I have found the phrase has spoken to me of the need to subjugate the natural flippancy of the flesh. If He is so great, and I am to live in the presence of the high and lofty One, then where is the room for foolish talk and jesting that I find so easy, even if I avoid the filthiness of which Paul specifically talks (Eph. 5: 4). Ought I not to live soberly in this present world? (Tit. 2: 12; 1 Pet. 1: 13).

Yet as well as humbling us, the phrase "Who art in heaven" gives us confidence by reminding us that God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think (Eph. 3: 20). Our Father is in heaven! Nothing is too hard for him (Jer. 32: 27). "Who art thou that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that should die, and forgettest the Lord thy Maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens" (Isa. 51: 12-23). God sees all. His eyes run to and fro to show Himself strong on behalf of the righteous. "Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, Yahweh, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might, He increaseth strength" (Isa. 40). Many other passages come to mind stressing that God is in heaven, His eye upon all things, supreme in power, completely in control. He is, indeed, a God worth praying to, for with Him is power to answer.

The whole phrase, "Our Father Who art in heaven," brings us very close to a Father, to one who is all-powerful.

None will enter the Kingdom of God but those who, carrying about with them a thorough love of righteousness, put their love so far into practise that they will not allow themselves to be driven into wrongdoing even if it is to save their lives. Many people do right so long as there is no detriment from that course, but the moment it works against their interests they do not scruple to do a little wrong. This is fatal to spiritual prosperity.

A pity it will be if when the Lord comes, faith be found in a dying state in a community which in some sense may be said to have borne the burden and heat of the day. Let us then "be watchful" and strengthen the things that remain and are ready to die.

His relationship stirs our love and quietens us as a child that is weaned of his father (Ps. 131: 2). His lofty dwelling-place makes us realise our littleness, and fills us with awe and sobriety, yet inspires us with confidence, because Christ is there, and because He beholds all things from His throne, and is well able to care for His children.

Next time (God willing) we hope to consider how these facts call forth the hallowing of His name, and how the other phrases in the prayer can help us to have the Father's name written in our foreheads. Meanwhile, let us rejoice that we have a Father in heaven.

—E. Wille (England)

P.S.: The subject of prayer is taking us down a wonderful by-way. The object of these articles is to seek for reality in the things of God; particularly in relation to the Kingdom and its establishment; but the Kingdom can only be considered in connection with how we can get there. However, after considering prayer and rounding off the consideration of what sort of people we are to be, if our personalities are to abide for eternity, we hope to go on to what we trust we shall do when made immortal, first in war and then in peace; who we hope to meet and how they will have got there. This little note is just in case you were wondering whither these articles are heading.

Christ's Noble Example

His meat and drink was to do the will of his Father in heaven—this is a healthy diet for all.

His activities were not consumed in humanly contrived channels of usefulness—but exhausted upon precious interests of the Truth: "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up."

He did not seek to become popular by withholding wholesome but unpalatable words—but where needful sent the withering shafts of merited rebuke into the very vitals of his auditory, laying bare, as by the stroke of a sword, the hidden recesses of hypocrisy, iniquity, and self-righteousness.

He did not enunciate principles which he did not endorse by action—but his life was a living testimony of the things he taught: his speech was pure, his love was pure, his very denunciations were pure and devoid of malice. He was not resentful, but kind, even to the unthankful and unholly.



We are permitted to glory, not, however, in the flesh, but only in the Lord (1 Cor. 1: 29-31).



We are permitted to be angry, but only in a righteous cause (Mark 3: 5).



We are enjoined to be covetous, not, however, in worldly things, only after spiritual things (1 Cor. 12: 31).

—J. Thomas

DID CHRIST PRE-EXIST ?

Several letters to hand have asked us to give some consideration to passages of Scripture that appear to support the theory that Christ pre-existed in bodily form. We expressed our mind upon this subject some months ago (see "Logos," vol. 25, page 230), and promised to give further attention to it. However, pressure of other work has prevented us fulfilling our promise until the present. In opening up this subject for consideration, we invite readers to forward any problems in to us. We commence with one this month that involves the significance of certain Greek words in relation to the form in which they are found in the original Scriptures. We suggest that the Reader give careful attention to what is stated, and we promise to try and explain the matter as simply as possible as we proceed. Our reader (E.W., Qld.) states his problem as follows:

"About a year ago, my attention was dawn to the fact that when 'dia' is used with the genitive, it means 'by' or 'through.' It disturbed my complacency very much, and I have spoken since to several brethren, trying to get their ideas on it. So far I have drawn a complete blank, the typical attitude being to deny the above meaning. However, it is too well supported by competent authorities to be a mistake. . . . W. E. Vine says 'Dia with the genitive means "by means of," "through," in the sense of instrument.' This is in harmony with other Greek grammarians. It seems to me that 'through' can have only two meanings. It either means 'by means of,' or 'because of.' If some children had been playing cricket, and one of their number was given to hitting the ball too hard, and knocking it over a neighbour's fence broke his window with the result that the children are made to stop their game, they would probably say to the erring party: 'It is all through you!' In this use of the word, 'through' could signify both 'because of' or 'on account of.' However, although 'through' in English can have both of these meanings, the Greeks had a way of making it quite clear just what was intended. In the case of the children mentioned, they would use 'dia' with the accusative. When they meant 'through' in the sense of 'by means of' they would use dia with the genitive. Vine gives the meaning of 'dia' with the accusative as 'because of,' or 'on account of.' If all this is true, as I believe it is without doubt, then when 'by' or 'through' are used with the genitive they mean exactly the same thing. That is, they express the fact that the one 'by' whom something is said to be done is the actual agent or instrument who did it. The suggestion that a person can be an agent through whom something is done without being actually present seems to me to be utterly impossible. . . . If he is to be the instrument 'by means of' which actions are done, then it seems to me he has to be present and actually do the things."

Answer:

Our correspondent makes two main points:

1. When "dia" is used with the genitive case, it signifies the agent by which a certain matter is done.
2. It seems utterly impossible that in such a case the agent is not personally present.

Point No. 1 has relation to such references as Hebrews 1: 2: "by whom (the Lord Jesus) He (God) made the worlds." The Diaglott renders this: "on account of whom," and many Christadelphians quote this alternate rendering as expressing their mind on this passage. But E.W. contends that such a translation is possible only if "dia" ("by"—A.V., "on account of"—Diaglott) is with the accusative case. Here, however, it is found with the "genitive" case, signifying that the "whom" (the Lord) is the agent or instrument through whom God made the worlds.

This being admitted, E.W. presses point 2: "It seems utterly impossible that in such a case the agent is not personally present" when the work is carried out.

That would mean that, in the beginning, Christ made the worlds on God's behalf.

And that would demand that he pre-existed in some form.

What "Dia" Signifies

The fundamental meaning of the Greek preposition "dia" when used with the genitive case is "through." We meet its use in our own language in such words as "diameter," "diagram," etc. It is translated in the N.T. in various forms, but mainly by the words "through," and "by." It can be used in various ways, as the following examples will show:

"He passing through (dia—genit.) the midst of them went his way" — Luke 4: 30.

"When they could not find by (dia) what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through (dia) the tiling"—Luke 5: 19.

The way through the door was blocked, so they let the man with the palsy down through the roof. In both cases, the preposition signifies "through" or "the means by" which the friends of the sick man could reach Jesus.

Let E.W. notice, however, that "dia" here does not denote anything done by the noun with which it is associated, but that the noun (the midst, the way, the tiling) was the "means" through which a certain matter was brought to pass. E.W. would doubtless reply to this that this is because

these nouns relate to inanimate objects; but when "dia" is associated with a person it denotes that the person is the agent through whom the work is done.

To that we would reply that Christ is set before us not only as a person, but as the way, the truth, the door and so forth.

In John 10: 2 we have another example of the use of "dia," in the celebrated, well-known passage:

"He that entereth in by (dia) the door is the shepherd of the sheep."

Here the word defines the means (the door opening) through which the shepherd entered the fold.

"Dia" therefore indicates the "means by which" a certain action is brought to its desired end. It occurs frequently in Scripture, as an Analytical Concordance will show. The examples above relate to impersonal things—a crowd, an opening, a doorway. When it is used in conjunction with a person, it indicates that the person is the instrumentality by which a certain thing is done. It is done "by" or "through" him, and not merely "on account of him." For example, we read that "God by the mouth of the prophets" spake unto the people. It was God who spake, and the prophets were the medium or instrumentality by which He delivered His message. He was the moving Force, they the agents through whom He made known His will. They did not act independent of Him, or by their own volition, but as they were moved by Him. Thus He Spake THROUGH them.

For that reason, most places in the N.T. where dia in the genitive appears as "by" in the A.V., it is changed to "through" in the R.V.

An example is found in Hebrews 1: 2: The A.V. reads: "By whom He made the worlds," the Revised Version has changed this to "Through whom He made the worlds."

One authority states that dia in the genitive denotes the cause "by means of which" an action is brought through to its accomplishment. In the following places we read that certain actions were done "by night" (Acts 5: 19; 9: 25; 17: 10; 23: 31). In each case the word is "dia" and is with the genitive case. The darkness of night became the means whereby certain actions were carried through to their end. The Apostle did not make his escape "on account of night," or "because of the night" (which would be the case if "dia" was with the accusative case) but by "means of the night." The night contributed something to the successful escape.

Hebrews 1: 2

This verse teaches that the Son was the "means through which" the worlds were made.

What "worlds" were thus made? The word in the Greek signifies "ages," not "worlds" as we might understand the word. The same word occurs in Heb. 9: 26, where we learn that 1,900 years ago Jesus appeared "in the end of the world."

Thus the Lord was the "means through which," or the instrument through whom Yahweh worked in the bringing to end of certain ages, and the making of new ones. (If the student cares to look up Strong's Concordance on the meaning of the Greek word here translated "made," he will find a great variety of meanings from "made" to "fulfil".) The Lord's offering brought to an end the Mosaic age, inaugurated the Gospel-Gentile age, which is to pass away with the Millennial Age of the future. The Lord was the means that Deity used to make this possible, and he personally contributed to accomplish the end in view.

How Christ Existed Before He was Born

Christ was with the Father from the beginning. Before birth he was with Him in mind, in thought, in concept. He is the "word made flesh" (John 1). Before he had corporeal existence, 1,900 years ago, the Word alone existed. This Word comprehended the whole Divine system and purpose; it was the wisdom of Deity which the unfolding ages revealed. And the very centre of that Word, that Purpose, that Wisdom was the manifestation of the Son. This word was the embryo in the womb of time which ultimately produced the Son. The ages were pregnant with this Son which needed but "the fullness of time" to bring him forth (see Gal. 4: 4). As an expectant mother will speak of her soon-to-be-born son in the present tense, will plan for him, will work for him, so did Yahweh for His Son. The expectant mother will do this "on account of" her unborn son, and could thus use "dia" with the accusative case. But the life of the coming mother is changed by the as yet unborn son. She is forced to curtail her activities, her social life is changed, she is altered in appearance—and this is all done "through" or "by" the unborn son. So, though not personally present, he is nevertheless the agent accomplishing certain things. This clumsy illustration may help us comprehend better certain facts of Scripture.

I can appreciate, that if E.W. is reading this article, he will become very impatient at this moment, and emphasize

that though the son is unborn, he is nevertheless in existence.

So also (in embryo form) was the Son of God from the very beginning. He existed as the Word, Wisdom, Purpose of Deity. He was just as real to the mind of the Father as the unborn son is to the expectant mother.

If it can be said of Abraham that he "lives unto God" because of the certainty of his resurrection (Luke 20: 36), how much more can it be said of the Lord Jesus that he was "with the Father" from the beginning. Time means nothing to Deity. Past, present, future are words which finite mortals use; but Deity lives in the future. And the language that the Spirit has selected to speak to men overleap the ordinary limits and laws of grammar to express these things. Thus Paul taught that "God quickeneth the dead, and (because of this) calleth those things which be not, as though they were" (Rom. 4: 17). Thus Christ (in this sense alone) was with the Father from the beginning. The embryo that later developed into the Son became the means through which nations rose and fell, ages came and went, and faith moved men.

In passing, we suggest there is a wonderful thought in the matter set forth above. Israel is represented in the Old Testament as the wife of Yahweh through whom His Son was to be revealed. That is one reason why He was so anxious over the condition of "His wife," so insistent that her spiritual condition might be such that she would have the health and strength to "bring forth," why, in the course of time, she was brought back to the Land under Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah in preparation of the coming birth. And when, at last, she laboured to bring forth, the pangs of childbirth were very real (see Mat. 2: 16-18).

How Christ Worked Before He was Born

The Scriptures show conclusively that the work of Christ was efficacious before he was born. The greatest of all works performed by him as the agent or instrument of His Father, is the forgiveness of sins by the shedding of his blood.

When did such forgiveness commence? Was it before or after the Lord died upon the cross? Undoubtedly before. The efficacy of Christ's blood stretched backwards as well as forward; it covered the sins of Abraham and David as well as those of Paul and Peter. Paul quotes the words of David, and the experience of Abraham, to point this fact

(Rom. 4: 1-13). He states that their sins were covered "through the righteousness (Lit., justification) of faith" (v. 13). The word "through" in this place is "dia" (genit.) in Greek. In Romans 5: 18 Paul states that "justification of life" has come unto "all men" by "one act of justification" (see marg.). Here, again, "by" is "dia" (genit.). The act was committed by the Lord on the cross. Yet Abraham was justified by it.

Thus Deity worked through His son long before that son was born. He could do so on the principle alone that all "live unto Him."

In Hebrews 9: 15 Paul shows that forgiveness of sins came by Jesus to those in Moses' time as well as those in Apostolic days. His work stretched back as well as forward.

In John 14: 6 the Lord declared: "No man cometh unto the Father but by ("dia," genit.) me." Again, these words are as true of Abraham as of us. Abraham "saw" the Lord's day in prospect (Jhn. 8); we look back upon it. Abraham approached the Father through the promised Redeemer (Gen. 3: 15), we do through the revealed Redeemer.

"God sent His Son into the world; that the world through (dia—genit.) him might be saved" (Jhn. 3: 17).

The world Christ saves stretches back as well as forward in point of time. He saved Abraham as well as us.

To him (Jesus) give all the prophets witness, that through (dia—genit.) his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10: 43).

If the prophets testified thus, it shows that the work of the Lord, the efficacy of his name, was as good in their day as in ours. The work was done though the agent had not been manifested.

"We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they" (Acts 15: 11).

The "they" in question relate to the "fathers" of a previous age—v. 10. How could they be saved "through (dia—genit.) the grace of the Lord Jesus" before he had been revealed?

Our correspondent suggests that it is impossible. Under normal conditions that would be true, but then we are dealing with One with Whom "all things are possible."

The word "dia" with the genitive occurs in the following places:

"I glory in the cross of our Lord by whom the world is crucified unto me" (Gal. 6: 15).

"Ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus" (1 Thess. 4: 2).

We exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 3: 12).

"I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake" (or "by the Lord Jesus Christ")—Rom. 15: 30.

In these verses, the Lord Jesus is represented as the "agent" or "instrument" through whom the Apostle crucified the world, exhorted and beseeched the brethren. Was the Lord personally present to actually accomplish the work of crucifying, exhorting, beseeching, etc., as our correspondent seems to imply he must be when the word "dia" is used? By no means. These things were done through the faith the Apostle had in Christ. Similar words are used of Moses (Heb. 11: 26). Paul could do it through a Christ who lived; Moses could do it through a Christ who would live. Thus we can conclude that through the remarkable and unique facts of God manifestation, the work of Christ was efficacious before he was born.

—"Logos" Committee



For Private Study

NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE

An Itemised Exposition of the Book of Revelation, based on "Eureka" and designed for home study and for Bible marking.

(Chapter 1, continued from page 152)

"A golden girdle"—The symbol of a tried faith (Lam. 4: 1-2; 1 Pet. 1: 7) without which "no man can please God" (Heb. 11: 6). Faith binds and completes the robe of righteousness. In the resurrection, any not suitably clothed will be rejected.

VERSE 14

"His head and his hair"—Christ is the head of the body (1 Cor. 11: 3; Eph. 5: 23). When the "one body" has been raised, judged and cleansed (Isa. 1: 18), it will appear "white as snow," and will be associated "as one" with the head, even the Alpha and Omega.

"His eyes"—The eye is the symbol of intelligence. In the past, the angels have acted as the eyes of Yahweh, guiding the destiny of men and nations for the ultimate benefit of the elect (Gen. 18: 21; 2 Chron. 16: 9; Dan. 4: 17). In the future age, the saints will occupy that position (Zech. 4: 10; Heb. 2: 5).

"As a flame of fire"—When a person is wrathful, his anger is revealed by the flashing of his eyes. Thus "eyes as a flame of fire"

exhibit the wrath of the multitudinous Christ against a wicked and rebellious world (Isa. 30: 27).

"His feet"—The saints will be occupied in various avenues of work. Some will act as the eyes, some as the hands, some as the feet of Yahweh, marching forth to execute the judgments written (Ps. 149: 7; Zech. 14: 4).

"Brass"—The symbol of flesh purified by fire. When the fire of Yahweh flashed forth against the Levites who rebelled against the authority of Moses and Aaron, it consumed them so that only the brass of their censers was left. This brass was incorporated in the brassen altar as a symbol of flesh purified by fire. In the vision of John, this brass is shown on the feet of the multitudinous Christ. Animals were

Use these notes as the basis of a personal or class study of this most interesting book. Use them in conjunction with "Eureka." You will read yourself rich with this incomparable exposition by Brother Thomas. We shall be happy to answer any questions on the matter outlined, and provide a more detailed exposition for any portion thereof.—Editor.

shod with plates of metal for the purpose of treading out the corn. The symbol is used for the treading down of enemies in Malachi 4: 1-3; Micah 4: 11-13. In the symbol before us, we have the principle of flesh purified by fire, and then going forth to discipline mankind, and bringing it into subjection to Christ.

"Burned in a furnace"—The nations will be trodden down in anger unless they submit—Isa. 60: 12; Jer. 25: 33).

"His voice"—After the divine judgments have been poured out, the saints will extend the knowledge of the Truth throughout the world (Rev. 14: 7; Hab. 2: 14).

"As many waters"—The analogy signifies a loud voice of many people (Ezek. 43: 2; Dan. 10: 8). The use of this symbol in this place indicates that the "one like unto the Son of Man" is really a community welded together as one.

VERSE 16

"A sharp two-edged sword"—The power of the spirit (Heb. 4: 12). By the use of the Spirit, which will enable the saints to read the hearts and minds of all men, sin will be restrained, satan will be bound (cp. Rev. 19: 15; Isa. 11: 4). Its use was illustrated in the judgment of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5: 3-7).

"His countenance as the sun"—Lit. "his aspect." The vision glowed with light. The shining forth of the sun is associated in Scripture with the glory of the Father. So the multitudinous Christ, in the coming age of glory, will manifest Divine glory (Mat. 13: 43). The saints shall shine forth to illuminate the darkness of men's minds.

VERSE 17

"I fell at his feet as dead"—Having been shown the vision of coming

glory, John is now taught how he will attain unto a place therein. He enacts his own death and resurrection, as did Daniel on a like occasion (Dan. 10: 8-19). John fell down as dead, but he was raised from this state by a hand being placed upon him. He then heard comforting words, "Fear not!" May that be our lot at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

"I am the first and the last"—Christ is the Author and Finisher of our faith. (Heb. 12: 1). By him, alone, will we gain the victory.

VERSE 18

"Amen"—Signifies "faithfulness." Christ is the Faithful One. See Rev. 3: 14.

"The keys"—The power to unlock both the grave and death. An understanding of the gospel provides one with the key to that end (cp. Matt. 16: 18; 1 Cor. 15: 54-55).

VERSE 19

In this verse there is given the scope of the Apocalyptic message. John is told to write the things which he saw, matters that had relation to existing conditions (e.g., the messages to the seven ecclesias) as well as "things which shall be hereafter."

VERSE 20

"The mystery"—The secret. In the Book of Revelation, Christ whispers a secret to his friends (v. 1) of which the world knows nothing.

"Seven golden candlesticks"—See v. 13. These "candlesticks" were really lampstands, for there were no candles used in the Temple or Tabernacle. The Ecclesias are likened to Lampstands because they radiate the light of the Gospel in the midst of spiritual darkness. The Word is the light (Ps. 119: 103), and where that is found expounded in truth, a lampstand exists. The symbol is taken from the seven-branched lampstand in the Tabernacle (Exod. 25: 31). The oil for this lampstand (without which it would not provide light) was supplied by the common people of Israel (Lev. 24: 2). Thus Israel's presence in the Holy Place was symbolised by the oil they provided. There are two significant features about this oil. Firstly, all Israel had to provide it—it was not left to a few to do so; secondly, the olives had to be thoroughly beaten to obtain the finest oil. As a symbol, it teaches that it is the duty of all to study the Word and provide light, and in order to do so effectively, careful toil is necessary—the olives must be thoroughly beaten. See Zechariah's vision of the Lampstand (Ch. 4: 1), and note his explanation of the two branches in vv. 12, 14. They symbolise the "sons of oil" (see margin, v. 14), which every true saint should aim to be.

"Seven stars"—cp. v. 16. Ecclesial stars are teachers—cp. Dan. 12: 2.

"The angels"—The term "angel" in Scripture does not necessarily denote a divine being, but a mortal appointed to a position of authority. The word signifies "messenger," and in Apostolic times, there were men appointed by the Spirit to act as Yahweh's messengers to the Ecclesias. They were the elders of the body of Christ, and were unique to that age, being appointed to their positions by the power of the Holy Spirit. There are no such elders in the Ecclesias today. Paul makes reference to their Divine appointment in Acts 20: 28; 1 Cor. 13: 28-29.

(To be continued)

VOLUME TWENTY SIX

THE LOGOS

Upholding the Purity of Apostolic Doctrine and Practice

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Thoughts for the Times

On Bible Reading

Let your reading be private, individual, and at the right time of day. Reading with others is good in its place, but cannot serve the purpose of private study. The mind cannot, in company, settle to the subject with that thoroughness of grip that is needful for thorough results. Have your Bible reading to yourself, whatever luxury you may indulge in with your friends. And let it be at a time when your faculties are wide awake. To put it off to the last thing, just before going to bed, after your pith has been spent on other things, is not doing justice to yourself or to God. A little extra Bible reading at such a time — such as a psalm or a chapter from the epistles — is very well as a soothing finish to the day, but to leave your whole Bible reading till then is to attend to it under conditions that almost preclude the possibility of your getting the intended good. The greatest reverence should be given to the Bible. Of all books, it is the sole dictator of duty and destiny; it defers to none, but commands unqualified surrender to its teachings and claims

on the part of every one to whom it comes, on pain of eternal extinction. It is the highest authority, the very voice of God inviting our trembling acquaintance in His will and word, the "counsel of Yahweh that shall stand." It is folly on our part to neglect this book, it is the highest form of wisdom to give it the attention it deserves and demands.



THE SWASTIKA

versus

ISRAEL —and DESTINY

"Daniel declares it (the time of the end) to be 'a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation to that same time' (12: 1). Israel's hopes will be at the lowest ebb; and unless another Joseph appear as in Egypt, for the salvation of his father's house, they must perish. But the Eternal Power has provided for them a Deliverer after the type of Joseph, who at his second interview with the nation, his brethren after the flesh, will reveal himself to them in the day of affliction; and when they shall discover, as Zechariah teaches, by the wounds in his hands, that he is Yahoshala, or Jesus . . . they will mourn and be in bitterness before him, as their fathers were in Joseph's presence, whom, as they had served Jesus, they sold for a few pieces of silver. . . ."

—"Eureka," vol. 1, p. 150

The Sign of the Crooked Cross

The sudden and unexpected outburst of anti-semitism throughout the world, has delivered to Israel a grim warning that it can expect no future apart from the presence of its King and Deliverer (Rom. 11: 26).

That was the beginning, but it had many imitators. In fact, it soon developed into a craze. Vandals got busy everywhere. Swastikas and anti-Jewish signs appeared as if by magic. The German Government became perturbed by the adverse publicity it received in other countries. The newspapers demanded action. The Chancellor publicly condemned the principle of anti-semitism, threatened dire punishment against offenders, went out of his way to honour Jews, and by astute moves rode the crisis to safety.

But the craze spread. It was not limited to Germany. Swastikas appeared in other parts. Anti-Jewish signs were painted up in Vienna, Paris, London, Oslo, in parts of Canada, U.S.A., New Zealand, Australia, until it seemed that the world was almost ringed with these symbols of hate,

Most of this was explained away as delinquents busy with a paint brush. That is doubtless true. But is also helped to underline the fact that in many countries anti-semitism still smoulders beneath the surface, only needs a little breeze to cause it to burst into flame.

And then, what?

It would mean a world more sharply divided between Jew and Gentile than ever before, a world that would look with hate and detestation towards Israel — such as we read in the 38th Ezekiel, in the battle cry of the Gogian host when it invades the land of Israel in the time of the end.

But individuals, or nations, that put confidence in the crooked cross, challenge not merely Jewry, but destiny. The history of 6,000 years shows that the purpose of Yahweh in relation to His people will be fulfilled despite all efforts to the contrary.

The emergence of Israel as a political power is a token to us that our redemption draws near.

A Warning to Jewry

What caused this demonstration in Cologne and other cities of Germany? It has been suggested that in addition to the traditional dislike that Gentiles have for Jews, there is now in Germany a sense of shame for the horrors that the concentration camps revealed. The fact that Jewry revealed the full terror of the Nazi regime, caused other nations to look with loathing at that system to which Germans had given their full support, and this, in turn, developed in them a feeling of resentment against Jews. Many Germans feel ashamed in the presence of Jews, and this shame and resentment finds expression in dislike which breeds hate.

Among many in Israel that hate is reciprocated. They have experienced the horror of the concentration camps, seen their loved ones murdered, their homes broken up, carry today on their bodies the terrible scars of a ruthless and brutal persecution. These Jews are dominated by a fanatical hatred of Germans, so much so that they were bitterly hostile to their own Government when it accepted reparations from Germany. In their minds there was nothing that could compensate for what they had gone through, and they wanted the guilt to be forever before the German people.

I spoke to one such in Israel. She was a pleasant faced girl that acted as guide during a visit I made to that country some years ago. She went out of her way to explain different points of interest concerning the country.

But when I mentioned German reparations which was then the subject of discussion throughout Israel, her smiling face became hard and bitter. In her opinion, the only good German was a dead one! She would not touch the reparation money under any circumstances. To her it was blood money.

She was amazed when I told her my experience of Germany. How that in the city of Esslingen, among the ruins of the war which then still remained unrepaired, a community, wishing to honour me, had sung for me a song in English and German, and the words of the song were: "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee! Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within her palaces."

"What community in Germany would sing a song like that?" she asked in amazement.

"The Christadelphians," I replied, and went on to explain that the harbouring of hate in our hearts did no good whatever.

I believe that the discussion I subsequently had with her made her thoughtful; certainly it stemmed her conversation for the time being.

But other Jews were not so patriotic as my guide on that occasion. Some detested the hardship and lack of amenities in Israel. They looked with longing back to the lives of culture and pleasure they had experienced in Europe. They imagined that the hatred that once existed had gone for ever, that the platitudes European politicians mouthed concerning goodwill towards Jews expressed the feeling of the people.

Some 6,647 Jews left Israel for Europe, hoping to re-establish themselves in the country of their birth, hoping to rebuild their fortunes with the help of those who once persecuted them but now claimed to be their friends.

They waited for this help in vain.

Officially they were welcomed back, but they entered an atmosphere so tense and hostile that they began to look for refuge elsewhere.

"The Bible is the truth in a book; Christ is the truth incarnate; and a Christian is the truth in his heart lovingly obeyed. It is nonsense for a man to talk of 'loving the Lord Jesus' while he receives not his words. The Lord thanks no man for mere lip-love, a love that rejoiceth not in the truth, believeth not all things, and hopeth not all things."

—J. Thomas

In deserting Israel those Jews were challenging destiny. Their own Scriptures (if they would only heed them) warn that there is but one place of safety for Israel. Unheeding these they learn by bitter experience the grim lesson that Eretz Israel alone offers any degree of security for Jews.

They will find happiness only there, despite the hardship, toll, and restrictions the land imposes.

God has warned His people:

"Thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations whither Yahweh shall lead thee" (Deut. 28: 37).

The records of the centuries demonstrates the truth of those words. Christ, alone, will break down the existing resentment, cause Gentiles to take hold of the "skirt of him that is a Jew," cause the world to recognise the Divine purpose in Israel.

The warning of God was not limited to the words of Moses. Through the Prophets He declared:

"Moreover, I will make thee waste, and a reproach among the nations that are round about thee, in the sight of all that pass by" (Ezek. 5: 14).

"I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them" (Jer. 24: 9).

Any Jew, understanding the prophets, would be foolish to leave Israel for Germany, or any other country; for anti-semitism is not limited to one country — it is found all over the world: in Egypt, the Arab States, Turkey, India, Russia, Europe, Africa, Australia.

The words of Micah come to mind:

"Many nations are gathered against thee (Zion), that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion. But they know not the thoughts of Yahweh, neither understand they His counsel . . ." (Mic. 4: 11-12).

The "thoughts of Yahweh" are expressed in Zechariah 1: 15-16:

"I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction."

Meanwhile, the hostility that has greeted those Jews who have left Israel for other countries, reminds them that they can expect no security, no peace outside the borders of the land.

Warning to Spiritual Israel

The present widespread anti-semitism is a warning also to spiritual Israel. They are in a similar position to natural Israel, inasmuch as the world can offer them no true peace or security either. There is a need to recognise this fact, to

clearly discern that we are not an organisation among other organisations, "another religion," "another sect" among other religions and sects. We are completely different, entirely separate from the religious world about us, having no more affinity with Protestantism than with Catholicism. From neither should we ask favours, with both we are at warfare as far as the Truth is concerned. Let the Truth be set forth clearly and vigorously, without fear or favour, and that line of demarcation will be preserved.

Today Jews are finding it impossible to become assimilated among Gentiles. The attempt to do so is bringing sorrow and suffering. Brethren who attempt religious assimilation will ultimately learn the same lesson. Yet there are signs that show that the materialism of the age is seeping into Ecclesial life. It finds its expression in the material possessions that ecclesias are accumulating and in which they tend to glory. There is a danger in this. Material buildings of our own are helpful as convenient places in which to meet and serve the interests of the Truth, but they are not at all necessary to the real purpose of our call. What God requires is a character built on faith; where that exists a permanent abiding place will be found within the true house of God (John 14: 1-3).

It is so easy to condemn those Jews who have forsaken their land where they were separate and secure from Gentile hatred, and yet fall into the same error, in principle, in our own attitude towards the Truth.

The Middle East Cauldron

Egypt, as the mouthpiece of the Arab League, is threatening violence against Israel. It declares that there will be no peace until the Israel question is solved. That is true. But it will be solved in a manner far different to what the League imagines. Isaiah declares:

"In that day shall . . . the land of Judah be a terror unto Egypt, everyone that maketh mention thereof shall be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of Yahweh of hosts, which He hath determined against it" (Isa. 19: 17).

"The elegant tongue of even angelic oratory Paul teaches us to despise when divorced from ways of righteousness and truth. We implore true men to take care. A flattering tongue is powerful to lead men into ways of destruction."

—R.R.

☆ ☆

"Men will bear with you in anything you may teach, provided you maintain nothing offensive to their self-complacency."

What wonderful events the Middle East is yet to witness! "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom. 11: 26). The great crisis of the last days shall be resolved in favour of Israel both spiritual and natural, and as we see these tokens of the Time of the End, surely we can lift up our heads in anticipation of the joy that is yet to be. It is a wonderful privilege to be united by faith to the God of Israel, and see in the developments of the nation the token of our coming redemption. He is not remote from us, but a God Whose Hand is visibly evident in world developments. The fact that we can view current history, and see the outworking of His purpose, shows that He is very near at hand, He intervenes in a very practical manner in the events of everyday life — and therefore is of power to help us. 1960 promises to be a momentous year. Let us keep our eyes steadily fixed upon the prophetic horizon.

Prophetic Confirmation of the Scriptures

OUTCAST ISRAEL

"Though I make a full end of all nations whither I shall scatter thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee"—Jer. 30: 11.



Can the infidel explain why it is that this wonderful people, in whose days great nations have been born, and held dominion over most of the habitable portions of the globe, built mighty and magnificent cities, whose glory is recorded upon the historic page, have passed away, and in some cases scarcely a relic can be found to show that they ever had an existence, and yet this Israelitish people, whom they have persecuted, robbed, and sought their entire destruction, still live as a distinct and powerful nation, and although they have been repeatedly deprived of all their wealth, fined, and fleeced by almost every Government known to history, still hold the wealth of the world? Answer, oh infidel, if you can, apart from the light afforded by Divine Revelation.

Oh, how contrary to the course of nations is all this? We are aware that the northern tribes came into Southern Europe, and are now not at all distinguishable. No Englishman can say that he derives from the Britons and not from the Romans, or from the Saxons and not from the Normans.

On the contrary, the Jew is a Jew still. Even our own all-appropriating country, which denationalises Germans, Irish, French, Spanish, Swedes, has left untouched this wondrous people. Here they are, holding fast to that one tell-tale face, keeping up the sacred learning of their traditions, self-conscious in their isolation, irrepressible in their love of Jerusalem, sublime in their singular patriotism, evermore looking and longing for their Messiah, with the same intense individuality as when lords of the soil, they plucked God's fruit from the trees of Judea. And what is more, these world-wanderers of the centuries, these tribes of the weary foot, have not only survived the terrible persecutions heaped upon them for nearly nineteen centuries, but have now risen again as an element of power among mankind. The Jew is back in the land; Israel is again a geographical and political term; the prophecies of God are fulfilled in the condition in which he finds himself whether in the land or in the world. Surely he is the standing miracle of the world's current history: the bush of Moses ever burning, and yet never consumed; an ocular demonstration of how God may energise the secret springs of a people's life, yet without disturbing individual freedom or social characteristics; an unanswerable refutation of that godless philosophy that would turn the Almighty out of His universe, and a sure sign of Christ's second coming.

W.H.

We must not expect a smooth path towards the Kingdom. The example set before us in the Lord is one of difficulty, sorrow and grief. We must "endure hardship" as does the soldier. We must arm as do the nations. Our weapons, however, are not carnal, but spiritual, and consist of the shield of faith, the breastplate of righteousness, etc. With these weapons we must "endure." We have many examples to that end in addition to the Lord. The Apostles all suffered for the faith, all died violent deaths. And we are reminded that it is through much tribulation that we will receive the Kingdom. But the reward is well worth the effort and trouble to obtain it.



Interest at Atherton

"We had a lecture on 21st November at which 10 strangers attended, including a couple who had been to your special lecture. We hope they will continue an interest in the things of the Truth, but recognise that it is God alone Who gives the increase" — E.C.B.

(Atherton is in the far north of Queensland, about 1,400 miles from Brisbane. A small ecclesia of about a dozen members meets regularly. Mention was made of this Ecclesia in the "Editor's Notebook" some months back. We are glad that an interest is being shown in the Truth, and pray that the Divine blessing may rest on these efforts.— Editor).

I was recently approached by a group of brethren who were disturbed at what they described as an attack that had issued forth from the exhorting platform against the use of the Divine name. The speaker, apparently, had used more zeal than knowledge in the use of insinuation and indictment, and with singularly bad taste, had used the worst possible time in order to do so.

The exhorting platform is not the place for personal attack. In fact, when such is indulged in, the act of communion can be sadly disturbed. If a brother has a matter against another, it is for him to approach the erring one privately, with the object of reclaiming him, and not make the issue a public one.

The exhorting brother stands in a very onerous position when he takes his place upon the platform. His duty and privilege is to "feed the ecclesia of God" (Acts 20: 28). The word Paul used in this place signifies to "shepherd," and the shepherd of Palestine did not drive the sheep, he did not employ a dog to angrily bark at the heels of the sheep as is the custom in Australia, but led them quietly to pasture, guiding them with his voice, inducing in them a confidence in his ability to help and protect them. We all need to learn the lesson of the shepherd as we go about our ecclesial duties; much harm, much distress would be saved by so doing.

It is a strange fact, that from the time when the Divine Name was first delivered to Moses (Exod. 3: 14), men of flesh have resented its use. When Moses first came before Pharaoh, he declared: "Thus saith Yahweh Elohim of Israel, Let my people go . . ." Pharaoh had never previously heard of Yahweh; he did not recognise Him among the gods. He replied, "Who is Yahweh, that I should obey His voice? I know not Yahweh, neither will I let Israel go" (Exod. 5: 2).

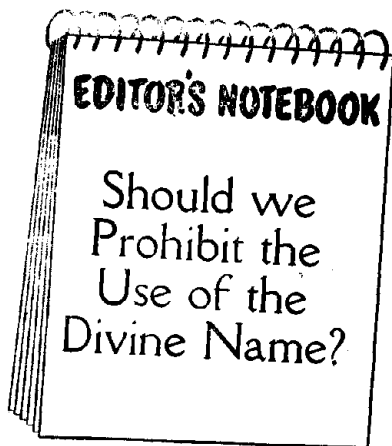
Pharaoh did not say, as it is recorded in the A.V., "Who is the Lord? I know not the Lord?" Because Pharaoh did believe he knew who was Lord among the gods. For the first time he had heard the challenging name of the Deity of Israel, and recognised that the Name set Him aside from all others. It struck harshly upon his ears; he hated the sound of it and the demand that was made in the Name, and therefore rejected it out of hand.

And men of Egypt have hated it ever since.

Why should the mention of the Name arouse such opposition?

The answer to that question is beyond me. I have listened to many reasons over the years, but have yet to hear a valid one.

Generally the opposition amounts to a personal prejudice. If "Lord," or "God," or "Jehovah" is used no objection is taken. If the Name that



Deity Himself selected as the one by which He wished to be known is used, there is immediate resentment.

Why?

Some have said that they "feel" it lacks reverence, that it is used for purposes of ostentation.

But the feeling that it lacks reverence is only due to a misunderstanding of the Name; and as to the latter suggestion, that is a matter for the individual. Some could parade the fundamental doctrines of the Truth for ostentatious purposes—but are we to refuse those doctrines, or hesitate to mention them because of the misuse on the part of some?

I have found no subject more humbling than that which surrounds the Name, the subject of God manifestation. I try to use the Name with the greatest reverence, whilst not standing in judgment on those who do not see fit to thus use it. Cannot the principle of Paul operate in such a case as this? Concerning another matter, he wrote: "Who are you that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth . . . One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it . . ."

The exhortation referred to in the beginning of these "notes," apparently made several challenging statements. It alleged that "those things which a former generation has laboured to build, a following generation casts aside and throws down." This principle, true in its proper setting, was somehow twisted around to do service for an attack upon any using the Divine name.

But stripped of emotionalism, what are the facts? The Divine Name was frequently used by our pioneers. It is found constantly in the writings of Brethren J. Thomas, R. Roberts, C. C. Walker, H. Sulley and others. In "Phanerosis," Brother Thomas makes the point that a great improvement would be made in the A.V. if the Divine Names and Titles were left untranslated in Hebrew, with an explanation of their significance in the front, and he goes to great lengths to explain the meanings and usage of these names. "Phanerosis" was written for the stranger! It originally formed the substance of a public address!

Where, then, does this exhorting brother stand? Brother Thomas has built up a principle, who is busy pulling it down?

The Divine Name was so frequently used by Brother Thomas that he incorporated it into the name he gave a house he proposed to purchase in Birmingham. In "My Days and My Ways," Brother Roberts tells of how Brother Thomas decided to live in England, and purchasing a house in the Midlands, he named it "Yahlom Lodge," or the way-faring place provided by Yahweh Elohim for one of His pilgrims. Brother Roberts writes: "In my juvenility, I had my qualms about putting the name of God on a house. But the Doctor took it very calmly as a thing in harmony with the practise of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob . . ."

The next alleged point in the exhortation was that the original Hebrew word is unknown, or at least very doubtful.

I know that there are commentaries that allege this, but they are usually the emanations of men who reject in part the teaching of the Bible. There is absolutely no doubt whatever as to the Hebrew consonants, nor, if the Bible is accepted as inspired, the root from which the Name comes. It is the Hebrew verb Ehyeh—"I will be." This is shown

without doubt from Exodus 3. Join the consonants with the vowels of the verb, and the Name is revealed.

The third point of the exhortation was that the Jews themselves will not pronounce it.

That is true. It is also true that they do not accept the Messiahship of the Lord Jesus. Are we to reject that truth because of their lead? Brother Thomas ridicules the attitude of the Jews in regard to the Divine Name, and shows that it is due to superstition. One authority from my library declares that the Name was commonly used by Jews until a time of great spiritual apostasy when it began to be substituted by the title of Baal, or Lord. Jews of faith did not hesitate to use it. In fact, one cannot read the Bible without frequently mentioning it. It is found incorporated in such names as Isalah, Jeremiah, Joshua, Jesus, or the common shout of triumph and joy: Halleluyah. It was in common and frequent use in the days of the prophets as all must admit who read the Word with understanding.

The Divine Name is commonly used today in theological circles to define the God of Israel, and the only reason that it was not incorporated into the Revised Standard Version is because the translators do not recognise the exclusiveness of the God of Israel. To use the Name, they realised, would set the whole of Christendom with its belief in the Trinity apart from the Bible.

That is just what Christadelphians do.

The speaker claimed that neither the Lord Jesus nor his disciples used the Divine Name.

But where is the proof of this? In "Phanerosis," Brother Thomas wrote: "The great teacher, Jesus of Nazareth, did not use the word Theos at all, inasmuch as he discoursed not in Greek." Throughout Palestine, in the days of the Lord, the common people, to whom he spake, used Aramaic, a form of Hebrew, but in the synagogue, the pure Hebrew was exclusively used. Is it not significant, that when the Lord visited the synagogue in Nazareth, he deliberately turned and read the Scripture where the Divine name appears (Luke 4: 16-19, cp. Isa. 61: 1-2).

We have the evidence of Paul, that when he heard the Lord speak, it was in "Hebrew" (Acts 26: 14), and when he wished to address the people of Jerusalem, it was in the same tongue (Acts 21: 40).

The speaker doubtless made the statement he did because it is commonly believed that the originals of the New Testament were in Greek. But there are no originals extant. We only have copies. And authorities believe that these are copies of originals written in Aramaic (or the common man's Hebrew of those times). The beauty of the Divine Titles cannot be revealed in this Gentile tongue. The Companion Bible makes that point, stating: "The Greek language, being of human origin, utterly fails (and naturally so) to exhibit the wonderful precision of the Hebrew inasmuch as the language necessarily reflects, and cannot go beyond the knowledge, or rather lack of knowledge, of the Divine Being, apart from revelation."

Finally, the speaker, is alleged to have said that we are breaking a tradition of past generations by using the Name. The speaker only needs to read some of the writings of the pioneers, works like "Eureka," "Phanerosis," "Ways of Providence" or his own hymn book (Hymn 14, for example) to realise the folly of such a statement.

Such exhortations can well be ignored.

At the same time, let wisdom be exercised by those who do understand and find pleasure in the Divine Name. Let them, as much as is possible, avoid argumentation on it. It is degrading to find it the subject of abuse and disputation, and those who have this additional knowledge should exercise the grace and charity to use it in a way honouring the One they wish to revere and worship above all else. "Those who are strong must bear towards those who are weak." Of course, when the subject is directly attacked, there is a need to stress what is right and true, and vigorously refute what is obviously wrong. But the Divine Name should not be bandied about as a catch-cry, or made the subject of undignified debate. Let the matter be reasoned in a calm fashion, on the basis of the Word, and Truth will prevail. The Name is designed for worship, not polemics. Be careful then, and learn the lesson of the shepherd who led the sheep and did not drive them. It is better to avoid the use of the Name than merely to use it without understanding, or in the spirit of defiance or challenge. The beautiful doctrine of God-manifestation should draw all Christadelphians together as one. I know, unfortunately, that the opposition certain have developed through ignorance and misunderstanding, is unfortunate, but at the same time, we reveal the characteristics of the Name, if with patience we bear with them, and try to help rather than to criticise and mock.

—Editor

The Supposed Pre-existence of Christ

JOHN 1 : 10

Several readers have requested that we give some explanation to John 1: 1-14, with special emphasis on v. 10. One reader expressed his mind thus: "I could pass John 1: 3 as reading: 'All things were made by it,' on the grounds that the Logos is the Divine Expression, and need not be Jesus the person at that stage. But John 1: 10 is another matter. To me it seems clear that the personal pronoun is required by the sense in vv. 10-12. If this is so, v. 10 teaches that the 'world' Christ was in, was the world that 'knew him not,' and that it was 'made by him! . . ." The verse reads: "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not."

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Answer

The section of Scripture to which our correspondent directs us (the prologue of John) is both beautiful and profound in its significance; so much so, that it is difficult to condense in few words a complete and satisfactory explanation.

What are we to do? We can provide an answer to v. 10, but what is really wanted, is a general exposition of all

verses from 1 to 14, and that would take us beyond the scope of available space in any one issue.

We have attempted a brief answer, therefore, and propose to provide a more extended one in subsequent issues. This means that other references submitted to us for consideration on this subject (such as 1 Cor. 8: 6) must await their turn — though we hope to give attention to them all in due course (God willing).

The subject matter of these verses is the Word (Gr. "Logos"). From this word came life and light (v. 4), and, ultimately, he who proclaimed himself to be the Light of the world (John 8: 12).

If we look a little closer at these verses, we find that "light" is set before us in two ways: firstly, the light that from the beginning shone in darkness, and continued to do so down the ages (v. 5); secondly, the "true light" which coming into the world (where the first light was already shining), illuminated all men (v. 9).

Thus we have both "light" and "true light."

And in this fact we have the key to the problem.

The former always was shining forth, the latter "came" (v. 11) in due time. The former "was in the world" (v. 10), the latter "came to it" (v. 11).

The word "true" defines the difference between these two forms of light.

This is a translation of the Greek word "Alethimos" which signifies "very," thus we have the "very light" against mere "light." The same word can be rendered the "real" or "genuine," and denotes the substantial, as contrasted with the shadowy, or the symbolic. The word occurs in Hebrews 8: 2, the "true tabernacle," and in Hebrews 9: 24: "the figures of the true." This usage of the word illustrates the meaning of John 1.

The Tabernacle in the days of Moses foreshadowed and symbolised the real, substantial Tabernacle, even the Lord Jesus. No one would think of confusing the Tabernacle in the days of Moses with the Tabernacle which is Christ. Yet these two are indissolubly linked together. Apart from Christ, the Tabernacle in the wilderness would have been both without power or meaning. It was only the presence of Christ (in type and promise) that invested it with power. He was there in symbol, in type, in promise — but to the mind of Deity, Christ's presence was very real. Forgiveness of sins was granted through Christ, who was represented in

the sacrifices under the law, as, today, he is in the bread and wine at the communal table. Men were moved by the power and influence of one who had then no existence, so that of Moses we read: "He esteemed the reproach for Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt . . . for he endured as seeing him who is invisible" (Heb. 11: 26-27).

In the same manner, the Most Holy in the Tabernacle, was a "figure of the true" — a figure of the real thing. The glory that shone in the darkness of the Most Holy, was a symbol of the glory that was revealed in the darkness of Judea, 1900 years ago, in the person of the Lord Jesus.

The "Light" should be no more confused with the true Light than the Tabernacle with the Lord Jesus.

John 1, therefore, speaks of "light" and "true light." The former was the Divine Expression, or Purpose, or Logos, revealed from the very beginning; the latter was the fulfilment of that promised in the former. When the true light came (v. 9), it came to a world in which light already existed (v. 10), a world that had been called into being by light, but which had largely rejected the influence of the light.

The word "world" in John 1: 10 is "kosmos" in Greek. It signifies not the physical world, but the "order" extant. Here was an Order in which light existed, which had come into being through light, but which did not fully comprehend the significance of that light.

That Order was the Jewish "world." Into that world, in which light already shone, there came "the true light," the substantial reality foreshadowed and promised in the word set before men from the beginning.

Our correspondent writes that "it seems clear that the personal pronoun is required by the sense" of the words of this verse.

That is not so. Whilst the word "logos" is in the masculine gender in the Greek, the word "light" is neuter gender. Notice that the translators have recognised this in v. 9, for they render: "That was the true Light, which . . ." instead of "who." In conformity with this, verse 10 can be rendered: "It was in the world, and the world was made by it, and the world knew it not." The "it" in each case relates to light, and the verse illustrates the kind of world, or order, into which Christ, the true light, came: it was a system of things that had been caused to exist by light, but which had denied the implications of light.

The Revised Version helps a little here. It renders v. 9:

"The true light which lighteth every man was coming into the world" and then the next verse explains the kind of "world" into which the true light began to shine.

Now let us look at the word "made" in this verse. Our correspondent says that it teaches that Christ "made" the world into which he came. But the word here used in the Greek ("ginomai") does not signify to create. It signifies "to become," "come to pass," "happen." The Diaglott states: "It occurs upwards of 700 times in the N.T., but never in the sense of create. . . . The word occurs 53 times in this gospel, and signifies 'to be,' 'to become,' 'to come to pass'; also to be done, transacted, etc. . . ."

The word occurs in the Septuagint in Gen. 2: 7 where we read that "man became a living soul." He had already been created some time before, and then breath was breathed into him, and he began to exist in the fullest extent, he had life. In the same way, the Order that had existed from the very beginning, was given true life, when Christ came 1900 years ago. Thus, if we identify the "light" of v. 10 as the Lord Jesus, all that the word "made" in this verse teaches is that the world was brought to a certain state by the presence of the Lord Jesus. The Diaglott supplies the word "enlightened," which though not specifically stated in the original, is nevertheless in accordance with the context.

For our part, however, we do not think the Lord Jesus is referred to in v. 10. He is the "true light," whereas the "light" was the illumination that came to men through the Word. We read these verses somewhat like this:

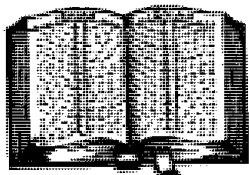
"The true light which lighteth every man was coming into the order. Light was (already) in the order, and the order was brought into existence through light, but the order did not understand light. The true light came into his inheritance . . ."

It is significant that John directs us back "to the beginning." In Creation week, we have in embryo form the whole purpose of God reaching to the last act of creation when man was made in the likeness of Elohim, pointing forward to the time when the second Adam will take dominion over the works of God's hands, and when, in Eden, the marriage of the antitypical Adam and Eve will take place. The application of the type is too clear to need any great elucidation. The mind goes forth to the seventh millenium of rest when the Second Adam will be united to the Second Eve, and when dominion will be granted to Christ and his followers over all others. The matter is treated quite frequently by the Apostles, and in the Book of Revelation.

In that same chapter (Genesis 1) light is given in two forms. In the beginning, God said, "Let there be light," and the light appeared. It made possible the early acts of creation. But on the fourth day, the light was supplanted by a more powerful light — the light of the sun, which was also reflected from the moon, both of which shone upon the earth beneath (vv. 14-19).

Is it not significant, that approximately 4,000 years after the Divine purpose was first enunciated in the declaration of Genesis 3: 15, that one should appear to declare, "I am the light of the world?" That same one, is styled in Malachi 4: "the sun of righteousness, with healing in his wings." The light of Gen. 1: 3 foreshadowed that of v. 17, as the declaration of Gen. 3: 15 foreshadowed the manifestation of the Lord Jesus 1900 years ago.

H.P.M.



Things New and Old

No. 9—

THE LORD'S PRAYER (cont.)

Hallowed be Thy Name

Last month we saw how the phrase "our Father which art in heaven" is full of power to lead us to an intimate walk with God, which we may hope to carry on eternally. We now continue our brief meditation on the "Lord's Prayer" as the framework on which to base acceptable prayer: the headings which will help us to concentrate our minds, and grow in fellowship with the Father.

"Hallowed be Thy name" has a wealth of thought behind it. God's name is His character, His purpose, and all that He is. It has an outward form, "Yahweh," which speaks of His past existence and all that He has done ("Who was"), His present power ("Who is"), and His future ("Who is coming" — Rev. 1: 8). It lays emphasis on His intention to become others who reflect His likeness, to extend His very being in them (the He who will be — Exod. 3: 14).

This name has inner attributes which constitute Yahweh's "reputation" or good name: merciful, gracious, longsuffering, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, that will by no means clear the guilty (Exod. 34). He made Himself a name when He led Israel out of Egypt — mercy to Israel and iniquity visited on Egypt (Exod. 6: 3; Neh. 9: 12; 1 Chron. 17: 21). Israel were to be the bearers of that Name, to reflect Yahweh in their national life (Deut. 28: 10; Jer. 13: 11); to be Holy because He was Holy (Lev. 11: 44). We are grafted into Israel and bear the name of Yahweh (Yahweh-shua — Jesus), and we too should be Holy as He is Holy (1 Pet. 1: 16).

This prayer is a petition for help to this end. I find it helps to protect me a little against the flippancy of the surrounding world — at least for a little while after I have thus prayed. To ask God to make us Holy is to strengthen our resolve: thus prayer helps to bring its own answer. "Hallowed be Thy name" also makes us think of others, and to sigh before God that they might be led into His name and become ornaments to it. I find myself mentioning individuals here, whom I would dearly love to see in the Covenant, bearing His Name. It is here, too, that praise breaks out that I have been privileged to know the joyful sound; and indeed thanksgiving for all His mercies, which are more than we can count. God's object with us is that His abounding grace may make us thankful, and that our thanksgiving may redound to His glory both now and in the age to come (2 Cor. 4: 15). So giving thanks for all things, appropriately comes at this stage of our prayer. It hallows or shows reverence to His name — acknowledges the tender play of his attributes upon us. Health, food, raiment, shelter, families, friends, brethren, the beauties of nature that surround us, wealth, the experience of life, and above all, a steady hope, a knowledge of the reason for all things — in one word, Christ Jesus. Never should we cease to thank Him as a major point of prayer, reflecting a major feature of mental makeup in Christ.

Thy Kingdom Come

A day will come when His name will be hallowed in all the earth. Hence the next petition: Thy Kingdom come! I find that in my prayers on the way to work this usually occupies a mile or two of my journey.

It is good that it should be so. It sets the goal before me at the beginning of the day. If present life is but a pilgrimage to that Kingdom then I must live as one whose citizen-

ship is of Zion, and who has here no abiding city, seeking one to come. I must hold human things lightly for the fashion of this world passeth away. My journey today is through waste and arid wilderness: no real refreshment will come from man. Thus the very act of praying for the Kingdom to come, sets life in its true perspective, and helps one to mortify the old man who is "at home in the body."

As I pray this prayer, there is a wealth in the Word on which to draw; each a different aspect — perhaps according to where we are reading. The reader will not need me to quote here. The promises to the fathers, to David, the words of Isaiah, of Amos, of Micah come to mind. "They shall dwell every man under his own vine and fig tree . . ." conjures up a day when big cities, ugly industries, masses of concrete and the internal combustion engine shall be a thing of the past, and simple, Godly, pastoral life shall be the order of the day. Indeed, how we just don't belong to this present evil world with its complexity and inventiveness.

Thy Will be done on Earth

Often I find my mind in this prayer goes to Jeremiah: "This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith Yahweh, I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts; and will be their God and they shall be My people" (Jer. 31: 33). This brings us to the next phrase in the prayer: the object of the Kingdom is the exaltation of God's will. Not just an eternal life insurance policy to ensure you and I needn't sleep a perpetual sleep. God manifestation, not human salvation, is the great object. Yet, of course, some men will be saved, and it is God's pleasure that men shall look forward to being practically involved. God does not call us to abstract worship of goodness, it is for the "joy set before us" with the Master that we are invited to endure the cross and despise the shame. Yet the joy is only a joyous prospect to us if we have learnt to love God's will so that we are thrilled at the prospect of a day in which men will actually discuss the things of God, where now their every word is about sport, cinema, television or similar escapist activity. They shall say "Come let us go up to the mountain of the house of Yahweh and He will teach us of His ways." "They shall no more say, Know Yahweh? for all shall know Me from the least of them even unto the greatest."

What a day it will be when every lip shall extol the beauty of the King who reigns in righteousness, when men shall learn to appreciate the contentment of righteousness

rather than the excitement of sin. When, like the reapers in the book of Ruth, it will be usual to salute one another with, "The Lord be with you," and "The Lord bless thee" without embarrassment.

That is the sort of Kingdom we long for; and in the longing there is sanctification. We will become a little more like the thing we long for. Note, too, how all these supplications come in the model prayer before we reach personal petition for our own daily needs. Asking God for things is put in its proper place.

This part of the prayer strengthens our love of Zion. "All my springs are in thee" (Ps. 87); "in whose heart are the highways of Zion (Ps. 83: 7, R.S.V.). It is at this stage in our prayer we express our longings: "Oh Lord how long!" It is God's pleasure that we "give Him no rest till He establish and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth" (Isa. 62:7). He invites us to worry Him about it, to be importunate for it ("men ought always to pray and not to faint" — Luke 18: 1); "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." We are invited to help bring the Kingdom nearer by our prayers, just as the saints in Rev. 8 brought judgment on the false Christian Roman Empire, by the incense which ascended from them from the golden altar. Of course, the day is fixed, but God fixed it with the prayers of all the saints in mind. So let us swell these prayers: "Oh Lord hear; O Lord hearken and do; defer not" (Dan. 9: 19), and thus, even now, become workers together with God towards the establishing of Zion.

As it is in Heaven

The Kingdom will be the projection of heaven to earth. The angels are "God's ministers who do His pleasure" (Ps. 103: 21). They "excell in strength, do His commandments, hearken unto the voice of His word." That will be the tone of all activity on the earth in the future age. We, too, hope to be like unto the angels. What fruitful meditations here!

But above all, the thought of heaven is of ineffable purity and the blinding light of God; nothing of corruption. That is to be the ultimate state of the earth; and even now we are invited to sit in heavenly places.

If we only keep on reading the word, and in the light of it slowly saying and reflecting on the Lord's Prayer several times a day, what an influence it will be; and this aspect of praying for the Kingdom is especially rich in power.

Give us this day our Daily Bread

Only after we have acknowledged God as our Father, hallowed His name, and longed for His kingdom to come and His will to be done on earth — only then do we ask Him for our creature needs.

Notice how it is **bread** — not **luxury**; it is **daily needs** — not sufficient for the next thirty years.

The very uttering of the prayer helps to get natural things into proper perspective, and to see our own efforts to earn a living as unavailing without the blessing of God.

The words of Christ come to mind to “take no anxious thought for your life, what ye shall eat, neither for the body what ye shall put on.” Most people think of little else — but your Father knows you have need of such things. The uttering of this prayer encourages us to lean upon the Rock of Israel for strength, and not on our own prowess. Our minds are caused to dwell on the many things said in the Word about God’s provision of temporal needs. Learning to trust, while quietly doing our part in these matters, is perhaps the greatest single element in our becoming inscribed in the book of life.

We think about our attitude to our employers: we really work for God, He is the paymaster: “be obedient to them, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ, not with eye-service as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with **goodwill** doing service as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord.” Yes, God pays our wages!

What a standard to set our day’s toil against, as we wend our way home. What a target to set ourselves as we toil! No place for ambitious scheming, anxious intriguing, or currying favour. God will give us what we need.

Simplicity

He will give us what we need, not what we think we need. God’s giving is based on our acceptance of His standards. Simplicity rather than complexity. This is not easy when the whole world is striving to better its living standards. They measure themselves by themselves. Mrs. Jones has a new frock or suite of furniture; Mrs. Smith must go one better. The more money people get the poorer they feel. Complexity is the keyword of this generation; and we so easily get caught up in it all, in the restless fretfulness that is never satisfied. Paul, and the prophets, call this attitude

of mind "covetousness which is idolatry." We brought nothing into the world, and can take nothing out. They that will be rich fall into divers temptations. The cares of this world choke the word. Godliness with contentment is great gain.

Yes, contentment, that is the word. Paul, in all his afflictions and material deprivation, could say: "I have learned in whatsoever state I am in therewith to be content" (Phil. 4: 11). That is a fine motto to nail to our mast. That is where a wife can help her husband by not continually thinking that others will despise her, or pity her, for her humble abode; for better even a barn where love is than a palace full of hatred. What more do we need than good, simple food, a clean, wholesome house, a few chairs, table, cupboards and beds? (Some good books, like "Eureka" to go with it all!—Editor). But, oh! we do tend to make life so complicated because of what other people have got. I know Elisha was a bachelor, even so the simplicity of his furnishing gives food for thought: a bed and a table, a stool and a candlestick (2 Kings 4: 10).

In writing thus I criticise my self in measure. We so easily become the children of our times. There have been rich saints. The father of the faithful was one. He chose to be a stranger and a pilgrim, dwelling in tents, rather than settle down to the complexity of city life like his nephew Lot, who choosing the comfort of the city, finished his mortal days in a miserable cave, no doubt a wiser man for his experience, for Peter tells us he was fundamentally a righteous man.

The Vanity of Riches

The world is full of the vanity of getting rich—"when goods increase, they increase who eat them" (Ecc. 5: 11). Ecclesiastes is full of the priceless value of a quiet life: simple toil and domesticity in the fear of Yahweh: "There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour" (Ecc. 2: 24; 3: 13; 5: 18), "the sleep of a labouring man is sweet whether he eat little or much, but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep" (Ecc. 5: 12).

If riches do come then "giving to him that needeth" is the prime use for the surplus, just as the heavily-laden camel has to unburden his impediments if he is to get through the narrow gate called the "needle's eye."

All these thoughts, and many more, spring from the request to "give us our daily bread," again showing that the

very uttering of prayer focusses the mind on God's way of looking at things. The very act of prayer to a large extent brings its own answer.

There is a pleasing phrase in a prayer of Solomon in which this one in the Lord's prayer may well be based: "May the Lord our God maintain the cause of His people Israel, as each day require" (1 Kings 8: 59).

Bread from heaven

For me it is all summed up in Exodus 16. We are sometimes so busy in type-building in this chapter that we miss the simple essentials.

Israel were to gather the bread from heaven at a certain rate every day, that God might prove them, whether they would walk in His laws or no (v. 5). This, then, is the purpose of the daily round. God is presented as the Giver: "This is the bread which Yahweh hath given you to eat" (v. 15).

Yet every man had to do something about it: "Gather of it every man according to his eating (v. 16, cp. 2 Thess. 3: "If any will not work neither should he eat").

But all were not equal in ability; some gathered more, some less, yet he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack (vv. 17-18). Why? Because they shared their surplus. 2 Cor. 8: 14-15 proves this by quoting it as an exhortation to generosity in balancing the want of some with the abundance of others.

Others forgot that it was "give us this day" and kept some over in case God did not provide. How often we are like them, instead of being "careful for nothing." "Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself; let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day" (Matt. 6: 34).

"When the sun waxed hot it melted" (v. 21). No storing up for a rainy day. God will not see the righteous begging bread. Prudence to save a little of this year's harvest for next year's seed must stay within bounds lest we build up treasure on earth.

And so we go about earning our day's living, or spending it, before the Lord, if we follow out the reflections suggested by the headings for prayer given by Jesus. It is on this background that problems which seem great disappear, and clouds that seem heavy display a silver lining. We cast our burden on the Lord. "Let your behaviour be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for

He hath said: I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, 'The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what men shall do unto me' (Heb. 13: 5-6; based on Joshua 1: 5 and Ps. 118: 6).

—E. Wille (Eng.)

How would you answer it?

PILATE'S QUESTION

What is truth? These words were uttered as a result of the Saviour's declaration to Pilate respecting his kingship. No answer appears to have been given, but we may depend upon it, that had any been given, it would have been consistent with other statements concerning truth made by Jesus to His followers and mentioned in His prayer.

A simple and clear definition is "Thy word is truth" (Jhn. 17). Truth, then, is one of the divine attributes, a quality of Him who is truth in its fullness and perfection. By His truth He is able to lead, enlighten, and sanctify His people who trust in Him. They hear Jesus saying, "I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me." He is King or ruler in respect of this fact. He did not claim temporal rule of this "kosmos" or arrangement of things, but He did claim authority over those who were his own as their head and leader; for every one that is of the truth hears his voice.

The signification of the Greek "aletheia," rendered "truth," is "That which is not open or manifest." It can, therefore, be known only by discovery, or revelation. Truth is a hidden power without which we cannot do anything serviceable to our fellows nor worship God acceptably. All power is indescribable, but at the same time appreciable; its nature, form and essence we cannot discover. Yet power so hidden and indescribable is ever known by its effects. We may say that truth transcends every other power with which we are acquainted by reason of its easy accessibility to man. In the conscience of man it stands as a witness of the righteousness of God, valuable to those who strangle it not. Those who rightly cherish it by walking in the "love" of it hold it as a lasting treasure.

The truth is a power and requires discretion in the handling, or it may be productive of much harm and loss to ourselves. Truth itself is impregnable; we can do nothing against it, but we can do much for its sake. Its proper use requires the accompaniment of prayer. Truth is ennobling in its effects. It makes us lightly esteem those things that are mean and trivial with which we come into daily contact, and fixes our attention upon those higher things of life which make for real and lasting peace with God, and fellowship with those with whom we associate. This is because we have yielded to the claims of truth, and acknowledge its power in our lives, and this without endeavouring to fix the quantity of truth, or suggest any limitation of its power.

Truth is opposed to that which is false and deceitful. No lie is of the truth; it requires to be invented or imagined. It is more requisite today than ever to discover truth by proving it, and searching for it as for hidden treasure. When discovered it may be used as a weapon or as medicine; the apostolic command is, to speak it in love. This needs mercy, which is frequently joined to truth to express the goodness and forbearance of God. The psalmist frequently extols the mercy and truth of God. By His mercy He prevents and promises; and by His truth He executes and performs. The greatness of His truth and mercy is depicted as reaching unto the clouds, extending unto all His works. His faithfulness is guaranteed by His truth, for He will perform the truth to Jacob and the mercy to Abraham which He has sworn from the days of old.

Truth knows no unessentials: its every aspect is requisite to the Christian life. The Christian warfare requires the recognition and use of more truth than that frequently subscribed to by the hand. Truth itself teaches us that the knowledge of truth does not exist to the same degree in every one who holds it. Hence the Apostolic injunction, "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." Diversity of knowledge of the truth is a theme of prophecy which declares a time when the watchmen who now see through a glass darkly shall see eye to eye. For knowledge and stability shall characterize that time (Isa. 33: 6).

Truth is a treasure; we can do nothing without it. We have this treasure in earthen vessels. The containing power of these vary, but the Gospel is suited to them all, and gives a tolerably clear conception of the object of our worship and God's will in relation to ourselves. Otherwise we should be

in the position of those who through ignorance worship they know not what.

Truth cannot be established by disunity or separating any part of it. Its power is to produce peace and concord among those who know it. The apostolic ecclesias after a crisis of persecution and affliction during a period of rest were multiplied and edified by walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit. There is much difference between a multiplication of meetings and a division in a meeting. The apocalyptic vision which depicts the success of the early ecclesias presents the truth as a bow in the hand of a pre-war victor who conquers on every side: unity and co-operation is suggested in this figure. Without Christ we can do nothing, either individually or collectively. For He is the truth concrete. The society of the truth, which consists of those who are Christ's and constitute that body of which He is the living head, may include persons of varying conscience and understanding. They may differ in respect of diet, in the observance of holy days, etc., but it cannot consist of those who deny allegiance to and faith in Christ.

Dominion over the body of Christ is not conferred by a knowledge of the truth; the apostolic rule was, One is your Master, all ye are brethren. The apostle Paul, while he disclaimed dominion over the faith of others, yet surpassed all other leaders of the ecclesias. Personal responsibility suggests to those who know the truth the necessity of using it aright. In speech its use requires to be with grace seasoned with salt in order that we should know how to answer every man. In worship the knowledge of truth should stir up our spirit to fervent service. In controversy truth requires a patient hearing of both sides if we would prove all things and hold fast to that which is good. As mercy is joined with truth in the Scriptures, the children of God are required to be merciful. Righteousness and peace are also joined, as attributes of God; we should rightly esteem each of these, not exalting one above another. The greatest exponent of truth shows how each of those qualities should be used; in his testimony for truth before Pilate we are assured that He witnessed a good confession. His mission was to restore the truth and establish it to its proper place in the heart and affections of man with an ascendancy far surpassing mere theory. The standard of truth is His voice as a King; the test of truth consists of an intelligent hearing and also obeying of that voice. If we continue in loving association with the voice of Jesus, we shall be assured of His eternal com-

panionship and partake of His spirit. If we on the other hand surrender to the dictates of the flesh, and do not the truth, the kingship of Christ will avail us nothing, and His confession before Pilate will help us not.

—F.V.



For Private Study

NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE

An Itemised Exposition of the Book of Revelation, based on "Eureka" and designed for home study and for Bible marking.

CHAPTER TWO

CHRIST'S WARNING MESSAGES TO THE ECCLESIAS — EXHORTATIONS FROM HEAVEN

VERSE 1

"Church of Ephesus"—Should be rendered: "Ecclesia in Ephesus." The Ecclesia was not identified with the city; there is nothing analogous to the "church of England" in the terms of the Spirit in relation to the saints. Ephesus was the metropolis of the Lydian Asia, and was considered one of the best and most glorious cities of those times. It was the greatest emporium of Asia proper, and was styled one of the eyes of Asia, Smyrna being the other. Today it is noted for its ruins of palaces, temples and amphitheatres. It is called by the Turks Ajasaluk, or the Temple of the Moon, from the magnificent structure formerly dedicated to Diana, the goddess of the Ephesians. The whole town is nothing but a habitation for herdsmen and farmers, living in low and humble cottages of dirt, sheltered from the extremities of weather by the mighty masses of ruinous walls, the pride and ostentation of former days, and the emblem in those of the frailty of the world, and the transient vanity of human glory ("Eureka").

Paul introduced the Truth to Ephesus (Acts 18: 19). After he left, Apollos visited the city, proclaiming the doctrine of John the Baptist (v. 24). But he was far behind the times. Paul's friends, Aquila and Priscilla, hearing him in the synagogue, formed an acquaintance with him, and "expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly" (v. 26). Having been thus set right by them, he went to work in the right direction, and mightily convinced the Jews in public, showing them by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

Paul later visited the city again (Acts 19), and the ecclesia gradually grew under his ministrations. On his last journey, he called for the elders of the Ecclesia, to give them final words of exhortation (Acts 20: 17-32). Timothy was also sent to Ephesus (1 Tim. 1: 3) to restrain certain brethren who were causing trouble, and to put other matters in order. These references to Ephesus, together with the Epistle to the

Ephesians, shows how largely the Ecclesia figured in those times.

"Who walketh in the midst"—Christ walks in the midst of the Ecclesias (Mat. 18: 20). That is true today as it was then. He is the silent observer of all that goes on. He can read the thoughts of those who gather from week to week. He knows the motives of all who assemble. And this he clearly states in v. 2.

VERSE 2

"I know thy works"—What solemn words of warning; how circum-spect we should be. He commends them because "thou canst not bear them which are evil," because of their strict adherence to the Truth—but then adds words of rebuke.

"False apostles"—cp. 2 Cor. 11: 13. Paul had warned Timothy at Ephesus against such (cp. 1 Tim. 1: 3, 6-8, 19-20; 4: 1). He had warned the elders of what they could expect from false workers in the Ecclesia (Acts 20: 28-30). Christ's commendation shows that the Ephesian Ecclesia had faithfully observed the warning, had rejected the teaching of those who claimed to be "apostles, and were not." An "apostle" is one sent with a commission, one possessing authority. There were apostles chosen by God and Christ, such as Paul, and there were apostles selected by men (cp. e.g., 2 Cor. 8: 23—"Messengers" = "apostles;" Phil. 2: 25: "your messenger" = "your apostle"—see R.V. margin). In addition, there were also "false apostles," men claiming an authority they did not rightly possess.

VERSE 4

"I have somewhat against thee"—A sad note is introduced into Christ's message. In spite of the commendation of the previous verses—the faithful striving of the brethren in extension of the Truth, their earnest vigilance in opposing error, their patient labour in the face of virulent opposition, they had nevertheless "lost their first love." The work they did was excellent, but the motive that governed it was not a healthy one. Christ could see that, though others may not have been able to do so. The true motive that governed this Ecclesia was carefully hidden by externals, and it required the keen eye of the Spirit to discern it. The fault was a serious one, for despite the apparent zeal of the Ephesians, there were the indications of decay and spiritual death, unless that first love was recovered.

VERSE 5

"Repent"—This does not signify merely to be sorry, but to change. The word in the Greek means to change in mind and attitude.

VERSE 6

"The Nicolaitanes"—The Ephesians had this redeeming feature that they "hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes," hated also by Christ. He commends them because "they could not bear them which are evil" (v. 2). These expressions remind us that both love and hate have their place in the Divine economy. We are commanded to "hate every evil way" among which is classed false doctrine. What is the use of loving good, if it does not induce in us a hatred of evil! Commendation was extended to the Ephesians for their righteous hatred, and, at the same time, they were exhorted to develop a true love.

The word "Nicolaitanes" is formed by a conjunction of two words: "Nico"—victory, and "Laitos"—the people. The word therefore signifies "Vanquishers of the People." Brother Thomas identifies the Nicolaitanes as errorists who introduced Gentile philosophies within the Ecclesias (cp. 1 Tim. 6: 20; 2 Tim. 2: 16). Their "science," "gnosis," or knowledge was derived from Plato, and incorporated a belief in the immortality of the soul. The doctrine of the resurrection was an em-

barrassment to such teaching, but these errorists got around it by teaching that it was already past (cp. 1 Cor. 15: 12; 2 Tim. 2: 18). The clear teaching of Truth by Paul and Timothy in Ephesus, induced a hatred of the Nicolaitanes with their false doctrine on the part of the brethren—an attitude of mind endorsed and encouraged by the Lord himself, who looked with anger upon the hypocrites of his day (Mark 3: 5—see also Ps. 97: 10; 119: 104; 139: 22).

Use these notes as the basis of a personal or class study of this most interesting book. Use them in conjunction with "Eureka." You will read yourself rich with this incomparable exposition by Brother Thomas. We shall be happy to answer any questions on the matter outlined, and provide a more detailed exposition for any portion thereof.—Editor.

VERSE 7

"He that hath an ear"—"These words seven times repeated, give us to understand that what is said in each particular letter is not confined to the particular ecclesia addressed, but to all the ecclesias whose spiritual condition at a certain stage of apostasy was represented by that particular one. The promises made in all of them are promises to all true believers of all ages and generations. . . . The words are not 'let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Star-Angel of the Ephesian ecclesia.' One might hear this and feel no personal interest in the matter. He might say that the promises beginning 'to him that overcomes' related only 'to him of the particular ecclesia addressed that overcomes, I will give'; but this restriction is excluded by the phrase, 'what the spirit saith to the ecclesias,' showing that it is spoken to the saints in general" ("Eureka," vol. 1).

"The tree of life"—This granted life eternal (Gen. 3: 22). It was denied the posterity of Adam, but will be made available to the "seed" of the second Adam (cp. Isa. 53: 10: 1; Cor. 15: 45). Thus the first and the last books of the Bible are joined as a bridge, the former showing how things happened, the latter showing how they will end. Eden will be restored. The second Adam will be united in marriage to the second Eve (2 Cor. 11: 1; Rev. 19: 7) and will be "as one" in the paradise of Deity (Gen. 2: 23; John 17: 21). "To eat of the Tree of Life is to be an unfading leaf, an immortal possessor of the glory, honour, and incorruptibility of the Kingdom which the God of heaven will set up in the Age to come" ("Eureka"). The saints are likened to trees in Paradise—cp. Ps. 1; Rev. 22: 2.

"Paradise"—This is a Persian word for a garden, which the Holy Land—the particular inheritance of the saints—will become—cp. Isa. 62: 4-5; Ezek. 36: 33.

SMYRNA ENCOURAGED—vv. 8-11

Forty-five miles north of Ephesus, Smyrna was an influential city of Ionia, and is still a place of some importance. It is situated on the Archipelago in Asia Minor, and has a very fine harbour; it is also of prominence in Greek Catholicism, which has established it as a metropolitan see.

There is no special notice of Smyrna in the New Testament apart

from the reference in the Apocalypse. The Gospel was probably introduced to the city by Paul during his three years' residence in Ephesus. The ecclesia must have been a healthy community spiritually, for Christ speaks of it in terms of commendation and encouragement. The celebrated Polycarp (approx. A.D. 167) was associated with the Smyranean Ecclesia, and it was visited by Ignatius in the year 107 on his way to Rome, whither he was sent by order of Trajan, "to be thrown to the wild beasts for the entertainment of the people." While at Smyrna, he wrote a letter of advice to the Ecclesia at Ephesus.

Time made its inroads into the Ecclesia in Smyrna, and gradually apostasy asserted itself, until the Truth faded from view. But that unhappy condition was not the state of the Ecclesia when Christ directed this message.

VERSE 8

"I am the first and the last"—Christ is the author and finisher of our faith (Heb. 12: 2). He begets faith in us and completes its work.

"Thou art rich"—Rich in spite of material poverty. See James 2: 5 and contrast with Rev. 3: 17.

"Blasphemy"—Notice that blasphemy is here associated with an untruth, and not directly connected with the name of God or Christ.

"Say they are Jews"—There are "spiritual" Jews as well as natural Jews. Those who embrace the Truth embrace a Jewish hope (Acts 28: 20), and are counted as spiritual Israelites (cp. Rom. 2: 28; 9: 7-8; Eph. 2: 11-14). There were some in Smyrna who were laying false claims to being spiritual Jews, but who were, in fact, members of Satan's synagogue.

"Synagogue of Satan"—"The word synagogue signifies a collecting, gathering, hence a congregation, and sometimes the building where the congregation meets. The blasphemers in Smyrna, who said they were apocalyptic Jews, or, by interpretation, Christians, but lied, are not styled 'the Ecclesia of the Satan' because they would imply that they were called out by special invitation to something" ("Eureka"). These pseudo-spiritual-Jews "went out" of their own accord (cp. 1 John 2: 19) accusing their brethren falsely of being in the wrong. Having separated themselves, they became a congregation of the satan, the adversary. They were opposed to those who kept the Truth, though claiming some sort of identity with them. But their claim was blasphemy.

"If the gospel of the Kingdom be stated and proved, to a man, or a company of men and women, and they oppose it as contrary to their views and feelings, by so doing they evince that they savour not of the things of God, and are therefore satans. On this principle, those who emigrated from the fellowship of the apostles, and made a new settlement upon the Nicolaitan basis, for themselves, seeing that their teaching was opposed to and subversive of the "truth as it is in Jesus," became satan. This was the case with the faction in Smyrna. They pretended to be Christians, but were opposed to the true doctrine of Christ, and opposed those who were faithful to it, thereby constituting themselves 'the satan of Smyrna'" ("Eureka").

VERSE 10

"The Devil"—The word "diabolos" signifies false accuser. This verse speaks of one such who cast true believers into prison and persecuted the ecclesia. It relates to the civil power of Rome, which was falsely accusing the brethren, casting them into prison. For the "devil"

as a "government" see also 1 Tim. 2: 26; Eph. 6: 11.

"Tribulation ten days"—A period of intense persecution broke out against the Christians during the years 110-120 A.D. under the direction of the Emperor Trajan. He tried to stamp out the growing Christian communities, and ordered his officers to repress them with every severity. The celebrated letter of Pliny, in which he records the hopelessness of diverting Christians from their beliefs no matter how severe he persecuted them, was written at this time.

VERSE 11

"The second death"—The death of the rejected at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

PERGAMOS WARNED — vv. 12-17

Pergamos was the name of a kingdom as well as of a city. The kingdom was one of the four that developed out of the break up of Alexander's Empire, referred to in Dan. 8: 8. We read that "out of one of them came forth a little horn" (v. 9) which subsequent words identify with the Roman power. Pergamum was the "one" through which Rome came to power in the east.

Attalus, king of Pergamos, died B.C. 138, and was succeeded by his nephew Philometer, who governed the kingdom in a most pernicious and extravagant manner. He was scarcely seated upon the throne before he stained it with the blood of his nearest relations, and the best friends of his family. Throughout his reign he vented his ferocity and barbarity in all directions.

Previous to his death (133 B.C.), he made a will, by which he appointed the Roman people his heirs. The principal article was expressed in these terms, "Let the Roman people inherit all my effects." They were not slow to take possession, and by the sword compelled the people to submit, reducing the one-time kingdom of Attalus into a province of Rome called Asia, in which were found the seven ecclesias. Pergamos, therefore, was the former capital of the kingdom, and played an important part in the fulfilment of Daniel's prophecy, Ch. 8.

Little is known of the Ecclesia apart from what we read here, but it was apparently the headquarters of the developing apostasy.

VERSE 12

"Sharp sword"—The Spirit-word, cp. Heb. 4: 12.

VERSE 13

"Satan's seat"—The adversaries of the Truth were found in great strength in Pergamos (cp. vv. 14-15). In the community styled by pagans as "Christian" were found "those who held the doctrine of Balaam," and of "the Nicolaitanes." This caused constant strife, so that the Ecclesia was divided, some following Antipas, and others following the errorists. Antipas was in the minority, and constituted the "faithful martyr" of Christ, being slain by the hatred and poisonous tongues of the adversary. The headquarters of the apostasy which was troubling all ecclesias was found in Pergamos, so that it is styled "satan's seat."

"Holdest fast my name"—The name "Jesus"—Yahshua, is a combination of Yahweh and Shua, and signifies "I will be salvation." The name Yahweh is the self-imposed name of God, first proclaimed at the bush for a memorial unto all true Israelites (Exod. 3: 14). The name has been incorrectly translated "Jehovah," "LORD," and "GOD," and should be rendered Yahweh. It proclaims His purpose to manifest Himself in a generation of righteous ones over whom Christ is chief.

In Scripture a person's name expresses his purpose and character. To hold fast "his name" means more than merely understanding what the name of God is, or merely pronouncing it; it means to manifest it. We "hold fast his name" when His purpose dominates our lives, and our characters reflect His example. If we are true sons of God and brethren of Christ, we must build into our lives the Divine qualities that are so beautifully expressed in the life of the Lord.

It was difficult to "hold fast my name" in Pergamos because of the disturbing activity of the Balaamites and Nicolaitanes. Their opposition to the Truth caused dissension and trouble, and in the heat of those things, men often lose their sense of proportion, and are driven to extremes. They forget the need for faith and patience, and that there exists one with a "sharp sword" who can and will fight on their behalf if they but patiently submit to distressing circumstances, and yet courageously and tenaciously hold on to "my name."

"Antipas"—He is styled "my faithful witness." Hence the name is identical with him, or them, who held fast the name and denied not the faith of Christ, whether in Pergamos or elsewhere in the midst of persecution. The name is typical of a class at that time, and signifies "against all." It is introduced here as the Apocalyptic designation of those who were the faithful, in opposition to all pretenders to Christianity. Paul and all who adhered to his teaching were Antipas. They were "against all" Nicolaitanes, Balaamites, children of Jezebel, false apostles, and spurious Jews, who, as Justin says, "are called Christians, but are atheists and impious heretics, because that in all things they teach what is blasphemous, ungodly and unsound" (see "Eureka").

"Slain among you"—One does not have to be subjected to a physical death to become a martyr in an Ecclesia (cp. 1 John 3: 15). Figuratively Antipas was slain by the hostility of his brethren.

VERSE 14

"Thou hast them there"—There were heretics in the Ecclesia at Pergamos whose presence should not have been allowed. So long as they were permitted to remain, the Ecclesia could not have peace, and unless they were dealt with there was grave danger that the light of truth would be completely submerged. That was the warning of Christ to the elders in Pergamos.

"Balaam"—The word signifies "Waster of the People." He allowed riches and honour to blind him to his responsibilities, thus compromising the Truth for the sake of wealth (Num. 22: 40). He here types those who have compromised with the world (2 Pet. 2: 15), and by their influence induce others to do so.

"Stumblingblock before the children of Israel"—Balaam found it impossible to defeat the counsel of God in relation to Israel, but devised a means whereby the Israelites were cursed. He drew them from their separateness by inducing them to mix with the Moabitess women, and by this means caused them to stumble from the Truth (Num. 31: 16). In order to show their "broadmindedness" the Israelites were seduced to worship with the heathen with disastrous results.

"Things sacrificed to idols, fornication"—These terms are to be interpreted spiritually not literally. The Ecclesia "sacrifices to idols" where it allows anything to stand between it and Christ; it commits "fornication" when it palliates with the world. The Ecclesia is described as a "chaste virgin unto Christ" (2 Cor. 11: 2), and for such to deny the teaching of Christ or to try and mix with those of the world is to commit spiritual fornication. "The manifestation of these false teachers contemporary with the apostles," writes Brother Thomas,

created a crisis in the history of the faith. It had come to this, either they must be put down, or the doctrine of Christ would be suppressed. This alternative would certainly have resulted, if God had not reserved to Himself a remnant who refused to bow the knee to Baal. This remnant was Antipas, and therefore 'against all' the Nicolaitanes, Balaams, and Jezebels, false teachers, who had crept in unawares, corrupting and handling the Word of God deceitfully, that they might make it less offensive to the Jews and idolaters, and so make the profession of Christianity more popular and consequently less dangerous to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness in the world."

(To be continued)

AUSTRALIAN SHEEP IN ISRAEL WON'T COME WHEN CALLED

The parable of the good shepherd (John 10) is based upon the fact that, in Palestine, the shepherd leads the sheep, calling them by name. The same principle is expressed in Psalm 23, and the lesson behind this is that the sheep of Christ's pasture should learn to hearken to his voice, and respond when spoken to.

The Scriptural lesson is told in negative form by a news item in a recent issue of the Adelaide "News." It reported:

"Five sun-tanned stockmen returned to Sydney by air last week after delivering 1,500 sheep and seven kelpie dogs to Israel.

"The sheep are providing quite a few headaches for the Israeli shepherds,' said the leader of the party, Mr. C. Anderson, of Griffith.

"They know each of their sheep by name, and the sheep come when called.'

But the Australian sheep won't answer to any names, and they run for their lives when they're called.

"To make it harder, there aren't any fences in Israel. Our sheep run like dogs when they are newly shorn and shepherds just can't catch them.'

"The party took Border Leicesters, Dorset Horns and Corriedales from the Griffith property of Dr. Solomon Goldberg to Israeli Sheep Enterprises, a 2,000 acre station 40 miles from Jerusalem. Dr. Goldberg is chairman of directors of the enterprise."

There is a very valuable lesson to be learned from the above experience. Our thanks are due to Sister Ide, of Woodville Ecclesia, for the above extract.

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VOLUME TWENTY SIX

THE LOGOS

Upholding the Purity of Apostolic Doctrine and Practice

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Thoughts for the Times

Taught of God

Jesus says, "Every man that hath HEARD and hath LEARNED of the Father cometh unto me" (John 6: 45). A man who has neither "heard" nor "learned" of the Father cannot come to Jesus; for no man can know Jesus apart from the Father and no man can know the Father apart from the "hearing" and the "learning" which God has made possible by giving us the revelation of Himself by His word. To know Jesus apart from the Father is to know "another Jesus" — even the mere-man Jesus of mere historians and philosophers. We must know God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent, whom to know, Jesus says, "is life eternal."

But knowledge in the intellectual sense, by itself, is not faith. It is the germ of faith, but must advance to faith in that imperturbable conviction and vivid sense which enable a man to say with David, "I saw the Lord alway before me." This kind of faith is a reality — a motive power — a mental element not only governing but initiating action — practically impelling a man to do this and not to do that. It is a confidence which acts of God through what He has said and done, and, therefore, embracing the "lively hope" of those

good things to come which God has promised. But it must go one step further to be complete and acceptable. Faith must work by love. This is "the first and the great commandment." Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. Oh, how vastly beautiful, how vastly important is this! A hard brightness, is faith without love. How to get at the love that softens and beautifies faith — this is the question, and not insoluble. Love cannot act on an impalpable abstraction. And God is not an impalpable abstraction, but a substantial glorious Reality — a great King — a Personal Majesty, focusing in Himself the powers of the Universe, which are "in His hand." All love grows by knowledge where the object is lovable. God is lovable in Himself, as no other being can be. It is, therefore, acquaintance only we need. We get this acquaintance in the Scriptures. God is not to be learnt elsewhere, in our age, except in so far as some features of His character are generally reflected in nature. Learning Him there, in knowledge indulged in — knowledge renewed and digested day by day — we gradually and insensibly acquire that affinity that becomes conscious to us in love; and by the power of this love, our minds gravitate to Him in adoration, supplication, praise and gladness.

— R.R.

The Bread from Heaven

Christ : The True Manna

"What sign showest thou, that we may see, and believe thee?"
(Jhn. 6: 30)

Of all the "hard sayings" of Jesus, none were more difficult to the comprehension of his Jewish contemporaries than those which refer to his relationship with the Father. Prejudice and superstition blinded the eyes of their understanding, and that blindness persists to this present day. That was the case particularly in relation to the discourse recorded in John 6: 22-71.

A careful reading of these words will make the motive of the Lord Jesus clearly apparent. They were called forth by the challenge of the Jews, who had contrasted the Lord with Moses, saying: "He gave us bread from heaven to eat; what sign do you give us, that we might understand and believe you?" (v. 30).

The Lord took up the challenge. He set before the Jews the symbolical and typical meaning of the miraculous appearance of Manna, during the wanderings of the Israelites, 1,500 years before. As we read the discourse, our minds flash back over the preceding centuries, until we pause at the time of Israel's redemption from Egypt. The first passover had been kept; the Jews had been baptised in the Red Sea, and stood freed from the slavery of Egypt on the other side; they had witnessed the breath-taking spectacle of Pharaoh's mighty army being destroyed by Divine vengeance. Other milestones were passed: the bitter waters of Marah, the goodly surroundings of Elim, the entrance into the Wilderness of Sin with its stark, providential trials. It was at this stage of the journeyings, on the 15th day of the second month after departure from Egypt (Exod. 16: 1), that events occurred which provided the background for Christ's discourse to the Jews fifteen centuries later.

Before deliberating upon the relevant features of John 6, due emphasis should be placed upon Christ's challenging statement in John 5: 46-47: "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"

Had the Jews "believed Moses" they would have understood the spiritual lessons of the manna in the wilderness, and would have been receptive to the teaching of the Lord Jesus. Similarly, if Christendom today would hear and receive the same truths, it would not be found so steeped in "tradition of men," such as the doctrine of the Trinity, or the so-called pre-existence of Christ. Let us, then, receive the Master's words of instruction as true servants, and not fall after the same manner of unbelief.

It is profoundly significant that the discourse in which the Lord Jesus revealed himself as "the bread of life" was delivered on the day following the feeding of the five thousand with bread and fishes. This miracle was also a "sign," as the word implies. It taught that Jesus was both bread and meat to those who would receive him. It is recorded that "he blessed and brake" the food before distributing it to the multitude: words of singular significance to his enlightened followers (cp. Mat. 26: 26).

Next day the multitude flocked around him — not so much to hear his teaching as to witness his miracles. The people remembered that the miracle of the previous day had been to their advantage. And Jesus was not slow to

point this out to them: "Verily, verily, I say unto you; Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled" (v. 26). He exhorted them to higher interests: "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life."

These words take on greater meaning when we understand the implication of the word translated "meat." "Brosis," the Greek word, signifies "the act of eating" rather than the meat itself. Thus we have an exhortation to "labour for that eating which endureth unto everlasting life." The Lord's exhortation requires that we seek out a certain digestible substance; that we masticate, swallow, assimilate it. The Jews sought for material substance, something that would sustain them from day to day; the Lord exhorted them to seek spiritual food which can obtain for them everlasting life.

But more challenging than this exhortation, was the added statement that he, alone, could provide that meat, for "him hath God the Father sealed" (v. 27). By this claim he fearlessly stated that his teaching and actions had the stamp of Divine approval. By using the word "sealed," he inferred his heavenly relationship. A seal is a mark of ownership; it immediately identifies that which is sealed with the one who seals it.

With the memory of the notable miracle of the day preceding still fresh in their minds, how could the Jews refute this claim to Divine relationship?

All they could do was to parry his statement with a question: "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?"

Back came the emphatic, uncompromising reply: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom He hath sent."

To do that, however, implied in their minds a sense of disloyalty to Moses. The whole of their religious and political order was founded on Moses, and yet here was one claiming a greater authority, calling upon them to believe in him. Where was the sign of his authority? True, he had performed a notable miracle and sign the **day previous**, but it was not the equal of that daily sign performed by Moses when the whole nation, in the wilderness, was fed with bread from heaven. They put their reasoning into words, demanding a greater sign, saying: "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat" (v. 31).

These words reveal that the Jews, far from being hopelessly bewildered, were, in fact, intelligently following the thread of Christ's words, connecting them with the happenings of the previous day. They even quoted the Scriptures in support of the stand they made. However, their understanding of the vital implications, both in the words of Moses and of Jesus, were entirely lost to them, as the narrative shows (v. 41). In other words, mere reading and formal understanding of the Scriptures are not in themselves "the meat which endureth unto everlasting life," there is the need for spiritual perception. "And this I pray," wrote Paul to the Philippian brethren, "that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment" — or "discernment" (RV), "insight" (Moffat), "perception" (Diag.).

The Jews read the Scriptures, but did not understand them. So the Lord corrected their false conception of things. It was not Moses who supplied the manna in the desert, but the God of Israel, the same One who now presented to the same nation the "true bread" (vv. 32-33), in the person of His Son. He thus set himself before them plainly as the fulfilment of the type; the true or "genuine" bread of life which if a man eat, he shall live forever (v. 51).

The discourse became more and more difficult. The Lord claimed to be the "true bread" sent from heaven "to do the will of Him that sent me" (v. 38). He faithfully and unswervingly fulfilled that purpose, and his actions constituted the "seal" of the Father. He is the only example of a man completely bending himself to the Divine will, the perfect illustration of humility and meekness. And the Lord's words are of sober import to those who would be his followers. Paul reminds us that we are "all part of that one bread" (1 Cor. 10: 17), and that being so, the purpose of our existence must be the same as his — "to do the will (Gr. "pleasure") of Him that sent him."

At this point of the discourse history repeated itself. We read that the Jews "murmured" at his saying (v. 41). They murmured also in the wilderness, and in the Septuagint version the same word is used to describe their action. So what they did to Moses they now did to the greater than Moses. This is a striking testimony to the inherent weakness of flesh, but the matter did not end there. It was not only the Jews who murmured, but the disciples also (vv. 60-61). They should have known better, but in every age there have

been those who have claimed to be followers of the Lord, but who have reflected the hard-hearted attitude of Israel after the flesh. So Paul warns: "Neither murmur ye, as some of them (in the wilderness) also murmured, and were destroyed" (1 Cor. 10). How great care needs to be exercised lest we be found among the murmurers!

By now indignation was sweeping through the crowd as it listened to the words of the Lord. They could not understand how he could claim to be "bread which came down from heaven." The Lord explained that they must understand the spiritual significance of his words, they must be "taught of God," and permit the power of the Father, inherent in the Word, to draw them to him. Only by so doing could they attain unto everlasting life. Then he brought his comments to a thrilling climax. "I am **THE** bread of life," he declared. "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead." Eat of this true bread and you shall live!

Here, clearly stated, was the superiority of Christ over Moses, the contrast between life and death.

Those Israelites who had wandered for years in the wilderness under Moses had not grasped the spiritual significance of eating the manna, and they, therefore, had "not entered in because of unbelief" (lit. "disbelief" — Heb. 3: 19). The greater tragedy, however, was that history was about to be repeated, and the generation of Jews contemporary with the Messiah were about to fail in the same way.

The Lord, therefore, drove home the point of his discourse. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (v. 53). Again a challenging statement, fatal to the doctrine of immortal soulism, fatal to the idea that we can merely drift into the Kingdom of God, fatal to the Jewish conception that fleshly relationship with Abraham was all-sufficient (cp. John 8: 39; Gal. 3: 7).

The Lord's words indicated that the operation of the mind in inwardly digesting the truths he enunciated was required. Moses and the prophets used similar language (cp. Deut. 8: 3; Jer. 15: 16; Ezek. 2: 8). The fathers in the wilderness would have died without the material bread from heaven, and it is spiritual death to deny oneself the "flesh and blood" of the Son of Man. In the days of Moses, God had sent the manna in a time of great need; and now, from the same Source, had come spiritual bread to satisfy a

similar need. He was "of" or "from" (R.V.) God (John 6), and the word here used ("para") signifies close intimacy.

That bread we must eat if we would attain unto life eternal. Throughout the narrative, the word "eat" is used frequently. In most cases, the word is "phago," the common word signifying to "eat," but in v. 54, the Lord, in concluding his discourse introduced another word, as though to emphasise the quality of eating. He declared: "Whoso eateth ('trogo') my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." This word signifies "to gnaw or chew," thus a slow engrossing process, tempered with enjoyment. The same word is used in vv. 56, 57, but in v. 58 both words are used, and fully illustrate the meaning and significance of the stronger word: "This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat (phago) manna, and are dead; he that eateth (trogo) of this bread shall live forever."

The Israelites in the wilderness ate the manna not out of pleasure but out of dire necessity; we should eat the true bread not only to satisfy a need, but with true enjoyment. Life and death is contrasted. Life is to be won, not through a mere formal acceptance and eating, as the Israelites in the wilderness, but by a careful, calculated chewing; a slow, pleasurable process of engrossing mastication and absorption, so that the true manna becomes assimilated into our very being.

The discourse with the Jews ended at this point, only to be taken up by certain bewildered disciples. To them it was a "hard saying," and instead of humbly seeking its meaning, they rebelled against that which they understood not. The Lord had claimed direct relationship with Israel's God. This they could not grasp. They murmured, calling from him the rebuke that is expressed in some versions as: "Will this make you to stumble, if ye see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before?" (vv. 61, 62). Then followed the great contrast once again: "It is the spirit that quickeneth (lit. 'giveth life'); the flesh profiteth nothing."

In the Greek, the last word of this phrase is a double negative, used for great emphasis, so that we might read: "The flesh profiteth nothing, nothing!" This emphatic negative serves to more heavily underline the following affirmative: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." In this sentence is revealed the typical significance of the manna in the wilderness: the

Spirit and Word of Yahweh manifested in a Son. He was the Word incarnate, which, descending from heaven, provided spiritual sustenance to a dying nation.

The manna is the Word, and this, like Israel of old, we must gather daily. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom," is the admonition of Paul (Col. 3: 16), and these words "are life," declared Jesus.

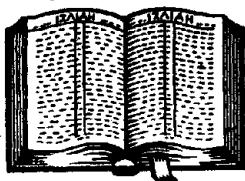
The narrative concludes with a further contrast. This time it is between those who fully, faithfully and unreservedly believe in Christ as the Word made flesh, and those who do not.

The latter are referred to as those who "believe not," or, as some say it can be rendered, "would not believe." These disciples were in similar state to Israel of the wilderness wanderings. Others, however, had a firm conviction, to which Peter gave expression: "We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the son of the living God" (v. 69). The word "are sure" is the Greek "ginosko" which is translated "know" in John 17: 3: "This is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." The word signifies the fullest knowledge, complete and confident understanding.

The concluding contrast, in this chapter of contrasts, is still the same: a contrast of life and death. On the one hand, the true believers who accept Christ in sound knowledge, and with strong faith as the bread from heaven, able to save; on the other hand, those who call themselves disciples but are unable to display the singularity of belief, faith and purpose which can alone bring them to a state of confident acceptance of and by the Lord Jesus.

We propose, next issue, to show how this discourse had its roots in the writings of Moses, and the wonderful lessons to be found in the beautiful and significant features of the manna in the wilderness.

— J. Ullman (W.A.)



Things New and Old

No. 10—

“There is Forgiveness with Thee”

In this article we continue our consideration of prayer which, coupled with the Word and the experiences of life, can create in us something which the Father's mercy regards as worthy of perpetuation.



“Forgive us our Trespases”

“To this man will I look, even to him who is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word” (Isa. 66: 2). God chooses men who are empty of themselves, that they may be full of Him.

The next heading to help us in our meditative prayer, leads us to confess our weakness, and reflects upon our insufficiency. The man who appreciates God's standards often feels a failure, although he dares to hope in God's mercy. In fact, God's whole purpose has been to create people who should look to Him as a saviour, having no confidence in themselves. To that end sin was permitted to exist, because men who have sinned and repented are better in God's sight than men who could not sin. Even Jesus felt the motions of sin, and was weighed down with them, though he did no sin (Ps. 38: 4). David was a greater, fuller man after failure and chastening had done their work — greater because he was smaller in his own esteem. Of course we must not fall into the error condemned by Paul, the error that would cause some to say, “Let us continue in sin that grace may abound!” Yet the abundance of grace leads to thanksgiving in God's marvellous mercy; and thanksgiving both now and in the Age to Come redounds to God's glory, to achieve which, He formed all things (2 Cor. 4: 15).

Let us, therefore, be sensitive to failure; let us keep our standards high and without the orthodox “miserable-sinner” complex; let us know ourselves as Paul did in Romans 7, “when I would do good evil is present with me.”

What are these Sins?

What are these sins for which we seek forgiveness? They are both general and specific; they concern our general inability to rise up to the measure of the Lord Jesus, and our specific failure to completely obey.

All too often sin is rather glibly talked about in prayer. Some public prayers almost make it sound as if we are rather proud of our sinfulness and weakness. In any case, the tendency is for sin to be thought of and talked of as a doctrine, rather than an experience. There is only one way our private prayers about forgiveness can have reality, and bring help to us in the struggle; that is, by mentioning our sins in detail. We have been invited to tell God "every detail of our needs in earnest and thankful prayer" (Phil. 4: 6). What greater need have we than forgiveness of sin?

First, there is a general sense of not rising up to the high calling. One of the original words connected with sin has the idea of "missing the mark" while another that of "crossing the line." In our daily life we are often "off target" even when we are not specifically transgressing, or "crossing the line."

I remember a discussion I once had with a Sister who was on the way out from the truth to join the people calling themselves the "Nazarene Fellowship." One of their dogmas is that "there is nothing wrong with the flesh; it is possible for an ordinary man to live a perfect life." They say the trouble from which we need redeeming is not our own sinfulness, but a legal condemnation to a violent death inherited from Adam. This sister said: "But Brother Wille, surely you can say that you haven't sinned today — or in the last few hours . . ." In my reply, I pointed out how high the standard was, and how difficult to maintain even an approximation to it. She went on to enquire whether I had told lies today, or lost my temper, or stolen anything. Her concept of sin was that it consisted of those outward actions which are at least easy to identify, and more easy to nail, than the more subtle failure by which we are so often oppressed.

Spiritual Sickness

I can better illustrate what I mean by examples from my own experiences, and from those of brethren who shall remain anonymous, with whom I have taken sweet counsel

— confessing our faults one to another (and what a help this can be!). Have you ever taken up the Word of God which in your better moments seems so precious, and read its words again and again, to get nothing out of it — unable to get any profit, or summon any interest or enthusiasm? You've read it all before! Has faith sometimes grown so dim that you lost your vision of the invisible things that are the only true realities? Has doubt ever gnawed at you until you have begun to wonder whether it is the truth after all? Then you argue yourself back logically, but can't seem to feel the reality of it! Christ has been so long absent! Will he ever come? Has business been so keen and exciting that you haven't had time to reflect on eternal things, or they have appeared unexciting in contrast? Or have you so put your "all" into daily labours that you are too tired even to read the Word? Who has not known some or all of these moods! We are certainly "missing the mark" and we will certainly be doing what we can to eradicate the failure.

But having our spiritual vitality lowered, how easy to stray even further from the mark. If the Word loses its attractiveness any spiritual disaster can happen.

Counter Attractions

There are all kinds of counter attractions which can build up a sense of permanence and reality around the things that do not abide, and which will ultimately alienate from the Truth. When we fall into spiritual sickness they are a great danger. We shall be in mortal conflict. Only prayer and more prayer, the Word and more of the Word, can bring us back.

What are these counter attractions? Reading material — newspapers, magazines, the world abounds with them in this age of potted thinking; novels — oh, yes, there are "good" ones like Walter Scott's and Dickens' — but eventually they give a deceptive excitement to human affairs; radio — well "everyone" has one today; television — well "everyone" will have one tomorrow, and perhaps, because it is visual, the most dangerous of all. There are many positively evil things in them all, but the great danger is that they make it seem that the things that are seen are eternal and the things that are unseen are elusive! Perhaps we have one or all of these things because "we must have some recreation," or because the children "are bored, we live narrow lives" — and unfortunately, the young mind does not easily

find the Truth an exciting thing. There are many difficult problems in an age when the world can so easily come right into our sitting rooms. I often think, however, that the simple course would be to start our independent lives without any of them. True, we would miss much "culture" (?), much "amusement" — but I think many of our troubles spring from not making a clean enough sweep. It is easier — less conflict — to go all the way in the things of the Truth than only half way; but it is probably easier said than done — perhaps we couldn't, at this stage, carry the rest of the family with us in such a complete act of dedication. Well then we shall know those evenings when we shall go on our knees feeling wretched failures — because we have not redeemed the time, but have wasted it on trifles light as air; because one half of our mind doesn't thrill to the Truth as much as the other half does; and we pour out all our weakness to the Father. We ask His forgiveness, for His strength in the conflict. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, so that you cannot do the things that you would."

Mind you — suppose you do make a clean sweep — then there will be evenings when you will be seeking God's forgiveness because you feel impatient with those who still cling to their Babylonian toys; because you feel superior to those who are "not as you are"!

"Things New and Old"

Dear Brother Editor,

I write in appreciation of the splendid articles now appearing in "Logos" under the theme: "Things New and Old."

Without wishing to unnecessarily eulogise Brother Wille for his contributions to "Logos," I cannot but help express my feelings in regard to his type of article. Brother Wille has the enviable ability of being able to put in writing what the reader himself is thinking, thereby establishing between the reader and the author something of a kindred feeling, so valuable in regards to the Truth.

Well I remember the articles, "What does the Truth mean to you?" "Antidote to Doubts," "Chariot of the Cherubim," etc., and now this faith-stimulating series emphasising the realities of those things which Yahweh has promised to the faithful.

Let Brother Wille take heart in the realisation that his articles are sincerely appreciated in this part of God's vineyard, let him in faith realise his responsibility in the God-given ability which he possesses, and let readers of "Logos" catch some of the understanding and warmth coming from our brother's pen.

—John Martin (Enfield, S.A.)

"In Many Things We Offend All"

The trouble is that once you really know the Truth, and a sensitive conscience has begun to develop — as soon as you turn from one failure, the opposite one stares you in the face. We can never feel complacent. How wonderful Jesus was: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?"

There is, of course, danger in drawing up lists of do's and don't's. We don't know another's difficulties. What requires no effort for us requires much for him and vice versa. One brother enjoys his good holiday, or his good music, and despises another who is addicted to the things we have mentioned. Wherever we stand, we all find ourselves in a conflict of desires, and needing to cry to our Father: "Forgive us our sins. . . ."

The standard is:

"Bring into captivity **EVERY** thought . . ."

"Give thyself **WHOLLY** to it . . ."

"In **ALL** things giving thanks . . ."

"Do **ALL** to the glory of God . . ."

"Living sacrifice . . ."

"With **ALL** thy soul, heart and mind . . ."

"Take up thy cross . . ."

"God **ALL** in all . . ."

By this standard we are all failures, all missing the mark. Nevertheless, let us reduce the number of hindrances in our life. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which does so easily beset us," "if thy right hand offend thee cut it off." Remember, that later in the prayer we plead: "Lead us not into temptation!" How important it is that we should, ourselves, avoid it.

—E. Wille, England.

News from South Africa

"I must congratulate you on the special issue 'RUTH, 'a copy of which I have seen. This issue is instructive didactic and exhortative to a degree I never thought possible when reading the Book of Ruth for myself. There is a tremendous work to be done in this country, and the Scripture Study Circle correspondence course I operate is merely scratching the surface. From the experience I have gained I find that, when the seed is sown, it must not be left to grow by itself, but must be watered constantly."—I.L.

Eureka in the Light of Today

THE ARABS

—Typically and Prophetically

"While Hagar represents Jerusalem under the Law; and Sarah Jerusalem under the new constitution of the Hebrew Commonwealth, Ishmael represents Israel, glorying in their fleshly descent from Abraham, and boasting in the law, and Isaac, those of Israel, who regard the flesh as profiting nothing, and who are the sons of Abraham by believing the promises made to him and to his seed. . . . The Ishmaelitic seed are wild men whose hands are against all who believe the truth. They are mockers; for as Ishmael mocked Isaac, so Israel mocked Jesus, and spoke reproachfully to Him and His brethren, who are one . . ."

—J. Thomas

Why Arab-Jewish Enmity Exists

"Keep not thou silent, O Elohim: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O El! For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head. They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent; they are confederate against thee. The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes . . ." (Ps. 83: 1-6).

With unerring accuracy, the inspired writer, 3,000 years ago, portrayed in vivid terms the hatred which exists today between Israel on the one hand and the Arabs on the other. Repeatedly, over the last 12 years, Arab leaders have proclaimed their intention of driving the hated Jew into the Mediterranean. World statesmen view the situation with alarm, well knowing that one spark in that explosive situation could easily engulf the whole world in a raging inferno of death, destruction and desolation.

Why should this enmity exist? There is sufficient space for Jew and Arab to live and work together, to reclaim the waste places, to exploit the mineral wealth of the Middle East, and so provide funds for irrigation and other projects which could ultimate in peace and prosperity for all. But always the primary problem remains — a problem beyond the power of man to solve — the Arab's implacable hatred of the Jew.

We shall endeavour to place before readers, the Scriptural and Historical background to these conditions, so that they may be better equipped to grasp the significance of this element in the developing "time of trouble," which surely indicates the nearness of Christ's return.

Ishmael: Born of the Flesh

Our consideration begins with the birth of Ishmael, progenitor of the Arab peoples. Abraham had received the promise, "Unto thy seed will I give this land" (Gen. 12: 7). Later he was told that the promised seed would not be an adopted son, but would, indeed, come forth of his own bowels (Gen. 15: 4). But now there appeared a limitation in the thinking of mortal flesh. Sarah was beyond the age of child-bearing (18: 11); if the promised Seed was to eventuate, another wife must be procured. So Hagar, Sarahs' bondmaid was brought to Abraham, with the intention that Sarah might obtain children through her (16: 1-3). So reasoned the flesh, forgetful that nothing is too hard for Yahweh (18: 14). Thus spiritually minded parents were led astray by the thinking of the flesh, in leaning upon their own understanding, even in their meditations upon the promise of God.

In due course Ishmael was born. But the child born under such conditions was not the child of promise (Gal. 4: 22-23).^{*} We observe a similar principle operating in the birth of Cain. Eve declared: "I have gotten a man, the one who shall be" (Gen. 4: 1). The flesh, meditating upon the divine promise of a seed, came to completely erroneous conclusions. Cain was not the promised seed, he was a giant in wickedness. He was not a child of promise, but was born of lust: "He was a child of wickedness and slew his brother" (1 John 3: 10, 12).

Blessings upon Ishmael

Abraham was told, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Gen. 17: 19, 21) thus excluding Ishmael from the inheritance of promise. The justice of this exclusion is clearly seen in the exclamation of Abraham: "O that Ishmael might live

^{*}The birth of Isaac was quite different. Abraham and Sarah were further instructed (Gen. 17: 19), with the result that "Through faith Sarah received strength to conceive seed . . . because she judged him faithful who had promised (Heb. 11: 11). Abraham being "not weak in faith considered not his own body now dead . . . nor yet the deadness of Sarah's womb . . . staggered not at the promise of God . . . was strong in faith (Rom. 4: 19-21). The child of such a union was indeed "born after the spirit" (Gal. 4: 28-29).

before thee!" (Gen. 17: 18), implying that he was not living "before God."

At the same time, Ishmael was a son of Abraham, and "beloved for his father's sake" (Rom. 11: 28). This is memorialised in the name given to him: Ishmael—"Whom God hears" (Gen. 16: 11 mg.). He is incorporated in the Land Covenant made with Abraham (Gen. 17), that Abraham's descendants would receive an everlasting inheritance within the territory promised to him, and that they would worship the God of Abraham. The blessing on Ishmael promised that he would develop into a great nation, ruled by twelve princes (see vv. 6-8, 10-14, 20). But for all this, the stubbornness and waywardness of the national characteristics of the Ishmaelites is indicated in the words: "He will be a wild ass among men, and will dwell to the east of his brethren" (16: 12).

These things were fulfilled in measure during his lifetime (Gen. 25: 13-15, 18; 1 Chron. 1: 28-31), but a greater, and more glorious, fulfilment rests in the future. Vaſt changes are to come over the Arabs; they are to be weaned from their waywardness; their offerings are yet to be united with those of Israel upon the altar of Yahweh at Zion (cp. Isa. 60: 6-7). But these things we will consider in a later article.

Ishmael's Sons and Their Land

In due course, 12 sons were born to *Ishmael to become the founders of the various Arab tribes. Their names are as follows, and in brackets I have appended the meaning of each: Nebaioth (Husbandry), Kedar (Powerful), Abdiel (Languishing for God), Mibsam (Sweet odour), Mishma (Fame), Dumah (Silence), Massa (Oracle), Haddar (Sharpness), Tema (Desert, untilled district), Jetur (Encampment of nomads), Naphish (Numerous, refreshment), Kedemah (Eastward).

There is a prophetic quality about these names, and striking contrasts. Compare "Fame" with "Silence," "Powerful" with "Languishing," "Husbandry" with "Untilled district." Obviously there are two distinct periods of development foreshadowed here: a time of adversity and a time of prosperity.

*Typifying Israel after the flesh which is also founded on twelve sons and tribes.

†The reader is recommended to read Brother Thomas's comments on the locust as a symbol for the Arabs in his treatment of Revelation 9 in "Eureka."

The people will live as **nomads in desert lands** noted for their **sharpness** in the **East country**. There they will **linguish**, and will go down into **silence**. In their latter end the **oracle** describes them as **numerous and powerful**, a people **famed** for their **husbandry**, and a **sweet odour** unto God.

This summary may be varied to some extent by adopting different meanings for the names, and by setting them out in a different order, but the essential message remains the same: a **glorious future** is in store for this people, after a long history of **obscurity**.

This is true of the past and future history of the Arabs, as well as that of Israel after the flesh whom Ishmael typified.

In Revelation 9: 3 the Arabs are symbolised as Locusts, and the same symbol is used for the Midianites and the "children of the east" in Judges 6: 3, 5; 7: 12. The Hebrew name for "Locust" is Arbeh, and for "Arab" is Arbi, and for the land of "Arabia" is Arabah.†

The land occupied by the Arabs, is defined in various parts of Scripture. From Gen. 21: 21, 25: 18 it is described as "east of Egypt," and "the wilderness of Paran." This is mostly desert country extending eastward of Egypt towards the Persian Gulf, and embracing what is now called North-west Arabia. Some authorities consider their original settlements to have been in south-west Arabia near Aden, later extending north and east to Yemen, Hadramont and Oman.

A number of districts in Arabia have been named after the sons of Ishmael, some of which names have survived down to modern times.

Nebaioth gives name to Nebathaea in north-Arabia, and to the Nabataeans, merchants who controlled the caravan routes of the Persian Gulf, Arabia and the Red Sea. Kedar is joined with Nebaioth in Isa. 60: 7; Duman (Josh 15: 52; Isa. 21: 11), Tema (Isa. 21: 14), Naphish (1 Chron. 5: 10, 19-20), Kedemoth (Deut. 2: 26), Jetur (Ituraea—Luke 3: 1) are used as place names in Scripture. From this it is evident that all the land within the Arabian Peninsular, south of the Euphrates, east of the Jordan, and extending south-west to Sinai (Gal. 1: 17), constituted territory of the Arabs, much of it being barren and desolate. Some of the Jews of the diaspora settled there (Acts 2:11). It is symbolically defined as the "Pit of the Abyss" (Rev. 9: 1) because it contains the "abyss" (the Dead Sea), the region of the symbolical "great

furnace" (v. 2). The tribes degenerated into a seething mass of discontent and war until the "key" was used to open the "pit" (Rev. 9: 1-2), from which "smoke" issued forth, out of which were revealed the "locusts" or Arabs, organised by Mohammed.

Arabia was a barren, forbidding, undesirable land, so deficient in rains that not a single river was sustained throughout its great length and breadth. Sharp naked mountains rise grimly from bleak uplifted plains, and rolling sands reflect the heat of the burning sun. In this cruel environment only a brave, cunning and hardy race of men could survive. The Arab tribes comprised such a race, and from the days of antiquity until now, have been known for their fierce individualism and their all-embracing distrust of their fellowmen. "Their hand has been against every man, and every man's hand against them," as Scripture foretold.

Bible History of the Arabs

The Arabs were a wandering, nomadic people, living a frugal pastoral life (Isa. 13: 20; Jer. 3: 2). Yet from Arabia came many of the spices and fragrant plants, that found such a ready market in Egypt and Israel, so that early we meet the Ishmaelites as merchantmen, bringing their precious cargo on the ships of the desert (camels), and organised into caravans (Ezek. 27: 21).

Occasionally we find them subject to the kings of Israel, such as in the days of Solomon when their leaders humbly presented their gifts of silver and gold (1 Kings 10: 15; 2 Chron. 9: 14), and in the days of Jehoshaphat when they were forced to pay tribute (2 Chron. 17: 11).

But seldom were they brought into subjection. Their fierce, untamed spirit found vent in lightning raids against the cities and borders of Israel, and in unremitting hostility, as in the days of Jehoram (2 Chron. 21: 16; 22: 1), Uzziah (2 Chron. 26: 7), and Nehemiah (Neh. 2: 19; 4: 7; 6: 1).

Out of this unpromising background, there ultimately developed a people that a little over a millennium ago, threatened to conquer the world, that left its mark heavily upon the pages of history, and today, in the Middle East, threatens the peace of the world.

The Arabs as a Type

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the Bible treatment of Ishmael, is the manner in which he is used to portray

the national characteristics of Israel after the flesh (Gal. 4: 24). Paul draws upon the incidents surrounding Hagar and Sarah, Ishmael and Isaac, to present an allegory of the two covenants of Yahweh, and the two seeds of Abraham—natural and spiritual Israel (vv. 22-26).

Hagar was an Egyptian (Gen. 16:1), reminding us that Israel was called out of Egypt to receive the Mosaic covenant. Abraham's marriage with her was only a temporary affair, born of the weakness of flesh, and put away with the coming of the true seed (Gal. 3: 19). This marriage was contracted at the request of Sarah, even as the New Covenant necessitated the existence, for a time, of the Mosaic Covenant. In consequence of her relationship with Abraham, Hagar despised Sarah (Gen. 16: 4-6), so also Israel after the flesh has despised the true Israel (2 Chron. 36: 15-17; John 8:39-42; Acts 13: 38-42). Because of her attitude, Hagar found herself twice driven into the wilderness, banished from the tents of Abraham (Gen. 16: 6; 21: 10). And in fulfilment of the allegory, Israel after the flesh, has twice been driven into dispersion; first by Babylon then by Rome.

But the constant exhortation of Yahweh to the Jewish people, glorying in the Mosaic Covenant that could only curse them for their wickedness, is: "Return to thy mistress (Sarah—the Abrahamic Covenant—Gal. 4: 26), and submit thyself under her hands." Hagar's son's name was called Ishmael, signifying "Whom God hears." And whose voice does He hear? For whom are His ears constantly open? Concerning whom did He say unto Moses: "I have heard their cry!" (Exod. 3: 7)? Is it not Israel?

As it was promised of Ishmael (and fulfilled): "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly" . . . "thou shalt dwell in the presence of all his brethren" (Gen. 16: 10, 12) so these words are true also of Israel after the flesh. Israel is destined to dwell in the covenant land, in the presence of his brethren—Israel after the spirit, the sons of Abraham according to the Gospel (Gal. 3: 29).

The allegory is beautifully continued in Genesis 21. There we read of the second banishment of Hagar and Ishmael from the tents of Abraham. They wandered in the wilderness perishing for lack of water (Gen. 21: 14). There was water available, but their eyes were blinded to it, until at the moment of extremity, when death seemed near, and a bitter cry ascended from Hagar into heaven, a messenger of

God was sent to open her eyes, to point the way to the water of life where she and her son might be refreshed. Thus they were virtually brought again from the dead (Ezek. 37).

The well was the well of Beersheba—a name that signifies: “The Well of the Covenant” (Gen. 21: 31-mg).

The time is rapidly approaching when dire, extreme need will force from the throats of Jewry a bitter cry for help. Like Ishmael, at the point of death, cast under one of the desert shrubs, with water spent in the bottle (Gen. 21: 15), Jewry after the flesh will be caused to lament: “Our bones are dried, our last hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts” (Ezek. 37: 11). But then, to their amazement, the one whom they have “despised and rejected” will appear, to direct them to the Well of the Covenant, to revive them with truth, to establish them as a mighty people in the earth. “The Deliverer shall come out of Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob” (Rom. 11: 7-10, 25).

Meanwhile, in the narrow confines of Palestine today, the ancient feud between Ishmael and Isaac is being revived in a national sense. With bitter hostility in their hearts Arab and Jew glare across the line of hate that constitutes their real border. Ishmael mocks at Isaac, and threatens to destroy him. But Jewry (unfortunately not emulating the characteristics of Isaac, but of Ishmael) returns taunt for taunt, hate for hate, and prepares to defend her borders or invade those of the enemy.

In fact, as in the past Ishmael's descendants have waged mutual war on each other—so today, in Arab and Jew, we see the allegory complete.

And the world watches the drama of the Middle East in fear, fully realising how terrible and widespread could be the conflict which the spark of hate between Jew and Arab can ignite.

—F. RUSSELL.

(We propose to consider further details of the background of the present Middle East crisis next issue, God willing)

A.F.M. (N.Z.)—Thank you for your letter to hand; and for your invitation to visit New Zealand. The possibilities of doing so at a later date are being examined, and we hope shortly to submit proposals regarding same, including an extensive programme of meetings, etc. (God willing). In the meantime, we can but suggest that each one needs to play a part in inducing a healthy, spiritual condition in Ecclesial life. Firmness towards oneself, forbearance towards others, and faith towards God are admirable ingredients to that end.—Editor.

The Supposed Pre-existence of Christ

JOHN 1: 1-14

We have been asked to give further and more detailed attention to the early verses of John's Gospel.



"In the beginning . . ."

When was this? God has no beginning; He always existed. He has no ending; He will always exist. Though this is incomprehensible to finite minds, though it is something we cannot grasp, it is none-the-less a revealed fact of faith.

God is not the only subject incomprehensible to finite minds. Can we grasp the infinity of creation that surrounds us? As we look into the depths of space above, can we measure it? If we consider that even space has its limits, what exists beyond space? And what ends when that ends?

And what existed before time commenced? And what will exist when it ends?

Those who ask foolish questions about God, such as "Where did He come from?" seeking to evade the responsibility that acceptance of His existence demands, forget that they cannot grasp, or explain, the fact of endless space—yet they have the evidence of it as they peer into the heavens. Why then hesitate to accept the fact of God because our puny minds cannot reach up to His measureless existence? Man is finite, he is bound by time, and cannot understand Deity who is infinite, boundless, above time. Only when man is clothed with the same nature as God, a nature that will take him beyond time, will he come to understand that which is today beyond his power to grasp.

The "beginning," then, has relation to some epoch in the existence of God. But to what epoch? Our minds are drawn irresistibly to the opening words of Genesis: "In the beginning . . ." In a volume so closely interwoven as the Bible is in its various parts, it is inconceivable that these two statements are not connected.

The "beginning" of Genesis refers us to the beginning of creation, and the peopling of the earth. There, "in the beginning" existed the word.

"Was the Word"

But what constitutes the "word"? The word in the Greek is "Logos"—a common Greek word, used hundreds of times in the New Testament in a variety of ways—"word," "speech," "saying" etc.

"Logos" signifies the outward expression of inward thought or reason, the Declaration by which this is revealed. It signifies not merely the spoken word, but the thought expressed by the spoken word; it is the spoken word as expressive of thought. Thus "logos" signifies a Declaration expressing wisdom, reason, purpose. One writer has well stated that "as the spoken word reveals the invisible thought, so the living word reveals the invisible God."

So we learn that in the beginning there was expressed reason or purpose. When the fiat of God went forth there was purpose, reason and wisdom in them all. This is beautifully expressed in Proverbs 8: 27-30: "When He prepared the heavens, I was there: when He set a compass upon the face of the depth; when He established the clouds above; when He strengthened the fountains of the deep; when He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment; when He appointed the foundations of the earth; then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him . . ."

Who was this "I" which gave Deity such pleasure? The answer is "Wisdom" (Prov. 8: 1). In all the acts of creation there was wisdom expressed; nothing was done without purpose. God could look upon His created work and take pleasure in it all: "Behold it was very good!"

And lest any should rush in to explain that this is the pre-existent Christ referred to in Proverbs 8 in the manner of the self-styled Jehovah's witnesses, let them take heed to the context. Wisdom is not personified as a man but a woman. "She standeth" (v. 2), "she crieth" (v. 3), "her voice" is heard (v. 1).

"The Word was with God"

The "word" did not exist independently; it was with God. He "made the earth by His power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His understanding" (Jer. 10: 12). These things did not spring into being by the force of evolution, independent of God, as some fools teach (Ps. 14: 1) but by His power and for His purpose. That purpose was revealed to Moses: "As

truly as I live, the whole earth shall be filled with My glory" (Num. 14: 21).

The Declaration of Deity brought into existence the varied forms of creation, and that declaration was the expression of reason and purpose. "Blind chance" found no place therein. In due time, the Divine wisdom became channelled into the form of teaching known by us as the Truth. This is, indeed, the outward expression of inward thought and reason, and in its simplest form is found in the Declaration expressed in Genesis 3:15.

The Divine purpose governed many matters beyond physical creation. It limited times and seasons, the rise and fall of nations (Acts 17: 26; Deut. 32: 8), the teaching of the prophets and apostles (Luke 11: 49). As we consider these Divine acts, the searching mind is drawn by the Logos unto God.

The Word was God

The word was God because the purpose or wisdom it expressed came from the mind of God. We often use a similar form of speech. We hear a gramophone record, and we say: "That was Caruso!" What we really mean is that Caruso was solely responsible for the voice we heard, and that voice represented him.

We are not so foolish as to imagine that Caruso exists of voice only! In fact, if Caruso lost his voice he would still exist if he were living. But Caruso was known by his voice, though it was only part of the real man.

Now that is expressed in the Greek original of John 1: 1. The word "God" appears twice, but in the Greek, the first time it appears with the definite article: "the God." We can thus read: "The word was with the God, and the word was God."

Authorities give the reason for this. They state that the reason why the definite article is not given on the second occasion the word "God" is used, is because the Word is only part of the manifestation of God. If the text read: "The Word was the God," it would signify that Deity consisted only of word; that the word was the whole of God. (see Green's "Handbook to the Grammar of the Greek Testament"—206).

This has led some (such as Moffatt) to translate: "The Logos was Divine." Others (such as the Diaglott under the Greek text) render: "The word was a god," but it should be borne in mind that there is no corresponding Greek word for "a" and it is introduced quite gratuitously.

"The word was God" in the sense of manifestation, of representation. Similar language is used elsewhere in Scripture, such as the words of the Master: "This is my body" referring to the bread (Mat. 26: 28; 13: 20), or of Paul: "The Rock was (represented) Christ (1 Cor. 10: 4).

The word, the Divine wisdom that found expression in the Divine purpose, represented God to man. Apart from it we would not know God. But by it, men of faith have been able to "see Him who is invisible" (Heb. 11: 27).

The greatest difficulty with this first verse is to accept the obvious meaning of the word "Logos." Most give it a mysterious significance, forgetting how common is its use in Scripture. Once a person has grasped the fact that it merely expresses a declaration in which is revealed wisdom, reason and purpose, the meaning of the verse is clear: "In the beginning was the Declaration (of Divine purpose), and the Declaration was with God, and the Declaration was (manifested or represented) God."

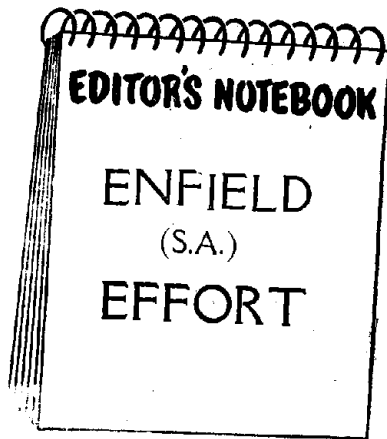
(to be continued)

The past month has been a busy one for the Enfield Ecclesia. It has witnessed what is undoubtedly the most concentrated effort in the history of this young but virile Ecclesia. It has recently conducted a fortnight's activity around the Word of God, involving some thirteen meetings, at which there was recorded a total attendance exceeding 2,500 people.

When it is realised that the Enfield Ecclesia is the smallest of the four Ecclesias in the metropolitan area of South Australia, with a membership of only about 65, it will be realised that the general attendance at the meetings has been outstanding. It exceeded our utmost expectations.

The programme for the campaign was advertised on the back inside cover of our issue two months back. Its objectives were:

1. To stimulate in brethren and sisters a love for the deeper understanding of the Word.
2. To aid Sunday School scholars in a better appreciation of this year's lessons, and of God's requirements.
3. To cater for the needs of interested friends who are seeking the Truth.



There was a little touch of drama in the effort. I had casually made mention, some time last year, that I would like to conduct a concentrated fortnight's campaign around the Life and Time of David. This was taken up seriously by the brethren, who had selected the month of February for the occasion. In Adelaide, February is the hottest, most oppressive month of the year. But the enthusiasm of the brethren matched the heat of the month, and, reluctantly, I was swept along by it. Secretly, I did not want to take on the work at that stage, and at our preliminary meeting with the Arranging Brethren to discuss the programme, I submitted a heavy programme forward certain that the brethren would turn it down. Instead they enthusiastically took it up; and I found myself saddled with work beyond what I ever originally intended.

As for the Enfield Ecclesia, it recruited labour, and soon had teams of helpers planning the opening fraternal, painting banners and signs, preparing slides for the illustrated addresses, arranging and checking printing. The surge of enthusiasm was too great to be resisted, and reluctantly I was carried along by the tide of it.

In addition to the usual public addresses (held in the Prospect Town Hall, and based on the Davidic covenant) the week-night meetings were devoted to such unusual topics as the Military Campaigns of David, The Psalms of David as Poetry and Prophecy, King David's Favourite Psalm, etc. In addition, a special illustrated Gospel Extension meeting was held, and an informal question night for interested friends.

Capacity audiences attended most of these meetings.

A pleasing feature of the campaign was the great interest taken in the subject matter. Enthusiasm for the Life and Times of David, the spiritual and practical teaching of the Psalms, the Military Campaigns of the King have been in evidence since.

A highlight of the effort was the final Sunday afternoon. A competition had been earlier arranged for Sunday School students in the form of a series of questions surrounding the Life and Times of David (for younger students a coloring competition was arranged), and prizes were to be distributed at an open Sunday afternoon held in the Prospect Town Hall on the final Sunday afternoon of the campaign. An excellent attendance of some 250 scholars were present to witness the distribution of the prizes, and to listen to the addresses given.

The Enfield Effort has demonstrated the power of the Word to interest and hold both brethren and strangers. There was nothing sensational in the subject matter chosen—it was not on "prophetic" subjects in the general sense of the term (not that there is anything wrong with such subjects—they are highly important)—but rather sought to examine some of the deeper aspects of themes that are sometimes considered rather "common-place."

After all, in these days of superficiality it is good to get back to sound, detailed expositions of the Word. We need to give ourselves time for the study and understanding of the Bible. Though fewer may listen to such addresses, there is greater power in them than more superficial talks. This is an age of superficiality, when most people lack the time to study deeply—even though we have a shorter working week than ever before. As Christadelphians we need to recognise our responsibility as the people of the Book; we need to know the Bible and be able to expound it. That requires time and patience; there is no short cut to it. On the other hand, the rewards from such patient endeavour are well worthwhile.—Editor.



For Private Study

NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE

An itemised Exposition of the Book of Revelation, based on
"Eureka" and designed for home study and for Bible marking.

(Continued from page 216)

REVELATION 2, VERSE 17

"Hidden Manna"—The manna given the Israelites in the wilderness was only revealed when the dew which covered it had evaporated (Exod. 16: 13). On the first occurrence of this miracle, the people enquired one of another: "Mahn hu"—What is it? For they knew not what it was. In John 6: 48-53, the Lord used Manna to type himself, claiming to be the "true bread" from heaven, and saying: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." We eat thus when we absorb the Word of Truth, but our eating, like that of Israel in the wilderness, must be from day to day. The Israelites found that they could not store up the manna but had to collect it every day. Any that was left over, corrupted and had to be destroyed.

On the 6th day, however, this was not so. On that day, Israel was commanded to gather twice as much in order that they might rest on the Sabbath day, and miraculously the manna gathered on this day kept for two days. This points forward to the eating of manna that will preserve us for the Kingdom, the seventh millennium. We must daily gather sufficient manna from the Word to sustain us from day to day, but on the 6th day, at Christ's return, the manna then provided will grant life eternal.

In addition to the manna gathered from day to day, Aaron was commanded to lay up an omer full, in a pot, and conceal it from view in the Ark of the Testimony. There it remained, miraculously preserved, for centuries, speaking of incorruptibility. In fulfilment of the type, there is concealed in Jesus, the antitypical Ark, that deposit of Manna (incorruptibility and life) which shall be given to those who overcome to eat. The eating of that manna, at his return, will bestow upon them eternal life.

There are important lessons to be learnt from this wonderful type (see 1 Cor. 10: 1-10), and we recommend that you read the section in "Eureka," vol. 1, entitled: "The Hidden Manna."

"A White Stone"—It was the custom, in the days of the Apostles, to vote in judicial trials with either a white or black pebble: the former for acquittal and the latter for condemnation. From this ancient custom there has arisen the saying that one has been "black-balled." Paul in Acts 26: 10 makes reference to this custom, saying in the original, "When they were put to death, I paid my pebble against them" (Acts

26: 10). A white stone was also the symbol of victory in the Grecian games. Thus, in the Apocalypse the white stone represents victory and acquittal at the Judgment Seat.

"A new name"—The Gospel call is to separate a people for the "Name" of God, i.e., Yahweh. At baptism a person is inducted into that Name (Mat. 28: 19), and proceeds to walk "in it" (1 Thess. 1: 1). But whether he successfully manifests that Name will be revealed at the Judgment Seat. Our hope is to bear the "glory of God" physically and thus have written upon us this "new name."

"No man knoweth it saving he that receiveth it"—We know the name, as a name; but unless we experience the fullness of the glory in actually possessing it, we will never "know" it in the sense of this verse. "No man knows experimentally the name, but he who answers to it" ("Eureka").

THYATIRA IN DANGER—vv. 18-29

The dramatic circumstances whereby the Ecclesia was established in Thyatira are revealed in Acts 16. Paul, at Philippi, met Lydia, who was from Thyatira, and perceiving that she was a devout woman, engaged her in conversation upon the Truth, shortly after she was baptised. Lydia doubtless took the gospel back to Thyatira, and "with her household," formed the nucleus of the Ecclesia that was established in that city.

Further impetus was given to the work of the Truth in this place when Paul visited Ephesus, for he continued disputing in the school of one Tyrannus for some two years, so that "all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19: 8-10). Among these must have been many from Thyatira, a town lying between Pergamos and Sardis.

Unfortunately, "the ecclesia among the Thyatirans became an arena upon which two classes of leaders displayed themselves. The one class were characterised by a more abundant love, service, faith, and endurance in the days of John, than in the days when they were originally constituted the Star in Thyatira; while the other class was characterised by the idolatrous, meretricious, and murderous wife of Ahab, "the woman Jezebel," who slew the prophets of Yahweh. The former were the Antipas in Thyatira whose devotedness sustained the truth against the machinations of all its enemies, heretical or pagan. Their 'love' was not like that of the opposition—a love of 'divine things' as far as agreeable to our animal instincts, and compatible with our worldly prosperity and peace. The love of the Antipas was the fulfilling of the law; the doing whatsoever Jesus had commanded, by which they evinced that they were his real friends" ("Eureka").

VERSE 18

"Eyes like unto a flame of fire"—Anger.

"Feet like fine brass"—Ready to tread down in judgment.

VERSE 19

"The last (works) more than the first"—There is commendation in this verse. The Ecclesia was known for its charity, service, faith, patience, and works. "Works" are mentioned twice, indicating there was no slackening off in work, but a development. All this was very good, but the next verse speaks of a growing evil among this otherwise fine group of brethren.

VERSE 20

"That woman"—Symbolically, a woman represents a religious community—cp. 2 Cor. 11: 2; Rev. 12: 1, 6.

"Jezebel"—or Isabel, signifying "She dwells not," i.e., with Deity. Jezebel, wife of Ahab, was a devoted worshipper of Baal, and intolerant of other faiths. To please her, Ahab reared a temple and an altar to Baal in Samaria (1 Kings 16: 32-33). She waged implacable warfare on the prophets of Yahweh (1 Kings 18: 4-13), planned the death of Elijah (19: 1-2), effected the murder of Naboth, but ultimately was destroyed by Divine vengeance. Here she represents a class at Thyatira which claimed to teach ("prophetess"), but like Jezebel of old manifested implacable hostility towards those holding the Truth.

"Fornication"—Basically is disloyalty. To mix with the world in an unlawful way constitutes spiritual "fornication" (see James 4: 4; 2 Peter 2: 14). Jezebel was seducing the servants of Christ to mix with the world.

"Eat things sacrificed unto idols"—To defy Apostolic teaching, cp. Acts 15: 29. Because of these evils, judicial judgment was to fall upon the Jezebel class in Thyatira (vv. 22-23) by He who is represented as having "eyes like a flame of fire, and feet like fine brass."

VERSE 24

"Have not this doctrine"—This indicates the true nature of the Jezebel, and the fornication committed—it was moral and doctrinal.

"Depths of Satan"—The supposedly deep things of the adversary which were subversive of the Truth, the "science" referred to in 1 Tim. 6: 20.

VERSE 28

"The morning star"—The Lord Jesus (Rev. 22: 16). The appearance of the Lord will be as the appearance of the "morning star" in the heavens—the herald of a new dawn. Those who overcome will be made one with Christ (John 17: 17), they will become "morning stars," a new race of Elohim (Job. 38: 7; Dan. 12: 2; 1 Cor. 15: 51), and their appearance in power will herald a new "day" for the nations (2 Sam. 23: 4).

CHAPTER THREE

SARDIS THE SICK—vv. 1-6

Sardis was once a great and splendid city, the renowned capital of Croesus and the rich kings of Lydia. It was about 33 miles to the south of Thyatira. Today it is an ignoble village of low and wretched cottages of clay, with no other inhabitants than shepherds and herdsmen, who feed their flocks in the neighbouring plains.

VERSE 1

"The seven Spirits"—There is only "one spirit" (Eph. 4: 4), but that spirit is multitudinally manifested, hence the symbolic number "seven" speaking of unity and completeness. By this spirit Christ walked amid the seven Ecclesias in Asia 1,900 years ago, and also walks amid the Ecclesias today.

"Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead"—The word "and" should be rendered "but" as in Moffatt's translation. The Ecclesia in Sardis had a name for being a live ecclesia. It evidently flourished in

numbers and in activity; it was known far and wide as a model ecclesia; but in actuality it was "dead." Men judged wrongly when they viewed Sardis, as they can judge wrongly today. An Ecclesia can have a "name" for being "alive," but in spiritual things, in matters that really count, that Ecclesia can be dead!

VERSE 2

"Be"—Lit. "become." The Ecclesia was exhorted to wake up to its spiritual responsibilities, to judge itself by the Word and discover what was lacking, to strengthen the things which remained, but were on the point of death.

"Perfect"—Gr. "pleroo"—to fulfil (R.V. = "fulfilled"). Though active in so many avenues of labour, though possessing a name applauded by so many, the Ecclesia had not fulfilled those works required of God.

"Repent"—Gr. Metaneo, signifying "to change one's mind or purpose."

"I will come on thee"—How is not revealed; but in some way, Christ influenced the course of Sardinian history as to adversely affect the Ecclesia. Though once it had a name of being alive, it is today defunct.

VERSE 4

"Even in Sardis"—What an indictment is found in the little word "even"!

"Their garments"—cp. Rom. 4: 7; Gal. 3: 26-28.

"Walk with me in white"—"With me"—unity with Christ. True saints are already clothed (Isa. 61: 10); their garments being pure and unstained must be kept in that state—then, in due time, their nature will correspond (2 Cor. 5: 2-3).

VERSE 5

"The book of life"—The most important book (cp. Phil. 4: 2; Exod. 32: 32; Mal. 3: 16). The symbol is doubtless based upon the custom of the times in which the King recorded the notable deeds of his subjects in a book of remembrance (cp. Esther 6: 1-3). The Scriptures speak of "book" and "books" (Dan. 12: 1; Rev. 20: 12). The actions of saints from day to day are kept in what might be called the "day book," whilst the general account, if worthy of it, is found recorded in the Book of Life. There are no literal books, of course. The Spirit is the Remembrancer (John 14: 26). When God says He will remember our sins no more, it is equivalent to saying they will be blotted out from the "day" book of records (cp. Isa. 43: 25).

"Confess his name"—cp. Luke 12: 8; Mat. 10: 32. The name confessed is not "Brother Smith" or "Brother Brown," but the name of the Father inscribed in the foreheads of the approved (Rev. 14: 1). That becomes the name of all those who are truly His.

COMMENDATION FOR PHILADELPHIA—vv. 7-13

Commendation unmixed with censure is extended to this Ecclesia. The city stood about 27 miles south-east of Sardis, in the plain of Hermus. In A.D. 17 it was destroyed by earthquake, but was soon rebuilt, and flourishes today.

VERSE 7

"He that is holy"—i.e., The Holy One; a title of Deity (cp. Isa. 1: 4; 10: 17; Hos. 11: 9; Ps. 16: 10; Hab. 1: 12) of Whom Christ is the

manifestation. In the Hebrew, the word (Kadish) comes from a root signifying "to be clean," so that as a title it vindicates the righteousness of Yahweh.

"Key of David"—To possess the key of a building is to have a right and authority to it, and the means to open it to others. Here it denotes authority in regard to the Kingdom of David—cp. Isa. 22: 22.

"He that is true"—Gr. "Alethinos"—Denotes true in the sense of real, ideal, genuine. Christ is the real and ideal manifestation of all that was typified under the old dispensation. He is the "true" light foreshadowed by the light that shone from the beginning (John 1: 9). He is the "true" bread typified by the manna (John 6: 32). He is the "true" tabernacle of which the old, was but a type (Heb. 8: 2; 9: 24).

VERSE 8

"An open door"—There is nothing to be feared from an earnest contention for the faith if confidence is placed in Christ who possesses "all authority" in heaven and earth (Mat. 28: 18; 1 Pet. 3: 22).

"Worship"—Reverence as to a superior. See similar use of word in 1 Chron. 29: 20. Many imagine that because Jesus was "worshipped" he is the second person of a trinity—but here are mortal saints to be similarly "worshipped."

VERSE 9

"Synagogue of satan"—In Philadelphia there were two groups claiming to be Christian—the Ecclesia and what is here styled the Synagogue of satan. The latter was a congregation of adversaries, who deserted the Ecclesia (1 John 2: 19), perhaps because they did not like the uncompromising testimony to the Truth that issued forth from it.

VERSE 10

"My patience"—Brother Thomas renders: "patient awaiting." The awaiting for Christ's return, and patient submission to difficulties in the meantime (cp. Rev. 13: 10; 16: 15).

"Hour of temptation"—Gr. peirasmos, from a root signifying "to pierce through" as with a spear, i.e., sore trials (cp. Mat. 6: 13). A period of intense persecution broke out against the Christians in the year 248 under the emperor Decius, and it could have been the period mentioned here. By that time those referred to in this verse had passed to their rest, and the synagogue of satan had temporarily prevailed.

VERSE 11

"Let no man"—If we follow man rather than the Word we can be in danger of having the crown of victory figuratively snatched from us.

"Thy crown"—Gr. "Stephanos"—a coronal wreath, the crown of victory given to the successful contestants in the Grecian games. This "crown," however, is one that will not fade away (cp. 1 Pet. 5: 4).

VERSE 12

"A pillar"—A pillar is representative of the entire house (Gen. 28: 22), or Ecclesia (Gal. 2: 9). To become a pillar in the temple, is to

become an important element in the spiritual temple, to be exhibited at Christ's return (1 Pet. 2: 5-10).

"In the temple"—The Temple was the abiding place of Yahweh, where was found His glory (1 Kings 8: 11; 1 Cor. 6: 19-20). In front of the Temple were reared two pillars called Yachin and Boaz (1 Kings 7: 21). They were merely ornamental pillars, for they did not support any part of the Temple. But they expressed an important lesson. Yachin and Boaz signify: "He shall establish it in strength." Yachin speaks of priesthood; Boaz of kingship which shall be combined in Christ (Zech. 6: 13). Boaz was the ancestor of David (Ruth 4), and Redeemer of Ruth and Naomi, so that the strength of which the pillar spake is manifested in redemption. The pillars were ornamented with lilies and pomegranates speaking of the saints, and the figure of Rev. 3: 12 points to identification with these pillars on the part of those who overcome. A beautiful study opens out upon this theme, and the careful student should read the section from "Eureka," and consider the details of these two brazen pillars which speak of flesh purified.

"The name of my God"—To have this Name named upon one, is for him to form a part of that Divine family yet to be revealed in its completeness (John 17: 17). Such will possess the "glory of God" (Rom. 5: 2), and Divine nature (1 Pet. 1: 3). "The name" or authority of Yahweh will be conferred on them as it was upon the Angel upon whom He likewise placed His name (Exod. 23: 20; 1 Pet. 5: 4).

"The city of my God"—To write this upon one is to constitute him a member of the body politic of Jerusalem. For the name of Jerusalem see Jer. 33: 16; Ezek. 49: 35.

"New Jerusalem"—The Bride of Christ (Rev. 21: 2, 9).

"Out of heaven"—True saints must be born from above, cp. John 3: 3 (margin), James 1: 17; 2 Cor. 5: 2-4. In that sense, they come "out of heaven."

"My new name"—A name is indicative of authority (cp. Phil. 2: 9; Eph. 1: 21).

Answers to Questions:

S.T. (Sth. Africa): We shall set out a few verses of Revelation in a form of suitable Bible marking for you as a sample. These notes on the Apocalypse are broken down from "Eureka," and you will need to break them down still further for your Bible. Do not put any note in your Bible until you are completely satisfied with it, nor any supporting reference until you have examined it.

P.M. (S.A.): You may imagine we are making slow work of these notes, but in actual fact we have covered some 380 pages of "Eureka." These notes are not intended to supercede "Eureka" but to provide a basis for its study. Do not leave "Eureka" on the shelf. Take it down and read it, and add to these notes and your appreciation of the Word.

Questions



Answered

Angels in the Kingdom ?

M.S. (Qld.): Will the angels assist Christ in reigning in the Age to Come?

Ans.: Paul answers your question in Hebrews 2: 5: "For unto the angels hath He NOT put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak." When that age dawns, their work, as far as this earth is concerned, will be taken over by a new race of Angelic beings, concerning whom Christ spake, when he declared: "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that age, and the resurrection from the dead . . . are equal unto the angels" (Luke 20: 35-36).

In Old Testament time, the angels constituted the Elohist "eyes of Yahweh" roving to and fro over the earth, His messengers, performing His will (cp. Gen. 18: 21; Exod. 23: 20; Ps. 103: 20; Gen. 28: 12; John 1: 51). In these times they continue to act in a similar manner, but under the authority of the Lord Jesus (Mat. 28: 18; 1 Pet. 3: 22). In the Age to come their earthly duties will be superceded by the saints (Zech. 4: 10).

The work of the saints will be to act as king-priests (Rev. 5: 9-10), ruling and teaching the people, and leading the world to God. That is one reason why we experience trials now; that we might understand

the needs of those who are tried, and that we might bear with them in compassion. Christ's sufferings helped to equip him in his all-important work as mediator for his people. We know we can come boldly unto the throne of grace through him, because he can be "touched with the feeling of our infirmity" (Heb. 4: 15). But if the Lord had never been faced with trial, he would be completely detached from our feelings and true needs. His sufferings have help him to be able to help us.

In like manner, our trials today can help equip us for similar important work in the future. We must be able to "show compassion on the ignorant and the erring," and we will do this better as we bear in mind our own needs in that regard (see Heb. 5: 1-4). The experience of life today is thus preparing us for the future, when we (if approved) will be among that company of angelic-priests who will labour with Christ to perfect the world that in it God will be "all and in all" (1 Cor. 15: 20-27). During the 1,000 years' reign of Christ, mortals will be able to appeal unto the immortal saints in their midst, knowing that once they, too, were mortal, and subject to the infirmities of the flesh. Thus Christ's brethren, like their Lord, will be capable of helping those desiring help,

VOLUME TWENTY SIX

THE LOGOS

Upholding the Purity of Apostolic Doctrine and Practice

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Thoughts for the Times

‘I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee’

Such is the promise of God to every faithful brother and sister, and how unspeakably precious it is! To have the assurance of a mortal man's help and protection is gratifying, but what shall we say of the promised care of the Almighty—He who can turn a man's heart whithersoever He will (Prov. 30: 1)—He who can make even our enemies to be at peace with us (Prov. 16: 7)? Let us strive to reach a fuller realisation of the goodness of our God. There is much to make us insensible to it. God appears, at times, so far away, and our affairs seem so unworthy of His recognition. Our experiences, too, are so ordinary—so like those of all other men. Let us not be misled by such thoughts. God's word is more reliable than mere appearances. Let us cultivate the faith of Paul when he said: "I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me." The more we study the Scriptures, the greater will become our confidence in God and His word.

The Seething Cauldron of Arabia

"The Arabian region is well represented as 'the pit,' and locality of 'a great furnace' (see Rev. 9); for the district of the Dead Sea, and of the whole valley of the Jordan northward to the Lake of Tiberias, is quite a phenomenon in physical geography, being below the level of the ocean. No other example of similar depression or pit, is known. The Lake of Tiberias is 328 feet below the level of the Mediterranean; and from thence the river valley declines to the Dead Sea, the surface of which is very nearly 1,400 feet below the same level. . . . This Arabian Pit was the place of a fire burning as a furnace, which, when it should be 'opened,' would pour forth a woeful tormenting power upon the unsealed inhabitants of the earth. The inhabitants of this pit of the sea, while they were shut up therein, would be in a state of war and distraction; for such is the idea conveyed by a burning furnace, which melts down the crude matters cast into it. A great furnace is never a symbol of peace and prosperity; but always of the contrary."

—"Eureka," vol. 2, pp. 452-453



The above extract is taken from Brother Thomas' exposition of Revelation 9 which contains the prophecy concerning the "locusts" that John saw emanating from out of the great "bottomless pit." These "locusts" symbolise the Arab power (the Hebrew words for Arab and locust are practically the same), and the prophecy commissions them to "hurt" the eastern Roman Empire (v. 4). John saw a star "fall from heaven" having the key to the bottomless pit. He used the key, and immediately smoke poured out of the pit; and then, out of the smoke, were seen locusts emanating, described as "like unto horses prepared unto battle" (v. 7). These waged a holy or religious war (v. 4) against the eastern portion of the Roman Empire.

In his exposition, Brother Thomas shows that this was fulfilled by the sudden and unexpected appearance of the hitherto disunited Arab forces, welded together under one head, and making bid for world domination. The "star" that fell from heaven, he identifies as Mahomet, who was forced to flee from Mecca to Medina, and who, subsequently, turned missionary, uniting the Arab tribes by the new religion he introduced, and by warfare (fire and smoke) brought them all under one spiritual head.

Out of this religious and military conflict came one of the most remarkable phenomenons in the history of nations: the meteoric rise, the brilliant splendour, and the sudden waning of the Saracen or Arab Empire.

At breathless speed, the Arabs built up one of the greatest empires the world has seen, but within four centuries its glory had departed, and it had crumbled into dust.

To the philosopher and historian this sudden rise and fall is inexplicable; they cannot explain "how" or "why" a nation that had been disunited and backward for centuries, should unexpectedly burst into life, drastically affect the course of history, and then fade away.

Yet though hidden from the "wise and prudent," these things are revealed unto "babes"; "God has revealed them unto us by His spirit." There is Divine destiny behind it all. "He hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their (the nations) habitation" (Acts 17: 26).

The Burning Furnace

The drama was played upon the barren, forbidding land which was given to the sons of Ishmael, a land in which only an ingenious and hardy race could survive. The naked wilderness before them offered no scope for a race of hunters; they were forced to become pastoralists. The roving tribes of the desert still maintain this nomadic existence, dwelling under the same tents, migrating with their horses and flocks to the same oases and pastures as did their ancestors in the days of Moses or of Mohammed.

This was their life, and for centuries they slumbered content with their isolation. The very harshness of the land secured them against the envy and invasion of more powerful nations. The armies of Cyrus, Pompey or Trojan could not achieve the conquest of the Arabs. The Bedouin horses and camels disappear and melt before the face of a conqueror, and though his troops may be victorious in battle, they are consumed by thirst, hunger and fatigue in the pursuit of an invisible foe who scorns his efforts, and reposes safely in the heart of the burning solitude in confident knowledge of its secret sources of water. Many a world conqueror found the Arabs dangerous to provoke and profitless to attack. Safely entrenched behind the natural defence of burning sands, he maintained his freedom and independence over the centuries.

This isolation, this constant battle with the elements, bred in the Arabs an ingrained suspicion of their fellows, so that "stranger" and "enemy" became synonymous terms. They were divided among themselves, the various families and tribes agitated by internal strife and feuds (Gen. 16: 12), and only the threat of a common enemy could unite these discordant elements. As there was little fear of invasion, some other means had to be devised to bring them together. Mohammed provided this unifying element, by inventing a religion, and giving them an incentive, to conquest. They engaged upon these conquests with a proselyting zeal; but once this evaporated, so did their unity.

Mohammed's Religious Zeal

The early religion of these desert wanderers was simple. The heavenly bodies conveyed many impressions to their minds. Boundless space, timelessness, the regular rhythm of the seasons with their beneficent influence to man, these and other impressions invoked in them a worship of the host of heaven. Add to this the belief in the serpent doctrine of the immortality of the soul, the transmigration of souls, and kindred beliefs, and there is obtained some hazy conception of the primitive superstitions which bound these people under chains of darkness.

But over the course of time, other ideas were introduced to them. Jews had been expelled from Jerusalem; the Ecclesia had become a fugitive; so-called "heretics" were banished from the provinces of the Roman Empire; and gradually the ideas of these minority groups penetrated to Arabia. On the other hand, in Rome, an apostate church had joined itself to the State in adulterous alliance; the dogmas of the Trinity and other errors had been established by war and bloodshed; the question of the worship of images and holy relics was dividing the church. Persecution was used as the most powerful argument, and Arabia, by virtue of its independence, provided a refuge for many of the oppressed, who brought with them their various ideas, philosophies, and superstitions.

Into this hotbed of strife and contention, Mohammed was born about 570 A.D. in the city of Mecca. At the age of forty, he assumed the title of prophet, and set about proclaiming the religion of the Koran. The faith he preached "is compounded," says Gibbon, "of an eternal truth, and a necessary fiction: that there is only one God, and that Mohammed is His prophet."

This solemn declaration of the unity of God struck at the roots of Arabian idolatry and polytheism, and in 622 Mohammed has so roused antagonism against his doctrines, that he had to flee for his life. History terms this the Hegira (the Withdrawal, or Flight). It marks the commencement of the Moslem calendar, for as the Christian calendar is dated from the birth of Christ, so the Moslem calendar is dated from the Flight of Mohammed in 622.

In his exile, the self-styled prophet met with greater success. He soon surrounded himself with a band of disciples, in company with whom, he returned to Mecca, and set himself up as prophet and ruler of Arabia. He was so successful in this, that at his death in 632, Arabia was united under one ruler and one religion.

We pause for a moment to wonder at the ease with which the Arabs accepted the authority and teaching of Mohammed, and so were, for the first time, united in preparation for the mission before them. What explanation can be given to account for this remarkable development? The answer is found in the consideration of a further question: Why are the Jews today returning to the land of Israel? Why is it that suddenly and unexpectedly they turn from their accepted traditional avocations, and willingly, even cheerfully, accept the unaccustomed and incredible hardships of Israel? The answer is that Destiny is calling them. Yahweh has a purpose with them, and He has declared that He will regather them. The spirit which today moves Jewry and impels them to return to their land, is the hand of Providence working in our midst unseen and unknown to the natural man.

So it was with the Arabs in the days of Mohammed. Yahweh had a purpose with them. The various elements which prepared the Arab mind for the acceptance of Mohammed's teaching, the readiness with which they united under his banner were all part of the preparation for their divinely appointed mission. At the death of Mohammed they were moved by a proselyting religious zeal to be erupted on to an apostate Christian world.

Their Divine Mission

Mohammed was succeeded by Abubeker who assumed the position of Caliph, uniting in himself both civil and religious power. He infused his followers with religious zeal, impressing them that the time had arrived for the new religion to be

propagated by the sword, that idolatry had to be overthrown, and infidels pursued and destroyed. "Remember, you are in the presence of God, on the verge of death, in the assurance of judgment and the hope of Paradise," he exhorted his troops. "Avoid injustice and oppression. Let not your victory be stained with the blood of women and children. Destroy no palm trees, nor burn any fields of corn. Cut down no fruit trees, nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you need to eat. You will find another sort of people that belong to the synagogue of satan, who have shaven crowns; be sure you cleave their skulls and give them no quarter till they either turn Mohammedans, or pay tribute!"

For three hundred years, the Catholic idolators of Rome and Constantinople were to suffer the torments of the "locust" hordes. Yahweh had predicted five centuries previously (Rev. 9: 5, 10, see "Eureka" 11, pp. 449-477).

The attack was launched, and at breathless speed, one dominion after another fell, before the Arabs. Syria, Egypt and Persia were taken in rapid succession. By 750 the Arab Empire extended from the borders of China in the east, to Spain in the west*, and the eastern section of the Roman Empire had been reduced to the region of Asia Minor (modern Turkey). The sword had brought overwhelming success to the Koran, and the whole world trembled before the threat of Moslem power.

And now the Arabs entered the "golden age" of their Empire. By 750 their conquests were complete; their empire had reached its greatest extent. This remarkable people now turned to other triumphs. Science, philosophy, literature now claimed their attention. They absorbed the learning of all the dominions where their sword had been successful and developed it. In the same way as they had introduced artillery into warfare, they now learnt paper making from the Chinese, mathematics from the Indians, commerce and banking from the Jews, astronomy from the Egyptians, poetry and literature from various parts. And wherever they went, they carried with them the results of their increasing knowledge. Western culture is greatly indebted to the influence of the Arabs; many Arabic words are still in current use, such as alchemy, algebra, almanac, elixir, zenith etc. They established centres of learning throughout their empire, and notably in Spain. The present University and Education system was founded by the Arabs.

*The reader is advised to refer to a map of the Saracene Empire.

The age of the great navigators was made possible by the release of knowledge in the great schools of navigation and astronomy founded by the Arabs, though a further impetus was given this by developments that stemmed from the fall of Constantinople by the Turks. The later contests between Spain, Portugal, Holland and Britain for the supremacy of the seas, and Britain's ultimate rise to the ascendancy as the merchant power of Tarshish, thus owes much to the Arabs. As one writer expresses it: "Jewish scholars, who sustained the traditions of the Moorish universities of Toledo, Cordova and Seville, handed on the *Almagest* to the European navigators."[†]

With this age of learning, however, there came a decline in military conquests. Instead of attempting to extend their dominions, from 782 to 933 they conducted unceasing campaigns against the idolators of the eastern Empire (see "Eureka" vol. 3, pp. 134-139 for a typical example of these campaigns). In a remarkable manner, the symbols and time periods of Revelation 9 were fulfilled. This chapter requires two periods each of 5 months, or 150 days, corresponding to two 150 year periods of history. From 632 to 933 represents such a period of time, and this was divided into two even periods of 150 years each: one of extending conquests, the latter of campaigns against the east*. In 933, Arab power was on the decline; secular power was wrested from the Caliph (as their ruler, the successor of the prophet, was called). No longer did he exercise the power to wage war. The empire crumbled into dust, and the Caliph continued only as the spiritual head of his followers. The spiritual influence of the Caliph continued today and must not be ignored; it is a vital factor in the present world situation.

Why should this power thus suddenly rise to prominence, exercise such power and influence, and as suddenly wane? The answer is given in Acts 17: 26: "God hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."

Decline of Power

In 760 Baghdad was made the capital of the Empire,

[†]The "Almagest" is an Arabic treatise on astronomy and navigation.

*The reader is strongly urged to read Brother Thomas' exposition of these symbols in "Eureka," vol. 2, pp. 449-477; also Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," chaps. 50, 51. A knowledge of the exposition of Revelation 9 is necessary to the understanding of current developments in the Arab League today.

and the Caliph took up residence there. From that time, Persian influences were at work, laying the foundation for divisions which later followed. During the 10th and 11th centuries, immediately after the termination of their allotted time (Rev. 9: 10), province after province separated from a rulership which was now more Persian than Arabian. The learning that the Arabs had accumulated during the golden period of their empire was neglected, and the Arabs deteriorated to their former state of semi-barbarism.

In 1258, Baghdad was taken by the Turks, and Turkish power absorbed what was left of the Arab Empire. But though defeated militarily, the Arabs still retained sufficient spiritual influence to finally conquer their conquerors, for the Turks embraced the religion of the Koran. Mohammed, though dead, still triumphed.

During the centuries which have followed, the Arab states that remained after the dismemberment of the Empire, have been, in turn, independent kingdoms, rulers of Egypt, provinces of Egypt, provinces of Turkey. Today, Egypt is a "base kingdom" (Ezek. 29: 15), Turkey is in decline (Rev. 16: 12), and the Arab States are again independent, bound together by a common hatred — the traditional hatred of Ishmael for Isaac.

The empire of the past is gone, but a spiritual empire still remains. The influence of the Koran extends today far beyond the confines of Arabia to Indonesia and Malaya, parts of China, Pakistan, Afghanistan, parts of India, Morocco, Tunis, Egypt, Nigeria, Kenya, etc. For many millions, the Koran is still the rule of faith, Mecca is still the holy city, and five times a day the eyes of these millions of "the faithful" are turned to "the east." One writer has stated: "Islam remains welded together by the binding force of the faith." This still remains an important factor in the Divine purpose, a factor that will help to "draw all nations against Jerusalem to battle" (Zech. 14: 1).

Next month (God willing), we propose to consider this spiritual influence in the latter-day development of the nations in the light of prophecy.

—Frank Russell.

The Bread from Heaven

MANNA in the WILDERNESS

"He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee to know that man (Heb., Adam) doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of Yahweh" (Deut. 8: 3).



With these words, Moses endeavoured to impress upon the Israelites that the supply of manna from heaven taught deep spiritual lessons, and that the manna itself symbolised the "Word of God." They were thus required to discern the same spiritual lessons from the writings of Moses as we find necessary for spiritual sustenance in our own days. They were called to manifest the attitude of the Psalmist: "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law" (Ps. 119: 18).

It is not difficult to imagine the scene on that first morning when the Israelites arose, wondering if the words of Moses would become fact. Hungry, and with the knowledge that apart from miraculous provisions they would die, their startled gaze revealed to them the fulfilment of the promise. They saw the ground was covered with a strange substance. "And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, 'What is it?' for they wist not what it was" (Exod. 16: 15, R.V.). The phrase "It is manna" in the A.V. should be translated as in the R.V., for their remark was one of wonderment and question. A powerful spiritual lesson is thus provided. As Israel did not recognise the manna when it was first placed before them, so the nation failed to recognise the Lord Jesus Christ, when, as the true bread from heaven, he appeared in its midst. "We know God spoke to Moses, but we do not know where this fellow comes from" (Jhn. 9: 29—Moffatt).

"Then said Yahweh unto Moses: 'Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in My law, or no'" (Exod. 16: 4). These words reveal four vital facts: Firstly, that Yahweh would provide

the bread; Secondly, that it would come from heaven; Thirdly, that Israel should gather it daily; Fourthly, that their acceptance of it in faith, should provide proof of their obedience. The proof of their obedience was their acknowledgment of the first and second points of the Divine promise, that Yahweh had provided the bread, and that it had come from heaven. We later learn that Israel came to despise the manna, thus despising the Word of God. "And the people spake against God, and against Moses, 'Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread'" (Num. 21: 5). The diet had become monotonous; the bread they desired was the bread of Egypt; and, although only relatively near the promised land when this denial was uttered, they no longer provided proof of their obedience to the Divine will as required (Exod. 16: 4). We need to exercise care ourselves. We can easily repeat the disbelief, murmuring, neglect, ignorance and enmity of Israel to the Divine way.

Their rejection of faith in the way the manna was provided, and its spiritual significance, went beyond rejecting the Word of God as taught by Moses; it anticipated the rejection of the true manna, the Lord Jesus Christ at his appearing in their midst. He was "despised and rejected of men" in the same way as their fathers before them had "despised and rejected" the manna in the wilderness (Isa. 53: 3).

The manna was miraculously preserved on every 6th day. "It shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily" (Exod. 16: 5). Verse 24 declares: "And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade; and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein." When they attempted to do this any other day, however, it did corrupt. Here was manna both corruptible and incorruptible, pointing another powerful lesson. The Lord Jesus was once of corruptible nature (Heb. 2: 14), and yet, like the manna on the sixth day, he was preserved (Ps. 16: 10; Acts 2: 31).

But the lesson goes further. The sixth day of Israel's gathering is related to the great seventh day, the millennium. On the antitypical sixth day there is to be a double portion gathered by a greater Israel. They will eat of the "hidden manna" (Rev. 2: 17) and "be like him" (1 John 3: 2).

Moses had promised that the people would receive both flesh and bread. "And it came to pass, that at even, the quails came up, and covered the camp; and in the morning the dew lay round about the host" (Exod. 16: 13). The lesson to Israel was that they should first receive flesh "at even" and bread "in the morning." In fulfilment of this they received their Messiah "according to the flesh" (Rom. 1: 3) at the even of the Mosaic Age, but the "morning" is yet to dawn. It will be in the Kingdom Age, the dawning of a new "Day" that they shall see the proof of Yahweh's miraculous powers: the true manna will be revealed to a rejuvenated Israel, then to be recipients of a new covenant from the loving personage of their Great King.

A spiritual lesson is also provided in this incident for those who now endeavour to "live by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of Yahweh." We have received "the flesh at even," and now await the time when the anti-typical manna of divine nature (Rev. 2: 17) will be bestowed upon us. It will be "morning" when the long night of Gentilism has rolled away, and it will be then, "in the morning, that ye shall see the glory of Yahweh" (Exod. 16: 7). This is the morning when the promise to Benjamin (the Son of the Right Hand) will be fulfilled: "In the morning he shall devour the prey" (Gen. 49: 27). It is the time of the Sun's rising, when the "glory of Yahweh" shall appear "in the cloud" of great witnesses (Exod. 16: 10).

The manna was concealed by dew, hence the term the "hidden manna" (Rev. 2: 17). The record states: "And when the dew was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground." It was only when the dew had evaporated by the powerful action of the sun that the manna was seen. Dew is used to represent resurrection: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Yahweh's "dead men" will arise as the dew arises, and then the action of the Sun of Righteousness will be revealed upon them, changing them into true manna, incorruptible nature, like himself (Phil. 3: 21; 1 Cor. 15: 45-46).

Israel had to labour to obtain the manna. "This is the thing which Yahweh hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your persons; take ye every man for

them which are in his tents. And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less" (Ex. 16: 16-18). Paul makes reference to this incident in 2 Cor. 8: 15 and teaches that we must be gatherers and distributors of the Word and its influence in good works. But if we do not labour we cannot eat; if we do not gather of the manna, we will not obtain a place in the Kingdom. As the manna in the wilderness strengthened the bodies of Israelites, enabling them to continue their pilgrimage through the wilderness, so the daily gathering of the manna of the word will strengthen us to gain the mastery over sin. If we individually gather, according to our individual capacity, the reward may be ours. We will acknowledge the four features of Exodus 16: 4: Yahweh has provided the true bread, Christ; he has been miraculously provided from heaven; we affirm and practise the necessity of daily gathering; we acknowledge our faith in the Divine message, and provide proof of our obedience to the Divine will. But whether we gather little or much, the fundamental requirement is: "**gather.**"

Christ taught his disciples to pray: "Give us this day our daily bread" (Mat. 6: 11). According to the Companion Bible, the word "daily" here used (and in Luke 11: 3) is "epiousios" compounded of two words "epi" meaning "upon," and "ousios" signifying "coming," thus a "coming" or "descending upon," as the manna descended upon the Israelites in the wilderness. It implies that the blessing comes from above, and whilst this may be said of our natural bread, it is equally true of that spiritual bread which alone provides sustenance for our spiritual living. Here, then, we are taught to pray for a daily supply of the Word.

The closing verses of Exodus 16 tells how an omer of manna was preserved in a golden pot and later placed within the Ark of the Covenant (Heb. 9: 4). This gloriously typifies the Lord Jesus Christ in a state of constant preservation. The manna within the Ark was miraculously kept for centuries concealed from view by the Caphporeth, or Mercy Seat. In the same way, Christ has been hidden in the heavens for centuries, in incorruptible nature, to be apocalypted at the "set time" (Col. 3: 4).

These are the great truths concealed in the Mosaic writings concerning the manna in the wilderness — truths which the Lord Jesus taught to a disbelieving nation in his time. In 1 Cor. 10: 1-12, Paul draws together the past, present and future in his comments upon these great types. He reminded

the Corinthian brethren that these events of so long ago provided important spiritual lessons which Israel failed to grasp. Similarly, he shows us the need for exercising our minds that we might learn from these examples, and thereby spiritually grow towards maturity. And for the future he counsels us with the words: "Therefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (v. 12). The Israelites failed to grasp the significance of Moses's teaching in the wilderness, the Jews of Messiah's day failed likewise, even many of his disciples failed to discern necessary spiritual truths. How vital it is, then, that we heed the counsel of Scripture; and, in regard to this glorious subject, give particular consideration to the words of the Lord: "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (Jhn. 6: 35).

—John Ullman (WA).

DEATH OF BROTHER AND SISTER R. G. WALKER

It is with sadness that we learn of the passing of Brother and Sister R. G. Walker, of Melbourne, Victoria. They were returning by motor-car from a special campaign that had been conducted in one of the country districts of Victoria, Warrnambool, when suddenly tragedy struck, and in a collision both lost their lives.

As Recorder of the Ecclesia meeting at Horticultural Hall, Melbourne, Brother Walker was well known throughout Australia and beyond, for the grand service and unstinting zeal he gave to the Truth over the years. He always stood for a principle, and we came to respect him when, for many years, almost our only contact with him was by correspondence.

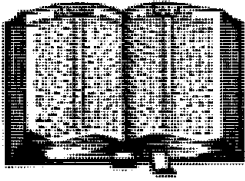
It was a pleasure, about twelve months ago, to be closely associated with him in a special effort in Melbourne, and the enjoyment of that occasion still lingers with us. We learned to love our brother because of his zeal for the Truth, and his kindly ministrations to us on that occasion.

He was nobly assisted in his labours by his sister-wife, who proved, over the years, a "help meet" for her husband.

They both sleep awaiting the return of the Lord. Suddenly, unexpectedly, returning from an effort on behalf of the Truth, they were called upon to lay down their labours. What an exhortation is bound up in the fact! None of us can presume upon time! "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Ps. 90: 12).

Our sympathy goes out to those who mourn. May He who caused it to be written: "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people," comfort them in their sadness. It is we who are the losers by the passing of such as Brother Walker, for Ecclesias need the steadying influence of men of principle, who are not afraid to voice their mind on matters of precept or doctrine.

Logos Committee.



Things New and Old

No. 11—

The Works of the Flesh

From praying for forgiveness because we “miss the mark,” we turn to pray because, too often, we sin by “crossing the line.” We can but touch the fringe of the subject in these scattered meditations. The reader will keep on thinking that I could have mentioned Psalm 51, or this chapter or that in Proverbs, Hebrews or Romans, but we have to rest content with a few hints drawn from the general tenor of the Word.

Crossing The Line

Some years ago, I commented on this aspect of the matter with the aid of a diagram (see also “Story of the Bible” vol. 2, No. 10):

We are fundamentally little units of self expression. All the “self” impulses know of no limit and are of themselves neither good nor bad. “I think,” “I feel,” “I want,” “I wish,” “I like,” “I hunger,” “I love” and so on. Our various impulses are necessary in order that we may live. If we did not “want” food, we should die of hunger; if the sexual impulse did not exist, the race would become extinct; if we had not some spiritedness, or self confidence, we should be utterly crushed.

But around all these natural impulses, God has drawn a line, saying: “Thus far and no farther.” This is Divine Law, which restricts us in doing what is natural. To cross over that line is transgression (“going across”), or sin. The first line was drawn in Eden. It was natural to eat good tasty food, to desire to be wise, to delight in luscious beauty — but when God drew a line and restricted these impulses in one direction, then to cross over was sin.

Character is formed by the discipline of impulses to conform to the Divine mould. It is positively **not** harmful to resist natural impulses and refuse them free play. It is good to find proper outlets for them, but to “crucify the flesh with its desires” never harmed anyone. The psychological word “repression,” is misunderstood. It does not mean “resisting

the devil," but refusing to face up to situations and emotions, and driving them down into the unconscious mind, where they can be a running sore, poisoning the conscious life with all sorts of complexes and tensions. By its fearless and honest self-examination, the Truth does much to deliver us from "repression," but it healthily restricts our self-expression. If we can receive it, it will thereby liberate us from our ego into the freedom in Christ Jesus, where he that loseth his life shall find it.

We have said that the natural impulses are inherently neutral: they only become evil when they cross the line. Thus there is nothing wrong with eating and drinking, but gluttony and drunkenness are sinful — they are not glorifying God in our bodies. There is nothing wrong with sexual relationship, for "marriage is honourable" said the apostle, but adultery, fornication, filthy talk, licentiousness are transgressions. Firmness is good — but when the line is crossed we get obstinacy, provocativeness, and a whole family of evil characteristics. When courage crosses the line it becomes foolhardiness, prudence becomes cowardice, loyalty becomes party spirit, righteousness anger becomes bitter enmity, and so on.

What Constitutes the Line?

The line is drawn in the Word by precept, proverb, prophetic denunciation, sacrifice, epistle, biography and history. The constant reading of all these builds up a standard within us, an inner consciousness of right and wrong, which is not our natural possession. This God-given "conscience" battles with our natural will ("Thy will not mine, Oh Lord!") and the conflict finds both its climax and its quickening in the moment of prayer.

Here we examine our day's deeds and thoughts; we put the Divine line (plumbline, if you like) against them, and say: "Forgive us our sins!"

Surely it is only of any value if we mention them one by one to God, face up to them, acknowledge them, repudiate them. Then God can "seal up our transgressions in a bag and cover over our iniquity" (Job 14: 17 RSV). The word translated "forgiveness" actually means to "be loosened from." The knowledge of sin, the acknowledgment of it, and the realisation of God's mercy, all help to do this. Sin wounds the new man; confession and forgiveness efface the wound. The first punishment for sin is its marring of character: "as a man soweth so shall he reap." Judicial punishment is but the

matching of eternal destiny to the useless character. Every honest confession of sin, of itself produces a neutralising of sin — a disinclination to let it take deeper root, and this is the first practical stage of forgiveness, in being loosed from sin. Thus, the very act of prayer contributes to the forgiveness it seeks.

What are these sins we mention one by one to God, in the presence, let us never forget, of Jesus our High Priest?

Paul provides a list in Galatians 5. I will use the RSV to describe the sins in words common today. Mark well that Paul is speaking to brethren and sisters — he was viewing the possibility of these sins being found even among them.

Immorality (A.V. Adultery and Fornication): Surely there is no need to mention this! But let us be honest. Jesus said: "Whoso looketh upon a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery in his heart." This is an age when every hoarding and newspaper seeks to stir up the sexual emotions into activity, and when many women seek to provoke by the manner in which they dress. Happy the man who has not received unwelcome guests of lustful thoughts into his mental parlour at some time or other. Toy not with them, but firstly show them the door by reading the Word, and exposing them in prayer. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his ways: by taking heed thereto according to Thy word" (Ps. 119).

Impurity (A.V. Uncleaness). The human mind easily descends to grossness, especially when it is trying to be funny. In the office, the factory, the shop we may be daily with people who like to say, "Have you heard this one!" who pepper their speech with dirty witticisms. We ought, without self-righteousness, get out of range. Certainly we should not give diligent ear, still less seek to outshine them. How often do we remain because we don't like to seem aloof, or laugh because we don't like to offend, or because we are genuinely amused? And then we think about it, and Paul's words come to mind: "Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting which is not fitting," and we are ashamed (Eph. 5: 19).

Licentiousness (A.V. Lasciviousness). The root is "licence," over indulgence. The phrase is used mainly of sexual matters, but can extend to other natural impulses. Even impulses exercised within permitted fields (e.g. marriage) can be excessively indulged. Saints are not exempt from inward struggles to maintain temperance in such matters. The Word says, "Pray about them all," "Be ye holy as I am holy" — but not ascetics.

Idolatry. Impossible in this age? No! Ezekiel speaks of idols in the heart, and John says, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." "Is there a thing beneath the sun, that strives with Thee my heart to share: Ah! tear it hence, and reign alone, the Lord of every motion there." That which competes with God for first place in our affections is an idol. It can be family: "Whoso loveth father, mother, wife, children . . . more than me . . ." It can be possessions: new carpets, furniture, clothes, modern devices — not all wrong as such — but all too easily developing ambition and "covetousness which is idolatry." What heart-searching is needed in prayer here.

Sorcery (A. V. Witchcraft). Perhaps not a direct temptation now, but any toying with the superstitions of men seriously or "for fun," gets near to it. The cult of horoscopes will be shunned by saints.

The Social Sins: Enmity (A.V. hatred); **Strife** (A.V. variance); **Jealousy** (A.V. emulations); **Anger** (A.V. wrath); **Selfishness** (A.V. Strife); **Dissension** (A.V. seditions); **Party Spirit** (A.V. heresies); **Envy** (A.V. envying); **Murder** (A.V. only).

What a miserable family these are! They are all related, and as such need to be considered together. The last one really sums all the others up, for John says: "If any man hate his brother he is a murderer." Brother-in-Christ in the first place, but brother-man who is made in the image of God in general as well. True, we must hate iniquity, and David said: "Do not I hate them that hate Thee!" (Ps. 139) — but personal animosity and grudges against our fellows — No!

Yet how often when we come to confess our faults by name in prayer to the Father we find members of this family of sin among them. They all have the common feature of self importance, self assertion and lack of humble contentment that our ways — including what other people can do to us — are in the hands of God.

People are not "nice." We could probably live the truth better but for "other people" — so we might think. Yet actually other people, in the world or in the ecclesia, are there for the very purpose of testing and shaping us. Mingling with human kind tests self control, and in learning to keep tongue and deed in check, we gain the real sense of values, and learn how few things are really worth getting upset about.

Yes, people are not "nice." And so, in the office, factory, or wherever we work; at home, the family, the neighbours, in the ecclesia — wherever there is human society, there is the clash of will and interest.

We "can't stand" such a person — he is not straightforward, he is petty, he is intolerant, he is too critical, he is supercilious, sarcastic, too outspoken, too soft, thoughtless, unreliable and so on. Yes, all these faults exist in people and are vexing to us. There will also be things about us that vex other people. Half the conversation in the world — and quite a lot in the Ecclesia — is about other people, their faults and their supposed or real wrongs against us. The Apostle James has sound speech on the way in which the tongue sets on fire the course of nature. All the epistles counsel against evil speaking, and Jesus says: "If thy brother offend, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone" (Mat. 18). But the tongue is not easily controlled, and in no time we are "running people (or brethren) down" — retelling to others their failures and unlovely ways. They do the same about us, and so enmity is formed, and strife may well follow. We must be severe in our standards on this matter, and be careful that we apply the old test: "Is it true? Is it good? Is it necessary?" before we criticise another. If we warn people about someone, let us be sure that our words are not those we would fear to say to the offender's face. In fact, before we start warning others, we should warn the offender himself. Let us also be careful that we do not gossip in the guise of discussing another's spiritual welfare.

Jealousy

Jealously is another ugly quality—a perversion of a true quality of God whose name is Jealous. God's jealousy is concern that the honour due to Himself should not go to others. To him alone is glory due, and He alone can be "jealous" without wrong. On a lower plane, a partner in marriage can rightly be jealous if the other party bestows intimate affection elsewhere — though no partner is so without fault as to be without blame, as God is. Moreover, usually human jealousy has a good deal of imagination in it: piecing together circumstantial evidence and falling into a mood because of supposed slights.

The trouble with jealousy is that it can so pose as righteousness. The brother who opposes the growing influence of another may do so because he resents having to share

with another the duties of a shepherd among a group of brethren; so he finds many faults and weaknesses in the other, and yet is quite blind to his real inner motives.

Anger

Anger is very occasionally justifiable; but, in general, the wrath of man worketh not the will of God. Christ, eaten up by the zeal of God's house, was angry with a cause. Be angry and sin not — but even then do not brood and allow a spirit of turbulence to grow; let not the sun go down upon your wrath; let sorrow, compassion and prayers for repentance take its place.

Temper-losing can never be good; for a man in a temper is out of control, and capable of every evil. So when our face goes red and our mouth dry, learn to put on the brake; walk away if necessary, and await a less passionate moment.

Cliques

Party spirit — cliques — we have seen them all, even in the guise of truth. When brethren begin to speak of the rest of the ecclesia as "they," when they point to sins real and imagined, then we have evidence of factionism. "We be brethren," whether weak or strong, and Christ died for all of us. Daniel's prayer (Ch. 9) is the example. He associated himself with the sin of the people: "We have sinned," not "they have sinned." Because "Logos" represents a strong and hearty line on the Truth which is not acceptable to all brethren, this must not lead to the existence of a "Logos" party. If some don't like the work of "Logos" this is a matter for regret, not for party spirit.

Envy

Envy is different from jealousy — it can never be right. It is begrudging others what they have, because we have not. It is a breach of the tenth commandment. It is easily fallen into in days when so many think and act as though the world owed them a living. The Scriptures are strong in denouncing the oppressors of the poor and needy, but the Word does not countenance an envious spirit. God gives us sufficient of all things to take us to the Kingdom, and what else can we ask or want? Why then envy the brother who seems to be more "full" than we are? We don't know how much of it is benefit, and how much of it is a test. Little actions by the brethren with this world's goods are often misinterpreted by those who lack, and an evil image is built

up and gossiped about — when all the time, envy is at the root of it.

The trouble is that we are so easily blind to the faults in this group because we are "first in our own cause." The moment of prayer is the time for a very vigorous tearing of the veils with which we cover our sins, and the holy labels under which we cloak transgression.

"As we forgive them that trespass against us"

Every time we utter these words in prayer we reinforce our determination to avoid the sins we have been talking of. We are asking to be measured by the measure we mete to others. This is very bold. If our standard towards others is hypocritical, merciless and cold, then in this prayer we daily sign our own death warrant. We are actually asking God to treat us in the same way.

The wonder of it all is that if we confess our faults, He is faithful and just to forgive us. He knows our frame, and our weakness, and the real desire of our heart. "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom Yahweh imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile" (Ps. 32).

Our High Priest

Thus in this phrase of the prayer there is warning, but there is comfort and hope. Above all, it is in this part of the prayer that we acknowledge the Saviour very particularly. We cannot stay to say much on forgiveness in Christ Jesus; but it is through him that God brings us to the state of mind where iniquity is not to be imputed. Forgiveness of sins is the great gift of the New Covenant in Christ — forgiveness because his sacrifice writes God's laws in our hearts and minds and brings about repentance. Forgiveness, because he is the great High Priest whose presence with the Father gives us access and boldness to approach where we might have been crushed by the frailty of our natures, compared with the effulgence of Divine glory.

Often when I pray this phrase, a picture comes into my mind of the once crucified, now risen Jesus, standing in the presence of Him who from everlasting to everlasting is El (Ps. 90: 2), Whose glory is too bright for human eyes; and I feel a nearness to God which would not be easy if His Son were not at His right hand. And the words of Paul come into mind: "We have not an high priest who cannot be touched

with the feelings of our infirmities . . . " In them is encouragement to endure to the end — to pray on — to keep on — nothing deterred by the sin that so easily besets us — determined to keep up the fight — knowing that of all that God has given the Lord Jesus, he will lose nothing. "Fear not little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."

—Edgar Wille (Eng.).

The Supposed Pre-existence of Christ

JOHN 1 : 1-14

(Cont. from p. 140)

"The Same was in the beginning with God" (v.2)

This verse repeats the statement already made in v. 1. Why should this be so? Repetition is normally considered a waste of words. Why should it be used here?

The more I study the Word, the more convinced I become of its Divine authorship, because I find such depth of significance in all that it states. I am confident that the Bible does not contain a superfluous word. The difficulty, of course, is for finite minds to fully grasp the purpose that Deity has in view in a particular statement or incident recorded in Holy Writ.

But it is always worth while seeking out why a particular verse is contained in Scripture.

Particularly when such a verse may be considered unnecessary, such as the one above.

Why, then, the repetition of v. 1?

Repetition is a Hebrew form of expression designed for the sake of emphasis. "The dream is doubled unto Pharaoh twice; because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass," declared Joseph to Pharaoh. The dream doubled to Pharaoh emphasised the importance of the threatened crisis facing the nation, and stressed the

urgency of immediately instituting a plan to cope with it.

The repetition of John 1 emphasises that the word, or declaration, proclaimed from the beginning is, indeed, Divine.

"All things were made by Him"

This statement is usually used to prove the pre-existence of Christ. Its significance is clouded by one or two anomalies in the A.V. Firstly, the term "all things" is susceptible of two meanings: it can apply to all things material, or all things spiritual. Actually, there is no equivalent word in the Greek for "things," the word "pas" signifying "all" and the context determining what is implied by the "all."

The word is used in a variety of ways. It occurs, for example, in Rev. 21: 5, 7: "I make all things new," "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." Obviously, the term as used, does not relate to physical creation.

Nor does it in Colossians 1: 16: "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, dominions, principalities, powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist . . ."

The "all things" of Colossians 1: 16 cannot be interpreted literally, otherwise it teaches that the Lord Jesus created God and was before God — "By him all things were created that are in heaven. . . he is before all things . . ."

Ample evidence exists in Scripture to show that "heaven" is used in a figurative sense, relating to exalted positions of authority, political and otherwise. The Lord brought into being certain "heavens" (the word is plural in the Greek) of a spiritual nature which are occupied by the saints now on earth. Paul makes reference to them in Ephesians 2: 6: "Christ hath raised us up together, and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Christ made possible the "all things" of this heavenly state on earth.

Similarly, in John 1: 2, the "all things" do not necessarily relate to physical creation. It is a fact, of course, that the Divine purpose, His logos, required and brought into being the creation of Genesis 1. "By the word of Yahweh were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth" (Ps. 33: 6); "He sent His word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions;" "He sendeth forth His commandment upon earth; His word runneth very

swiftly" (Ps. 147: 15); "My word that goeth forth out of My mouth shall not return unto Me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. 55: 11). These references show, that the works of creation, Divine intervention on behalf of Israel, declarations of God's purpose, were all accomplished by "the Word of Yahweh."

That the statement "all things were made by him," does not refer to primordial creation is shown by the use of the Greek word "ginomai" translated "made." The word signifies "to become," "to come to pass," "to happen." It occurs some 700 times in the New Testament, but never in the sense of create. The word occurs some 53 times in this gospel, and signifies "to be," "to come," "to become," "to come to pass," "to be done" etc.

The translation of the Diaglott is therefore to be preferred before that of the A.V.: "Through it everything was done."

What were these things that the Divine purpose, or Word, brought about?

They comprise all the developments in the Divine plan. When sin made its presence felt in Eden, the Divine purpose (or Logos) made imperative the declaration of Genesis 3: 15 and the promise of a redeemer; when the wickedness of the antediluvian world threatened to overwhelm the Truth, it was preserved by a flood which washed away that evil generation and left only the righteous remaining; when the world again degenerated into darkness, it required the call of Abram; when Israel was threatened with destruction in Egypt, it provided a saviour in Moses. And so throughout the history of the past and present. The Divine purpose required the Davidic promise, the preservation of Israel, the return of exiles from Babylon, and the great epochs of history that have happened since down to the regathering of Israel in our own time.

Compressed within the statement, "Through it everything was done," is the Divine philosophy of history.

Nations have risen and fallen, epochs have come and gone, civilisations have flourished and decayed, because the Divine logos required it. Through it a pattern of history was designed from the beginning to the end of time.

"All things came into being through the word."

The Divine purpose is the channel through which all things are done.

The word "by" is rendered "through" in the margin of the Revised Version. It should be incorporated into the text itself, as it is in the R.S.V.

But what about the personal pronoun "him"? Does not that indicate a person, the pre-existent Christ?

Not necessarily. The investing of abstract nouns with personality is common in Scripture. In Proverbs 8, Wisdom is personified as a woman, and the personal pronouns "she" and "her" are used in relation to "it" (vv. 1-3).

If wisdom can claim a personal pronoun, so also can "logos" which is the declaration of wisdom.

In Greek, such nouns are frequently (though not invariably) personified and thus invested with a masculine or feminine gender. It is not intended, by so doing, to imply that they have individuality, however. For example, in John 1, the words "beginning," "life," "darkness," in Greek are all nouns of the feminine gender. An exact translation would not carry this idiom of language over into England, and speak of these things as "she" and invest them with female personality, but would provide them with the neuter pronoun "it."

The same should be done with the word "logos."

It is a Greek masculine noun, and because the translators were governed by trinitarian ideas, and saw the "Logos" as the second person of a Trinity, they translated this idiom into the text as "him." For the same reason they have distinguished the Word by giving it a capital letter though it is not so treated in the original.

"Through it everything was done," as translated by the Diaglott appears a more correct rendition than the A.V.

It is significant that elsewhere where "logos" appears, the translators have not hesitated to render it in the neuter gender, though in the Greek it is still a masculine noun. Examples of this are found as follows: "When anyone heareth the word (logos) of the kingdom, and understandeth it not . . ." (Matt. 13: 19). "It (the word, logos) becometh unfruitful" (Mark 4: 19-20). "Blessed are they that hear the word (logos) of God, and keep it" (Luke 11: 28).

There are many, many examples of masculine and feminine Greek nouns that have been translated in the

neuter gender (as they should be) in the Authorised Version. Therefore, it is quite consistent to do so here, the only reason demanding otherwise is the bias of a theory that requires "logos" (in our language a neuter noun) should be invested with personality. In short, the use of the personal pronoun "him" in this place is quite inconsistent with similar treatment of the same noun elsewhere.

All that has been stated above is easily confirmed by any analytical concordance, and a little searching through the Scriptures which the reader will find most profitable.

—H.P.M.

(To be continued)

Contending for the Faith

The Fallacy of British Israelism

"If the light that is in thee be darkness — how great is that darkness" — Mat. 6: 23.

Christ claimed to be the "light of the world" (John 8: 12), but that does not mean that we are necessarily illuminated thereby. In order to appreciate light, we must have our eyes open to its beauty. It does not matter how brightly the light may shine, if a person is blind, he cannot appreciate its glory.

The Lord brought this truth strongly home to the self-righteous, critical Pharisees. "The light of the body is the eye," he told them. "If, therefore, thine eye be single (or "sound" as the R.S.V. renders), thy whole body shall be full of light; but if thine eye be evil (i.e. "unsound") thy whole body shall be full of darkness."

In the latter state, the "light within" is darkness (Mat. 6: 23). The maxims that a person may lay down who is spiritually blind, and the teaching with which he may attempt to illuminate others, will be but manifestations of the gross darkness of his mind. Thus we have contrast: the way of Light and the way of Darkness. These two divergent ways are illustrated by two wonderfully, descriptive passages contained in the Book of Proverbs: "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" but "the way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble" (Prov. 4: 18-19).

In the course of proclaiming the Truth, the way of Light often comes in conflict with the way of Darkness. For example, members of

our Ecclesia recently had discussion with a group representing British-Israelism. We came armed with our Bibles, prepared to "prove all things," but we may as well have left them at home. Their leader was a woman (cp. 1 Cor. 14: 34) who was expert at twisting Scripture, and who blithely passed over Bible reference with a careless wave of the hand.

As leader for her group, she maintained that the Jews (the two tribes) were not Israel, and claimed that at the time of Esther, many thousands of Gentiles joined themselves to the Jews in captivity for fear of the vengeance that the Jews were then permitted to exercise against their enemies. She maintained that Britain and America constituted the ten tribes of Israel, and that the Jews of today (which, she claimed, true "Israelites" should hate) are the descendants of those Gentiles of Esther's day who became Jews to save their lives.

This is just a sample of the nonsense which we were compelled to listen to. Another sample was that the devil was literally the father of Cain! To submit sober words of truth from the Bible to this woman was just a waste of time. We felt utterly frustrated by the hopeless task, and were glad when the meeting was over. At the conclusion of it, she presented us with literature among which was a roneod paper purporting to be the speech of Rabbi Emanuel Rabinovich at a special meeting of the Emergency Council of European Rabbis in Budapest, Hungary, on 12th January, 1952.

This roneod paper is a subtle but vicious piece of anti-semitism. It claims that the Jews are working to precipitate World War III within five years; that they are responsible for the war fever being worked up in Russia, for the conflict that exists between East and West, for the advancing of large sums of money to outspokenly anti-semitic elements in America and other parts in order to gain world sympathy, that Jews are aiming to abolish religion, are preparing to willingly incite persecution in order to arouse world opinion on their side claiming that Jews are teaching fellow-Jews "that the death of a few thousand Jews in exchange for world leadership is indeed a small price to pay."

It is an indictment upon a religious sect that it has to stoop to such means of propaganda. British-Israelism challenges the foundation of Bible truth: "If My covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will I cast away the seed of Jacob. . . ." (Jer. 33: 26). The time is coming when the fallacy of British-Israelism will be obvious to the world.

From Notes—E. Hooper (N.Z.).

"Judgment & Events of the Immediate Future"

This is the title of a small pamphlet by the late Brother A. R. Scrivener, published after his death. It expounds the subject of Bible prophetic chronology. This is a controversial but most interesting subject which is unconsciously given even greater significance by the fact that the author of this booklet has recently passed to his rest. For him time now means nothing — the date of the Coming is of no further concern — his next moment of consciousness will be at Christ's appearing. Brother Scrivener died in the assurance that the time will not be long — and the signs of the times indicate that the coming is, indeed, at hand.



For Private Study

NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE

An itemised Exposition of the Book of Revelation, based on
"Eureka" and designed for home study and for Bible marking.

(Continued from p. 247)

Revelation 3 (Continued)

LAODICEA THE LUKEWARM

Laodicea, the city of the seventh ecclesia addressed by the Spirit, lay south of Philadelphia, in the way to return to Ephesus, so that it will be found, upon an inspection of the map of Asia Minor, that the seven ecclesias laid in a kind of circular form, so that the natural progress was one from another.

The ruins of Laodicea shew it to have been very large, situate in a volcanic region upon seven hills, and encompassing a large space of ground. Some notion may be formed of its former greatness and glory from three theatres and a circus, the ruins of which remain, and one of which is very fine, as it was capable of containing above 30,000 men. In its apostasy, the ecclesia in this city became the metropolitan, or Mother Church, of sixteen bishopricks, yet it is now desolate, and not so much as inhabited by shepherds, but is become an habitation only for wolves, foxes, and jackals, a den of dragons, snakes, and vipers. Thus we have in the ecclesia of the Laodiceans, in the fullness of its apostasy, a Mother of Harlots sitting upon seven hills; and because of its spiritual misery, poverty, blindness, and nakedness, reduced, with the city of its habitation, to utter desolation and irrecoverable ruin.

Laodicea was often damaged by earthquakes, and restored by its own opulence, or the munificence of the Roman emperors. These resources finally failed, however, and the city became a scene of ruin.

VERSE 14

"Church of the Laodiceans"—Notice the rendition of the margin: "the ecclesia (called out ones) in Laodicea."

"The Amen"—Cp. 2 Cor. 1: 20. The word, in its Hebrew derivation, signifies "faithfulness." Isaiah 65: 16 speaks of the "God of Amen" (i.e., Truth or Faithfulness), for whatever He saith shall be.

"The true witness"—See note on v. 7 ("Logos," p. 246).

"The beginning of the creation of God"—cp. Col. 1: 15-19. The "creation of God" relates to the Elohim of the Age to Come (cp. Luke 20: 36).

VERSE 15

"Neither cold nor hot"—For cold cp. Prov. 25: 13; for hot cp. Ps. 39: 3. A cold or a hot drink is refreshing; but a lukewarm one is insipid.

The Laodiceans were lukewarm, and such an attitude is an insult to the Creator. Such are fit only to be spued out of the mouth.

VERSE 17

"I am rich"—Laodicea was a very wealthy city, and its prosperity adversely affected the Ecclesia which laid undue emphasis upon material possessions to the exclusion of spiritual virtues. The present is likewise a materialistic, Laodicean age.

"Knowest not"—This was the real ground of Christ's rebuke. The ecclesia was blind to its true state. It saw in material possessions a measuring stick of value, forgetting that these things mean nothing in the sight of Him with whom we have to do. The spiritual blindness of the brethren was their real sin. With all their fine possessions, they did not comprehend how wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked they were in the eyes of Christ. What a contrast to Rev. 2: 9. Here was an Ecclesia in tribulation and poverty, but described as "rich." The true criterion of real wealth will be made evident at Christ's return.

VERSE 18

"Buy"—Notice that the things symbolised (a tried faith—gold; righteousness—linen; spiritual discernment—eye salve) must be purchased. Yet from Isaiah 55: 1 we learn that money is not needed. They must be purchased by expending time, energy and trouble to obtain them.

VERSE 19

"Those I love, I rebuke and chasten" — See the exhortation of Hebrews 12: 5-12. Such discipline is necessary and helpful for the development of an acceptable character, the same as every parent finds a need to rebuke and chasten his children. But this is done "in love," with the ultimate benefit of the chastened in mind.

VERSE 20

"I stand at the door and knock"—At the door of our hearts, there he stands. We can reject his kindness and love if we are obstinate, but if we are wise and open to him, the benefits are immediate and sure. The time is at hand when he will "knock at the door" in a manner that will brook no delay—cp. Luke 12: 36.

How the Ecclesias Reacted to Christ's Message

Surely when the Revelation was first received from the banished John in Patmos, it must have made an impression upon those who had a seeing eye and a hearing ear within the Ecclesias. The last message of the Lord, delivered through one who had suffered so much as John had, must have commended itself to some at least. Be that as it may, however, the impression originally caused soon wore off, and the Ecclesias drifted further and further into a state of lethargy to Divine requirements, or apostasy from the faith. False teachers were permitted, unscriptural theories and crotchets circulated among the ecclesias, and virile contention for the faith gradually faded. In time, this pernicious influence gained the ascendancy in the seven ecclesias, and the truth entirely disappeared. Darkness had obscured the light. Gibbon records that about 200 years after the Apocalypse was first recorded, it narrowly escaped being rejected from the canon of Scripture by the influence of the seven ecclesias to whom the messages are addressed. It is significant, that this was at the council of Laodicea!

It is fortunate, that in deciding what Scriptures are inspired, a greater Power was at work than mere man, and therefore the opinions of flesh were overruled by God.

Prophetic Aspect of the Messages

We have noted that seven signifies completeness. In the seven ecclesias, therefore, the complete ecclesia is foreshadowed. Every ecclesia can find its counterpart in one of the seven. It can be found manifesting the strong zeal of Philadelphia, or the blinding influence of a prosperous complacency as was found in Laodicea; it can be noted for a vigorous opposition to heresy as in Ephesus (where, however, a little more love was required), or overcome with false teaching as in Thyatira; it can be found struggling against opposition and adversity as at Smyrna, or enjoying an unwarranted reputation as at Sardis.

Thus these messages are not limited to the particular ecclesia addressed but to all brethren, everywhere. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith to the Ecclesias." The warning note is necessary today, as in the days of John.

In "Eureka," Brother Thomas shows that the seven ecclesias addressed represented seven epochs of time, leading to the full development of apostasy in the days of Constantine, when the church was married to the State, and the Laodicean period commenced. The church (for to the title ecclesia it could not longer lay claim) could well boast of its prosperity, of being increased with riches, and in need of nothing. But actually it was blind, destitute of the very things that would commend it to Christ. It was neither hot nor cold, it was completely lukewarm to the requirements of the truth, and therefore fit only to be spued out of the mouth. This Christ did, so that the "Christian" world became his only in name.

The Christian world about us is in a Laodicean state, and the introductory notes to the message to Laodicea are most significant. It is significant that the city was built on seven hills—so also is Rome; that it was noted for being subject to volcanic disturbance—so also is Rome; that it claimed to be a Mother church—so also does Rome; that it was finally destroyed by volcanic eruption—so also will be Rome.

In addition to this limited prophetic import of the messages, there appears to be a long-range prophecy as well, illustrating the condition of the Ecclesias down to the epoch of the second coming.

In line with that thought, the Ephesian epoch reveals the condition of the Ecclesias at the close of Apostolic times. Elders such as Timothy and Titus established the Ecclesias on a sound foundation of truth. They became renowned for their works, labour, patience, zeal, and hostility towards false teachers (Rev. 2: 2-6). The "first love" had been lost, however, and they were commanded to repent.

This period was followed by one of acute persecution, answering to the message to Smyrna. A cleavage between the true and the false was becoming evident. The Ecclesia and the Synagogue of Satan existed side by side, whilst open opposition and persecution by the civil authorities of Rome was also felt. "The devil cast some into prison, and they were tried."

The next period witnessed the growth of Satan's power, the Papacy. It brought into sharp contrast the witnessing of Antipas, the staunch opposition of that class of true witnesses who stood against the "god of the earth" or the Pope (Rev. 11: 4). Antipas was slain where "Satan

dwelt." This was fulfilled in the brutal persecution unleashed by the Roman Catholic church against the Ecclesia during what is known as the "dark ages." This period saw widespread error symbolised as "the doctrine of Balaam and of the Nicolaitanes."

The Thyatiran period (Rev. 2: 18-29) saw the absolute power of the Roman Harlot system, Jezebel, established throughout the earth (cp. Rev. 17: 4-6). Paganism, which had formerly hindered the manifestation of the man of sin (2 Thess. 2: 7), had long been taken away; there had come a "falling away" of the faithful (v. 3), and the Papal system had blossomed out in its full growth of wickedness. But a few remained to testify to the Truth, who refused to acknowledge "the depths of Satan," and who witnessed to the Truth concerning the God of Israel.

It was followed by a period of darkness, a period when those who claimed to have truth, had a reputation for being alive, but were actually dead (Rev. 3: 1-6). In the course of this period, the truth was discovered and lost by the early Baptists within the course of approximately 100 years.

The Philadelphian epoch (Rev. 3: 7-13) was noted for its "little strength," and the "open door" for the proclamation of Truth which no man had power to shut. It speaks of a vigorous testimony in the face of opposition which lacked the power to shut the open door. Such an attitude was revealed by the pioneers of the Truth, men like Brother Thomas and Brother Roberts, through whom the Truth was revived in these last days. They kept the Word of God, and were kept from the "hour of temptation" that was to come.

That "hour of temptation" is now with us. It is the period described by Paul as "perilous times" (2 Tim. 3: 1). It is a time when the Ecclesias may say: "We are rich, increased with goods, have need of nothing," without realising their blindness, real poverty, and naked state. It is a time when Christ is heard knocking at the door, through the signs which speak of his imminent return, but when brethren fail to heed the significance of these things. It is a period of material prosperity, when Ecclesias demand resplendent halls, and individual protection as necessary to their existence—and when the Truth itself is weakened not so much by error as by apathy. The exhortation for today is that expressed by the Spirit in Rev. 3: 18: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold (a tried faith) tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment (righteousness) that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see!"

When Moses Beheld the Divine Glory

"Pondering the statement of Exodus 33: 22, which speaks of Moses hiding in the cleft of the rock to view the glory of Yahweh, it occurred to me that it would be difficult for the angel who was revealing Yahweh's Name to Moses, to cover his eyes with one hand while "passing by" at the same time. Upon looking up the meaning of the word "hand," however, I found that it is from "Kaph," a word which in Job 36: 32 is translated "cloud" — "With a cloud He covereth the light, and commandeth it not to shine . . ." As Moses was told that the full manifestation of Divine glory would slay him, and as it was by the merciful provision of a cloud that the glory was veiled at the dedication of Solomon's Temple, it seems to me that possibly Moses was similarly protected until the angel had passed, at which time the cloud could be removed allowing him to view the "back parts." C.H. (N.S.W.)

Questions



Answers

THE TABERNACLE

H.R. (Vic.): In connection with your sketch of the Tabernacle would you publish the following:

1. In the west wall there were eight boards — six plus two, and not ten. (This is correct, see Exod. 26: 22. Our sketch is more concerned with the spiritual significance of the Tabernacle than the literal details — though these are important. In that regard, a further amendment could be suggested in that our sketch shows wider boards, on the north and south side. Actually, all boards were of the same size, $1\frac{1}{2}$ cubits each. There were 48 boards in all, 20 on the north and south sides, 6 on the west side, plus two corner boards—Editor).

2. We are not told that the corner boards were mitred, but "twinned" (Exod. 26: 24). (In Exod. 26: 23 we read of boards for the "corners" of the Tabernacle. The Hebrew word "Mequt-zoth" signifies "angle." Here were "angle boards." Great controversy has raged over these two "angle boards," but the best explanation, and the most practical, is that of mitred boards. Take a board, cut it down the centre on a mitre, reverse one piece and join the two pieces together again and you have an "angle" or corner board. That would make 6 ordinary boards plus two angle boards on the western side, making the overall outside measurements $10\frac{1}{2}$ cubits, but the inside measurements 10 cubits. — Editor).

3. In Exodus we read of the

court, I cannot find any mention of an outer court. (The "outer court" is the court outside — Editor).

4. Under the heading of "The Table of Shewbread," it is suggested that the priests ate the loaves in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle. The word "the" should be "a" holy place (R.V.). Leviticus 6: 16; 8: 31 shows the holy place was in the Court near the altar of burnt offering. (We do not suggest that the priests "ate the loaves in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle" but merely in the Holy Place. By that we mean the Sanctuary, of which the court was a part (see introductory note to the sketch). It is quite correct that the loaves were eaten in the court, near the altar of burnt offering — Editor.)

5. Under the heading of "Coverings" we would naturally think the embroidering was done on the work of the Cherubim as suggested, but that was not so. Young's Concordance says "interwoven." The various coloured curtains were not stitched together, but interwoven into one material. The interweaver was an embroiderer. (Exodus 26: 1; says: "Ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet; with cherubim of cunning work — the work of an embroiderer — shalt thou make them" — Editor.)

6. What is the meaning of Exodus 26: 15: "A cubit on the one side, and a cubit on the other side of that which remaineth in the length of the curtains of the tent?"

Answer: The ceiling of the Tabernacle was formed by ten curtains of fine twined linen (Exod. 26: 1). These were each 28 cubits by 4 cubits, and were sewn together in two sets of five, which were joined by 50 loops of blue on each curtain, and 50 golden clasps. This curtain was sufficiently large

enough (28 x 40 cubits) to drape over the sides of the Tabernacle to within a cubit of the ground. This was the cubit that remained (v. 13), but this cubit was covered by the covering of goats hair which extended beyond that of the linen curtains.

WHY WAS JESUS BAPTISED?

M.B. (Vic.): "In submitting to baptism, the Lord declared: "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" (Mat. 3: 14). Why was it necessary for Jesus to be baptised seeing he had no sins to wipe away?"

Answer: Baptism is a symbol of sacrifice (Rom. 6: 3). The Lord declared: "I have a baptism to be baptised with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke 12: 50). He thus described his sacrificial death as "a baptism."

His baptism in the Jordan was a foreshadowing of his death on the cross as well as being a public declaration that he was dedicating his life to the Divine will. His life

was a living sacrifice, of which his baptism was a token. Until that moment, though sinless, he had lived the normal life of an Israelite, but now he was about to leave even that, to dedicate himself completely to a mission that was to end in death. Baptism is a symbol of renunciation of a previous way of life, and the dedication of oneself to a new way. It was therefore a fit introduction to his public ministry. Thus John declared: "But that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptising with water" (Jhn. 1: 31). It was "a fulfilling of all righteousness" because it was demanded of God. It "became" him to do this because he had to do the will of his Father. Jesus, himself, benefited through his own death of which his baptism was a foreshadowing (Heb. 13: 20).

"Weighed in the Balances and found wanting"

"As a matter of interest, did you know that the 'Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin' of Dan. 5: 25 referred to Chaldean weights? The smallest was the Gerah of which 1,000 went to a 'mene.' Hence: Mene (1,000), Mene (1,000), Tekel (20), Upharsin (500), making 2,250 in all—the seven times of Gentile ascendancy. 'Tekel' is Chaldean for a Hebrew shekel which was 20 gerahs (Exod. 30: 13). 'Upharsin' signifies 'to break,' and hence a broken 'mene' or 500 gerahs. We had this information from Brother Harrington, of Essex, who was with us at Mumbles when we were down for their study week in August. . ."

M.H. (Yorks., England)

(We have not checked the above statement, but will leave it to some enterprising reader to do so and advise us accordingly. If confirmed, it is a most interesting detail . . . Editor).

VOLUME TWENTY SIX

THE LOGOS

Upholding the Purity of Apostolic Doctrine and Practice

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Thoughts for the Times

Modern Paganism

A god commonly worshipped today is the idol men call Culture. If a man knows twenty languages he is called a man of culture—though he never says one word worth hearing in any of them. That is the fetish bowed down to today—the examination-paper, the certificate written by a man who can write nothing but what he copies. This kind of instruction we are thankful for up to a given point. But there is another kind of qualification urgently required. It is that which deserves the name of Inspiration. The Truth must inspire us, we must be emotionally moved by it, before its greatness will seize us. To know it merely from an academic point of view is not enough. It is to know it as a child might know the multiplication tables — realising it true enough, but completely unmoved by its appeal. Mere "culture" discovers by long processes, and then announces in halting terms what it has discovered; inspiration

"feels" what it speaks and warms others by its tone. A man inspired by the Truth can move others though his speech is far from polished and his utterances crude. There is the type of person in the Ecclesias whose very presence is an exhortation, whose very personality proclaims a message, who is alive and vibrant with the Truth — and yet who never stands upon the public platform. They are those inspired by the Truth because they enthusiastically embrace it — and their presence is as salt among the Ecclesias. We need more of them.

Eureka in the Light of Today

MOHAMMED'S SPIRITUAL EMPIRE TODAY

"Protestant and Papal scribes are in the habit of applying the epithet: 'False Prophet' to Mohammed, and therefore do not perceive its applicability to the Roman Bishop. But neither Mohammed, nor his successors, are termed 'the false prophet' in the Apocalypse. The Arabian was false enough doubtless; but he was a far more respectable character than any Pope that has ever reigned; and were I to choose between the two superstitions, I would rather be a Moslem than a Papist. It was the glory of Mohammed to destroy idolatry; it is the infamy of the Popes to be the high priests of the 'Queen of Heaven.' The Saracens were God's locusts to torment, and the Ottomans God's cavalry to slay with political death, the Catholic Image-worshippers of the Asiatic third part of the Roman Dragon. Mohammed was the star; and his successors, the Commanders of the Faithful, the 'angels of the bottomless pit; whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon' (Rev. 9: 1, 11). These names in English signify 'destroyer,' which is indicative of the mission of those who marshalled themselves under the standard of the Arabian."

—J. Thomas



Early Development of Islam

Islam's spiritual Empire today holds sway over some 300 million adherents who are ready, at a moment's notice, to plunge themselves into an orgy of blood and slaughter with the same fanatical zeal, as did their ancestors a thousand years ago.

In threatening, forbidding aspect, it surrounds the tiny state of Israel, ready to crush it at a moment's notice but held back by circumstances that the world does not truly understand.

It is part of the drama of the times in which we live that the dwarf is destined to conquer the giant.

Islam developed out of the primitive superstitions of Arabia, through the various religious groups which influenced the mind of Mohammed to formulate his creed in the Koran — the Bible of the Moslems.

Originally, the Arabs recognised many gods, whose power and importance were restricted to their own particular spheres of influence. Each family had its own idols and images to which homage was paid on entering or leaving the house. There were local gods in every district and region; gods for various trades and professions and prayer was directed to these when a particular benefit was desired. Their religion, therefore, was mere superstition, and because no reverence was paid to these gods, an oath made in their name was not binding.

This was not the case with the supreme god, Allah. His influence was universal, his name sacred, and oaths made in his name were binding. But he was considered too high and lofty to be troubled too often, and so the Arabs resorted to these inferior gods. Neither fear of Allah, nor respect for the gods, had any practical effect on the morals of their devotees.

It was not worship, but family honour and tribal traditions that formulated the morals of the Arabs. He is, above all, independent. In the fierce battle for survival against the element he trusts in himself. He finds his own way across the uncharted wastes of the desert, his own sword defends and preserves him from danger, he does not hesitate to ride alone. He feels no invisible Presence guiding, directing, protecting him. He is the very incarnation of the man of the flesh (1 Cor. 2: 14).

The only outward sign of piety was found in Mecca. Here, an annual feast was held to which the Arabs assembled from all parts of their land. During the feast, a truce was observed in their inter-family feuds and quarrels. A lucrative trade was practised in images and idols. The people of Mecca, with a livelihood depending largely on the annual tourist trade, and on the sale of the holy souvenirs, assumed an exaggerated piety for the gods, for there are none so de-

voted to the business of religion than those who make a business of religion.

Outside of Mecca, scoffing and neglect of the gods was the common attitude. Sometimes, after squandering the vigour of manhood in the pursuit of fleshly lusts, this "man of the flesh," this "wild ass," *in the frailty of old age turned philosopher, and then lamented the vanity and frailty of life, extolling virtues which he then presumed to see as the supreme goal of human endeavour.

There were some in Arabia who were dissatisfied with this condition. They sought for something better. Oppressed with the consciousness of sin, they saw virtue in suppressing the flesh, by strict control of thoughts and deeds (see Col. 2: 23). These men were called "Hanifs" (i.e. penitents) because they tried to free themselves from sin. They were not an organised community, but merely isolated individuals, groping in the darkness of their ignorance, for a better way. They gained a reputation for piety, particularly in the town of Medina. These Hanifs rejected the polytheism of the Arabs and believed in one god only. Such a faith generated a sense of responsibility, and of "resignation" (the origin of the term "Islam") to His will. It also brought a sense of moral accountability and of judgment to come, providing a strong incentive to purity of life and rejection of prevailing superstitions.

Mohammed appears to have had some contact with these people, and to have been influenced by them. He imitated them in measure, seeking solitude that he might give himself to meditation and prayer, claiming to receive visions when he fell into a fit or trance (it has been suggested he may have been an epileptic). The Jews also supplied Mohammed with some of his teaching. Most of the stories in the Koran have been borrowed from the Old Testament. A large portion of his moral precepts were derived from the Law of Moses, and quite a lot of his doctrine was expressed in Jewish terms.

Mohammed was also influenced by so-called "Christian" monks, who claimed to follow the example of Jeremiah 9: 2 and withdrew to places of solitude to live a life of purity and seclusion. They were not clergymen, but private individuals†,

*The words, "he will be a wild man" (Gen. 16: 12) are rendered in the R.V.: "he will be as a wild ass among men."

†Gibbon records: "Even in the seventh century, the monks were generally laymen; they wore their hair long and dishevelled, and shaved their heads when they were ordained priests."

a distinction clearly recognised by Abubeker, the first Caliph and successor to the prophet, who exhorted his armies: "As you go on, you will find some religious persons who live retired in monasteries, and propose to themselves to serve God that way; let them alone, and neither kill them or destroy their monasteries. You will find another sort of people that belong to the synagogue of Satan, who have shaven crowns (i.e. the priests of Rome); be sure you cleave their skulls and give them no quarter . . ."

The System Formulated

These various influences made a strong impression upon Mohammed. He repeatedly withdrew to meditate and pray on a lonely mountainside, claiming to receive visions from the angel Gabriel. He wrestled within himself for two or three years, resolving all doubts and fears, finally commencing his ministry as a prophet, first in his own house, and then among a small circle of friends who met together for common prayers. At last he announced that as Moses had come to the Jews, and Jesus to the Christians to restore them to their original and pure faith, so he, Mohammed, had been sent to the Arabs for the same purpose. He claimed that his system provided the true faith for Jews, Christians, Arabs, the whole world.

His doctrine is simple: Men should believe in God and in Judgment to come; they ought to live their lives seriously and not waste them in follies; they ought not to be high-minded or covetous.

To impress his system, he proclaimed a simple routine: Prayer will take a believer half-way to God, therefore he is obliged to pray five times daily with his face towards Mecca, at set times, regardless of where he is or what his circumstances may be. Fasting will bring a believer to the door of God's palace, therefore, in the month Ramadan, he must abstain from food and drink, from all sensual pleasure and from unholy thoughts during the hours from sunrise to sunset. Alcohol, pork and other unclean foods are prohibited at all times. Alms will gain a believer entrance to the Divine presence, therefore, one-tenth of his income is strictly exacted as "alms to God."

The doctrine and routine are incorporated in the "five pillars of Islam" the observance of which will be rewarded on Judgment Day. These five pillars are: (1) — There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet; (2, 3, 4) — the routine mentioned above; (5) — Every believer should

undertake the pilgrimage to Mecca during his lifetime.

After the death of Mohammed, these doctrines and principles were edited and collated into the book known as the Koran, meaning "reading" or "recitation." The Koran is the only book used by Moslems. They have also the Sunnah (Usage or Rule) recording the rule of faith, based on tradition, and compiled partly from legal decisions made by Mohammed in a later period of his life. The Ijmah (unanimity) expressing the views of early doctors of Islam. The Qiyah (measure, comparison) based on the above three writings, and supplementary to them. These books comprise the sacred books of Islam.

Doctrines of the Koran

In asserting the unity of God, we must not suppose that Mohammed denied the existence of the gods recognised by the Arabs. All he did was to strip them of their divinity, and relegate them to the status of "jinns" or demons. In regard to his teaching concerning the Judgment, it is no exaggeration to say that the reality of the Judgment is the foundation stone of Islam, demanding moral accountability to God and purity of life. Mohammed taught that the bodies of the dead will be reformed from the dust to be re-united to the soul. The intermediate state of the soul, he taught, is undefined and undefinable. It is immaterial, but deprived of all sensual feelings, so that its real function cannot be defined.

Salvation is dependent on true belief (the "gospel" of Mohammed) and works of faith (the morality enjoined by Mohammed).

All infidels are doomed to hell. True believers will be judged by their actions. The guilty will be punished for a period ranging from 900 to 7000 years to expiate their sins. When free from sin they will be admitted to Paradise, a place of rivers and fountains, of costly array, precious gems and sensual delights.

No mediator is recognised, no sacrifice, symbol, idol, or image required. Thus Catholics were looked upon as miserable idolaters, and Trinitarian dogmas considered as nothing short of polytheism.

Extent of Koran's Influence

Mohammed's preaching met with little response in Mecca. Though his ideas were not altogether new, his driving enthusiasm was both unusual and inconvenient. He

vigorously denounced their polytheism, thus endangering their vested interests, and offering them by his threats of judgment to come. His agitation threw Mecca into a turmoil of debate and resentment, and so strong was the opposition that he was forced to flee for his life. His flight (Hegira — A.D. 622) is taken as the starting point of Mohammedan dates and history. He found refuge in Medina (possibly due to the Hanifs there), and within a short time was virtual ruler of the city.

Mohammed now became bent upon conquest, determined to vindicate his cause by the sword where argument failed to convince. Religion became a weapon by which power was to be acquired. The forms of his system were practised openly: public greetings of a pious nature, regulated times and forms of prayer, the military precision of prayer meetings in mosques, the giving of alms, tithes.

As success attended his proselytising, he became more exclusive and intolerant. Previously friendly towards Jews, they now objected to his exercise of secular power, and were faced with his intolerance of them. He agitated against them, pointing out the inconsistencies of which they were guilty, teaching that prayer should not be offered towards Jerusalem, but towards Mecca; that Saturday should not be observed as the day of worship, but Friday; that the fast of the Day of Atonement should be replaced by the fast of Ramadan.

In short, Islam became exclusively Arab and national. A new political force had come into being. Allegiance was no longer based on blood relationships, but on religion. All Moslems were brethren — others were outcasts and foreigners. But ultimately blood relationships did assert themselves, leading to divisions and strife in subsequent generations.

A spiritual revival throughout Arabia followed. A holy war was instituted which brought Mecca and the whole country under the banner of the prophet. Islam* had assumed secular power. Complete submission to Allah meant total disregard for anything "holy" outside Islam. The reckless daring, the absolute loyalty and devotion of the Arabs became channelled into the cause of Mohammed. Gibbon records:

"While the State (Eastern Roman Empire) was exhausted, and

*A Moslem is a follower of Islam. The word is derived from the same route meaning "to submit," i.e., to Allah.

the church distracted, Mohammed, with the sword in one hand and the Koran in the other, erected his throne on the ruins of Christianity and of Rome. The genius of the Arabian prophet, the manners of his nation, and the spirit of his religion, involve the causes of the decline and fall of the Eastern empire; and our eyes are curiously intent on one of the most memorable revolutions which have impressed a new and lasting character on the nations of the globe" (Ch. 50: "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire").

Previous articles have outlined the rise of the Saracen Empire.† The intrepid courage, and fanatical zeal of the Arabs though worthy of a better cause, rapidly extended the influence of Islam on all sides until a few years after the death of Mohammed, the Empire stretched from India to Spain.

On the death of the self-styled prophet, contention raged over the appointment of a successor, and this led to the creation of various sects, to civil war and assassination. Theological and ritualistic differences also entered to divide the Empire. The unifying influence of Islam was war. The Arabs delighted in it. "The sword is the key of heaven and hell; a drop of blood shed in the cause of God, a night spent in arms, is of more avail than two months of fasting or prayer; whosoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven." The Arabs had always despised death; this philosophy caused them to welcome it. When their wars of conquest ceased, however, the internal strifes and discords again asserted themselves to split the whole Empire, causing it to collapse as rapidly as it had grown.

But though their political power waned, their spiritual empire remained. In fact, the Caliph exercised through religion a greater influence than had been possible through the sword. Its power remains today to threaten the Middle East and the whole world.

Islam Today: Threat to World Peace

One writer has written:

"Somehow Islam stands outwardly intact. Today it looms, as it has through the ages, a religious monolith astride the middle latitudes of three continents. Though its once great empire has been dismembered by the surgery of modern nationalism, and debilitated by economic adversity, Islam remains welded together by the binding force of the faith. From Morocco to the Malacca Strait, Moslems profess the same beliefs, utter the same prayers, turn their eyes toward the same holy city. It is these things that still render Islam, for its diverse millions, the Kingdom of God on earth" (From "Life" Magazine).

†The Greeks and Romans applied the name Saracen to the Arabs.

Thus, 300,000,000 eyes are today focused upon Mecca. They are keenly observant of events occurring in the Middle East, in Arabia, Turkey, Persia, Syria, Jordan, Israel. They feel deeply any challenge to the status or condition of their brethren, and could easily be moved to grasp the sword once more in a "holy war" of vengeance. The fact remains one of the problems of the Middle East, a feature that prevents the Western World from dealing more firmly with difficulties that arise with the Arab States. Israel's development, her relations with her neighbours, are watched by 300 million Moslems, who can be united in war against the common enemy.

Nor is Islam, itself, a spent force. It is active in the missionary field, particularly among the coloured races. Africa is a special target. It is said that in active competition with "Christian" missionaries they are gaining ground, obtaining ten converts to every one registered by "Christian" communities. The colour bar is a big problem to "Christians"; it is none at all to the Moslem. In West Africa, Islam is identified as the black man's religion, and Christianity that of the white man. Numerically, their greatest gains have been in India and Pakistan, where many Hindus have escaped from the ancient caste system, and embraced Islam.

Out of all this there emerges a prominent feature. The Middle East is the centre of world affairs today. There, for the moment, the false system of Islam triumphs, symbolised by the Dome of the Rock, the Islamic holy place, which stands on the site of the Temple of Jerusalem. It causes the prayers of the saints to ascend: "How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden underfoot?" Thank God, there is an answer; there is an appointed time, when "the sanctuary shall be cleansed" (Dan. 8: 13-14).

Islam represents a gospel of a kingdom of God contrary to that preached by Paul, and therefore "accursed" (Gal. 1: 6). There is no salvation in it. The current missionary activities of their devotees is a binding together of the coloured races, preparatory to being drawn into the vortex of the Middle East, when the time arrives. All eyes are turning to the east. All nations are being drawn against Jerusalem to battle.

Here is an important sign of the times, an indication that the stealthy advent of the King of Israel and the end of all things, as at present constituted, is at hand. How im-

portant that we should heed the message, that we should recognise that we stand at the threshold of events that will bring the Day of Judgment; and prepare accordingly.

Our brother Peter exhorts us:

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the element shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up. Seeing then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming day of God" (2 Pet. 3: 10-12).

—F. Russell (S.A.)

The Supposed Pre-existence of Christ

JOHN 1 : 1-14

(Cont. from p. 273)

"In him was life; and the life was the light of men" v.4

☆ ☆

We considered, last month, why the personal pronoun "him" should be rendered in the neuter gender "it" as it is in the Diaglott, and nothing further need be said upon that here.

The verse before us teaches that the Divine purpose (Logos) which had brought to pass so much, also set before men the hope of life. When sin marred the original creation, and brought the inevitability of death to man, a hope of life was also set before him by the declaration (Logos) of Genesis 3: 15. This promise of a Redeemer was as a ray of light in the midst of darkness. It constituted the light of life (John 8: 12) and illuminated the minds of men from the very beginning.

Primarily light is a luminous emanation which enables the eye to discern form and colour. It might shine brightly, but it requires an organ adapted to its reception (Mat. 6: 22). Where this is absent, or impaired, the light is rendered useless. It matters not how brilliantly the sun might shine from out of the heavens, if men are blind, they see not the light.

And in the spiritual sense, men are naturally blind. Inherently they know nothing of the Divine purpose. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2: 14). Our eyes must be opened to Truth if we would discern the light.

The promise of life — man's dire need — opened the eyes of people who were spiritually blind to the light of truth. "The belief, and spiritualising influence of this hope, became the ground of acceptance with God in the earliest times . . . Belief in what He promises is belief in God; and its influence upon 'the fleshly tablet of the heart' is most edifying in its effect." So writes Brother Thomas in "Elpis Israel" p. 115. The proclamation of the Divine purpose brought both light and the promise of life to men.

"The Light shone in the Darkness" v. 5

Here are two opposites: light and darkness, and one exists only at the expense of the other. Thus light shining in the midst of darkness suggests the proclamation of Truth in the face of opposition and conflict.

And again our minds are directed to "the beginning," to the enunciation of the logos in the declaration of Genesis 3: 15. The Divine purpose was founded upon conflict. "I will put enmity" between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, between the mind of the spirit and the mind of the flesh, between light and darkness.

"And the darkness comprehended (Gr. Katalaimbano) it not." "Katalaimbano" signifies "to lay hold of," in the double sense of "to possess as one's own," or "to seize in order to destroy." Darkness cannot "lay hold of" light, but can only be destroyed by it. In the same way, the light of truth must surely triumph ultimately. Down the ages, the forces of darkness have attempted to seize or destroy the adherents of light, but their efforts have miserably failed. The witness to truth has continued, though the light has been but feeble in the midst of the prevailing darkness. Nevertheless it has been there to illuminate the surrounding gloom. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because the deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God" (John 3: 19-21).

These words of Christ show why the darkness has been so prevailing down through the ages. Men have loved it as a cover to their wickedness. The light threw into bold relief their failings, it revealed their real motives, and called upon them to desist from ways that are evil. Therefore they hated it and found refuge in darkness. That was **their** cover for sins, and they sought its shelter.

Light shining in darkness is a very expressive figure of the conflict of truth with error since the beginning of time. Why is it that the faithful and courageous testimony of truth, that which can bring life to men, has been received with so much hostility? Why is it that the exhortations and denunciations of the prophets aroused such antagonism? Did they not speak to the edification of their hearers? Most assuredly they did! Were not their words health to those who were prepared to hearken? There is no doubt of that! Why then did they incite such hatred?

Because light and life can only be obtained at the expense of man's most treasured possession: his self-esteem. The light revealed the true character of men, like a powerful searchlight shining in the midst of thick darkness, throws into bold relief the object upon which it is played. One example in Scripture will illustrate what we mean. When the prophet Hanani reproved good king Asa for relying upon the Syrians rather than upon Yahweh, he publicly revealed for all to see, but for the king's own good, the faithfulness of Asa's action in that particular. But Asa hated the experience. He was held in high esteem throughout Israel. He had a reputation to faithfulness. He was the moving force behind a great revival that was sweeping the nation. All Israel knew of his faithful attitude, his words of courage on the notable occasion when he had gained a momentous victory over the huge force of invading Ethiopians (2 Chron. 14: 11). And now to be told that he was faithless . . . It was more than he could bear.

In other words, the searchlight of truth was exposing his actions, revealing inconsistencies in his behaviour. And he could not stand it. He sought refuge in darkness. He attempted to stifle the voice of criticism by imprisoning Hanani (2 Chr. 16: 10). He attempted to "katalaimbano," to "seize hold of" the source of light in Judah at that time.

But he failed. For there, in the testimony of the Word, is the record for all to see. God will see that all such attempts fail. He did not bring the world into existence that it should

be the arena of darkness and ignorance. His Word must ultimately prevail; light must triumph. "For so shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. 55: 11).

Because of that, light will eventually conquer darkness. There have been times when it has seemed that darkness has triumphed, the voice of truth has been silenced. But, in fact, there have always been a remnant of believers, those who have not bowed the knee to Baal — as Elijah was reminded. Somewhere the light has shone, though, perhaps, weak and fitfully, in the midst of the thick darkness that would encompass and destroy it. For centuries that light was limited to Israel, and thick darkness covered the Gentiles; today it is diffused throughout the Gentile world, and darkness has fallen upon Israel.

There is a time coming when "gross darkness" shall cover the earth, when the light shall be withdrawn. That will be when Christ comes to withdraw his saints to Sinai. By so doing, the little light that today struggles through the darkness will no longer be seen, the world will be left to its own resources. It will be as the darkness before the dawn; for as the prophet proceeds to show (Isa. 60), that darkness will be completely and forever destroyed by the glorious shining forth of the Sun of Righteousness from Zion's hill to the ends of the world.

—H.P.M.

Applications Still Come In

The Gospel Proclamation Society (see inside back cover) reports requests for free literature have been received from many sources during the past month. All such requests are fulfilled, and the applicant placed upon our mailing lists for further literature on the Truth. Requests have been received during the past few weeks from the following sources (sometimes more than one application from the town mentioned): PHILIPPINES—Mindora, Boliol, Bacoloo City, Barclay, Oec, Silay City. N.S.W.—Newrybar, Sydney, Croydon, Bondi. CANADA: St. John N.B., Platterville Ont., Moncton N.B. QLD.—Surfers Paradise, Nundah, Birdsville. U.S.A.—Abilene Texas, Hemet Calif. N.Z.—Christchurch; ENG.—Oldham, Lans. NORTHERN TERRITORY—Elcho Island. NIGERIA—Aba, Item. TASMANIA—Lymington, Longford, Mt. Hicks, Legana, Launceston, Lenah Valley, Roseberry. W.A.—Swanbourne, Norseman. VIC.—Warragul, Mentone, Canterbury, Albert Park. ISRAEL—Tel Aviv.

At a Memorial Meeting

The Authority and Supremacy of the Son

We have met together this morning because God has spoken. Apart from that, we would not be here. Each one of us would be pursuing his own pleasures, and walking, unknowingly, in the way that leads to death and oblivion. So our gathering together here, this morning, is ALL of God.

We have read (Hebrews 1 & 2) of how God has spoken down the ages through many people, and in various ways, but finally through a Son. Not "His" son, as we have it in the A.V. as though He has no others, but by "a" son, or "the" son. Indeed, God has "many sons whom He will bring to glory" (Ch. 2: 10), but the point is made that whilst God has spoken through many men before Jesus, in this case, the Word was made man; it became flesh by the operation of the power of the Spirit upon Mary in the matter described by the angel who was sent to her. As a consequence, this man, Jesus, was different from all the others, He is "the brightness of Divine glory, the express image of God's person," and "heir of all things."

God had spoken in the past, says the apostle, but consider the difference in the present channel of speech. The angels were but instruments to manifest His power; the prophets were but His messengers; Moses was only a servant. Jesus the Christ, however, was a Son. What this means is indicated by the normal close relationship between fathers and sons, and though this is but a feeble echo of the reality, God has ordained it to teach us the relationship between Himself as Father and His son. As Son, the Lord was accounted worthy of more honour than Moses the servant, "inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house." But who is the builder of the house? The answer is: God (v. 4). And Jesus was "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3: 16), "Immanuel," or "God with us" (Isa. 7: 14).

We must not take away from the power of this fact. In the opening verses of Hebrews, the Apostle advances it to illustrate the vast gulf that lay between even the angels, mighty in word and deed, and the Christ, and a reason why we should more carefully take heed to the things which we

have heard from and of him. "If the word spoken by angels was steadfast," he declared making reference to the Law, "and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord."

That is the point. This message was spoken by the Lord. The same point is stressed later in the epistle: "If they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven" (Heb. 12: 25). Jesus said himself: "I proceeded forth and came from God" (Jhn. 8: 42), "I came down from heaven" (Jhn. 6: 51). The "I" here that came down is the Word, the Holy Spirit, the "Power of the Highest," for "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth (Jhn. 1: 14)."

John the Baptist bare witness of this, saying: "This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me" (v. 15). John, in his Gospel, quotes the statement of the Baptist as proof of the fact that "the Word was made flesh." How was Jesus "before" John, seeing that John was both older than him, born before him, as Luke is careful to demonstrate? The answer is given by Malachi the Prophet: "Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me." This was God speaking to Israel, telling how He would appear in their midst. John Baptist was the messenger, the "voice crying in the wilderness" (Isa. 40: 3), as he himself gave witness (Jhn. 1: 22). The Word through Isaiah declared "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of Yahweh, make straight in the desert a highway for our mighty ones" (God—Elohim). John was sent to proclaim Yahweh, to prepare the way for "mighty ones." Yahweh — He will be — He will be Saviour — Jesus — so that with Yahweh in heaven and Christ on earth we have two Mighty

*The statement of Hebrews 1: 2 is that God spake "by" or "in" (as it should be rendered) a son. Thus the Voice was the Voice of Yahweh, though the flesh was the person of His son. Christ declared: "I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (John 12: 49), "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me" (Jhn. 7: 16), "He whom God sent speaketh the words of God" (Jhn. 3: 34). Yahweh spake through the Lord as He did through the prophets, but in greater degree. Isaiah could say: "Behold my servant, whom I uphold" (Isa. 42: 1). It was Yahweh not Isaiah Who upheld Christ—He spake "in" —the prophet. . . . Editor.

Ones where but one was before. Christ declared: "I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me" (Jhn. 8: 16), "I and the Father are one" (Jhn. 10: 30). In what way? Jesus explains this in saying (v. 38): "The Father is in me, and I in Him."

That is the full expression of Divine sonship of which the human relationship is but a figure. That is why John Baptist, though not exceeded in greatness by any prophet, yet proclaimed one "whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose" (Jhn. 1: 27) who "is above all" (3: 31), and "was before me" (1: 15). Who was before John? Why, Yahweh, the power and the purpose that spake through the prophets, now manifest in a Son, so that He could say through that son: "Before Abraham was, I am" (Jhn. 8: 58). Why did John record all these sayings, these "difficult" sayings of Jesus? Why did he dwell such on this theme, and on the message of John Baptist? He tells us himself: "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Anointed One, the Son of God" (20: 31).

Jesus is the Son of God, one dwelling by the Spirit "in the Father," and the "Father in him," so that whilst the prophets were but messengers, proclaiming "Thus saith the Lord," he was "God manifest in the flesh."*

His Humility

If we mediate upon these Scriptures, we will come to a fuller realisation of the greatness and majesty of the Lord, and this, in turn, will help us to appreciate better all that he did in obedience to his Father's will — the emblems of which are before us on the table. When a servant does what he is told, there is no great merit in it; that is what he is there for. But Jesus:

"Though he was in the form of God (God manifest) he thought it not robbery (a thing to be grasped at) to be equal to God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2: 6-8).

*What the Lord is today, we can become (see 1 Thess. 1: 1; John 17: 20-21)—that is the most wonderful feature of the doctrine of God manifestation which is interwoven into the fabric of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. The clumsy and bewildering fallacies of Trinitarianism, or of a pre-existent Christ find no place in these glorious expressions which reveal the purpose of Yahweh to manifest Himself in a Son and in sons.—Editor.

He submitted to having nowhere to lay his head though he was heir of all things; he refused the honours of a king though they were truly his; he condescended to the company and friendship of men who were but babes, though he had a wisdom greater than Solomon; he received the derision of those who actually usurped his power, though he possessed the authority to crush them; he washed the feet of his companions, though he was their Lord; he surrendered to the rabble, though he could have called for legions of angels in his defence. He who gave us this great example of patient endurance was the Father Himself, veiled in the Son of David, who said to Philip: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet thou hast not known me Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (Jhn. 14: 8).

So we contemplate Jesus the Christ, "God manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of messengers, preached unto the nations, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1 Tim. 3: 16). We see him, despite all this, as one of ourselves, because he humbled himself. We see him as the "captain of our salvation," a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." And because of these things he is ONE, not only with the Father, but also with us. Paul states it beautifully in Heb. 2: 11: "Both he (Jesus) that sanctifieth, and they (the saints) who are sanctified are all of One (one Father, one hope, one common stock, one common experience) for which cause, he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Thus we are led to consider ourselves, the brethren of Christ, Christadelphians. Surely we can view this as a position of honour and privilege, the highest available in the earth today.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" (1 Jhn. 3:1).

Jesus, though a son, learned obedience by the things that he suffered, and so must all his brethren. That is our present portion, and we suffer with him, as Paul did, that we may be glorified together with him, and experience the fulfilling of the prayer: "That they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one" (Jhn. 17: 22).

God will then be manifest to the world, not only in "the Son," but through all His sons, so that the knowledge of the glory of the Lord will fill the earth, as the waters the sea. Thus there is set before us "an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, that fadeth not away." Then the Divine nature will be a part of us, even as this bread and wine is shortly to become a part of us.

The sons of God are found in heaviness for a season, but when their warfare is accomplished, they will receive the garment of praise, the vigour of immortal life, to rejoice in the great joy which is their appointed portion. Today, the saints sit down in little groups throughout the world, but then they shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets, and, greatest privilege of all, to sup and commune with the Lord himself. So, as we come to share the bread and wine, we remember his words:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth IN ME, and I IN HIM. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me" (Jhn. 6: 53-57).

What is true of him must be true of us also. If we are like him now, we shall be like him then. "Therefore," says John, "every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

E. A. STALLWORTHY, Holland.

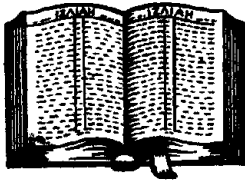
Encouragement from U.S.A.

"I have enjoyed your recent issues of 'Logos,' 'Herald' and 'Story of the Bible,' and find that they all help and encourage me in my walk towards the Kingdom. Brother Wille's explanation of the 'Lord's Prayer' opens up much food for thought, and has brought the reality of prayer much more closely to my mind. The special issue on 'Ruth' helped me considerably to understand that book better, and impressed me with the deep meaning contained within it. How courageous and yet how humble was faithful Ruth! Surely we can take heed to the lesson and see that we exercise care in gleaning in the fields of Bethlehem. Truly, it is God's privilege to conceal a matter, and our honour to search it out."

.....—L.G., Washington, U.S.A.

I have great faith in the formative power of the truth. I would have the truth spoken or read, do everything; human authority do nothing. Let the truth act upon men's hearts after the similitude of a magnet on steel. It is essentially attractive, and will in the end bring all honest and good hearts to an enlightened union with the name which is above every name.

—J. THOMAS.



Things New and Old

No. 12—

Lead us not into Temptation

We now reach the last phrases of the Lord's prayer, the consideration of which has really involved us in a general meditation on what is involved in walking in Christ.

Of course, God doesn't tempt anyone with evil (James 1), although He does test people (Gen. 22: 1; Deut. 8: 2). The phrase on which we now reflect is a figure of speech for "keep us out of temptation" — an exaggerated form of speech like the command to "hate" our parents and wives.* It is a prayer to God for moral strength to resist the wiles of the devil by which we are surrounded; that He will so contrive circumstances that we find it possible, even with some failing, to maintain our integrity in the Truth, and endure unto the end.

Strangely enough, this is a heading under which I find myself spending little time in my meditative prayers on the way to work and at other times. I am at fault in this. It is a much needed prayer, for we cannot avoid a certain amount of mixing with the world. One could not go immediately from this phase of prayer and voluntarily place oneself in compromising circumstances, where a fall is almost inevitable.

*There is no command in Scripture to "hate" our parents, or wives, but the very reverse. Respect and love for such were among the most important commands made to Israel and endorsed by the Apostles (Eph. 6: 2). Harsh was the punishment threatened against those who failed in this particular (Prov. 30: 17). The word "hate" used in such places as Luke 14: 26 and Gen. 29: 31 is a Hebraism used to signify a relative preference for one over another, to the extent, if need be, of disregarding the claims of one in the face of another. Jacob did not "hate" Leah (Gen. 29: 31) as we use the word, but he disregarded her claim and her rights in preference for those of Rachel for whom he had an all-absorbing love. And this is what the Lord meant when he spake of a person coming to him, and "hating" if need be his father or mother. He meant that they must disregard the claims of their loved ones, for the greater claims that he had upon them. But this disregard of the claims of earthly parents must be done in respect and love for them. Thus whilst love is paid to parents, a greater love must

be paid to Christ; so all-absorbing, as to be expressed by the relative words "love" and "hate."

The word "temptation" (Mat. 6: 13) is from the Greek "Peirasmos" and is used for trials of various kinds. Christ told his disciples: "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations" (Luke 22: 28). He had in mind his trials at the hands of his fellows. Paul spake of the "temptations which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews" (Acts 20: 19), of his "temptation which was in his flesh" (Gal. 4: 14), his physical infirmity. James exhorted the brethren to "count it joy when they fell into temptation" (James 1: 2), in other words, to bear trials joyfully. The word occurs twice in 1 Cor. 10: 13, where we learn that "God is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape . . ." This temptation relates to trials into which we are sometimes brought by God that we might be tested, and which we are called upon to bear cheerfully and with patience (very difficult to do sometimes!). The "temptation" to which the Lord referred to, therefore, relates to those trials which have tested the faithful down the ages. We are not to seek these trials, not to boastfully ask for them in order to demonstrate our strength, but in humble realisation of our own weakness, and the proneness of human nature to fail, constantly pray that we be not brought into this state. "I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death," declared Peter boldly—but he learned his lesson (Luke 22: 33), and was brought to the state when he could but humbly mutter: "Thou knowest that I love thee, Lord!" (Jhn. 21: 15).

The word "lead" in Mat. 6: 13 is rendered "bring" by the Revised Version: "Bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Such a prayer recognises that our lives are Divinely overshadowed, it acknowledges the power of Deity to "bring us into" or "deliver us from" all trial (Rom. 13: 4), thus teaching us to "acknowledge Him in all our ways," that He might "direct our paths."

The Aramaic version renders: "Leave us not in the hour of trial." The Diaglott translates: "Abandon us not to trial."

—Editor

"Laying aside every weight"

We have already spoken about the way in which the world's modes of thought can enter our very homes, of how some business activities make us more open to temptation than others. When we utter this prayer, we are caused to weigh up all our activities to see whether we are making the road to holiness difficult for ourselves because, contrary to apostolic wisdom, we will insist upon making provision for the flesh (Rom. 13: 14). We think of the baggage being unloaded from the camel to enable it to squeeze through the little gate that gave entrance to Jerusalem called the "needle's eye," and upon which the Lord based his parable. Loaded with the impediment of luxury, pleasure and sin, we cannot travel along the narrow way; we must lay aside every weight (Heb. 12: 1), stripping off everything that hinders us.

Such "stripping off" sometimes involves what seems for the moment loss and pain, but one day we shall learn to call this all gain. It might require the setting aside of a close association with people in the world that would seem likely to bring us material benefit, but which soiled us spiritually. In meditating prayerfully under this heading, my mind has often roamed back to the rebuke of the prophet to Jehoshaphat: "Shouldest thou love them that hate Yahweh?" (2 Chron. 19: 2). The alliance with Ahab was good politics, but it led to spiritual disaster by bringing the poison of Jezebel into righteous Jehoshaphat's family circle.

That sort of thing was in the mind of James when he said: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses; Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" Divine standards become adulterated in the mind; human standards seem less obnoxious as we dally with the world.

"The Lord is Able to give thee much more"

If it means "loss" to keep out of temptation, remember the example of Amaziah (2 Chron. 25). He took up a defiling association with Israel in order to make himself stronger for battle. He paid good money in advance for some battalions from the ten tribes to fight against Edom. But the man of God pointed out the impurity of the alliance—it would hasten spiritual decay—it would lead into temptation. Being a man who did right things externally, but was not right inwardly (v. 2), Amaziah was appalled at the money he would have wasted. "But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel?" And what a beautiful answer! Let us bear it in mind when we face loss for Christ's sake: "Yahweh is able to give thee much more than this" (v. 9).

This moment in prayer is the time for resolving that if our hand or foot causes us to stumble we will cut it off; or if our eye, pluck it out. We need to exercise a ruthlessness with ourselves if we are to survive spiritually. Not for nothing was circumcision the token of the covenant, and we are circumcised in Christ (Col. 2: 11). It may be an easy thing to be a Christadelphian all our lives; it is not so easy to really stay in Christ all our lives. The two things are not always the same.

"No chastening for the present seemeth pleasant"

There is another aspect to this phase of the prayer. God tests us for our good. "I shall come out like gold tried in the fire," said Job, when he glimpsed the real purpose of affliction. We ask God to help us in the battle; to "keep us from

falling." Often the only way He can give this help is not very pleasant; for no chastening for the present seemeth joyous, even so, it afterwards yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them that are exercised by it. So, sometimes, I have found this prayer, "Lead us not into temptation" will commence this kind of reflection in my mind: "Oh, I wish I could overcome this particular falling! Help me, Father! But how will the Father help me? He will give me trouble to loosen my affection from human things and sharpen my appreciation of what alone matters. But I don't relish trouble. Lord, help me without the necessity of trouble. But chastening is the only way, unless I resolve here and now to let the Word dwell in me more richly in this particular matter, and then the falling will lose its hold . . ." Thus, the very act of prayer is again in part an answer. I do not want God to lead me into trial, even for my good. But if I do not strengthen (in Christ) my resolve, as He loves me, He will have to "lead me into temptation." But if I am strengthened in prayer, I may perhaps make some progress, and avoid the trial or "temptation" that would otherwise have been necessary.*

Nevertheless, some trial will still be necessary. "Before I was afflicted, I went astray" (Ps. 119: 67). "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn Thy statutes" (v. 71). But even in this, God has made a gracious promise. The trials or temptations will be in experiences common to all men; the same things will happen to us, but for us will have a special purpose and meaning. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will, with the temptation, also make a way of escape; that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10: 13). Not avoid it, but bear it. When we pray, "Lead us not into temptation," we are invoking this promise. As we invoke it, we look at our troubles, and see a little of the benefit we are deriving; and this, itself, is an escape from the sorrow that would crush.

*We will not avoid trial through inward strength or outward righteousness. Otherwise we are faced with the logic that the most persecuted man is the man most wanting it, which would automatically place Job and the Lord on a lower status than their companions. As stated in the previous footnote, the prayer acknowledges the guiding influence of God in our lives, recognises that He brings us into trial, and pleads that as we are weak we be not abandoned to it. It sets before us two facts: that there is a guiding principle operating in our lives; that we have no strength in ourselves, and of ourselves can not successfully surmount temptation . . . Editor.

In this prayer, we are also asking that the troubles we get may do us good, and the reflection sparked off by the petition will contribute to such a result. God does give us trials to provide opportunity to show what manner of men and women we are. He did this to Israel: "Yahweh thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thy heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments or not" (Deut. 8: 2-3). He did the same to Abraham whose faith was made perfect through works (Gen. 22).

This prayer beseeches that we steer clear of the wrong reaction to the trial, that we endure temptation (James 1: 12), and helps us to avoid saying when we are tempted, "I am tempted of God" (v. 13). "Lead us not into temptation," yet "God tempteth no man."* It is a little difficult, although I think we have already shown the variety of meanings to the word. However, we can say that God tests men and women by placing them in certain situations; the situation becomes a temptation to evil because of the sinful promptings of our hearts in response to it. Thus God "tempts" in the sense of manipulating the situation. We are "tempted" when we are drawn away of our own lust. In prayer, we ask God to grant that testing situations be few; and that when they come we may by the Word, be able to crush our evil responses.

In other words, we ask "to be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, wherein we greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, we are in heaviness through manifold temptation; that the trial of our faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2: 5-7; Rom. 5: 1-5).

—E. Wille (Eng.)

*Like many other words, "tempt" is governed by several shades of meaning which the context usually defines. In James 1: 13 the thought is "tempted with evil," and the word rendered "evil" here (Gr., *Kakos*) is entirely different from that of Mat. 6: 13 and other places. Here the word signifies that which is essentially evil in character, in Matthew it relates to that which is hurtful in effect (Gr., *poneros*). Sometimes the two words are used fairly closely in meaning, but the significance in James is obvious when the meaning of the word is kept in view. God cannot be tempted by that which is bad in character, neither does he tempt man in that way. Man is tempted in that way when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. God tests men by different means. See James 1: 2 and Hebrews 12: 6.—Editor.

GOD'S CARE FOR THE SAINTS

"I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (Ps. 37: 25).

The righteous may be, and often have been, forsaken of man, but they never have been, and they never shall be, forsaken of God. For He hath said: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13: 5). Though nearest and dearest friends forsake us, God never will. "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up" (Ps. 27:10).

As for the word rendered "begging," we do not think it specially means begging in the sense of asking alms; for some very eminent saints have been reduced to a state in which they have had to ask or beg for bread. Thus David himself on one occasion, when very hungry, begged some bread from Ahimelech the priest (1 Sam. 21: 3). Elijah, that eminent saint of God, in the time of famine, begged a morsel of bread from the poor widow of Zarephath, though she had but one handful of meal wherewith to make it. Lazarus in time of affliction and distress, is represented as being carried to the rich man's gate to receive alms. Moreover, the giving of alms is a duty commended in Scripture as well-pleasing to God; for the poor we shall always have with us; and, at the last day, Christ will say, "I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; and inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." Now, from all this we see that the righteous may be in need of alms, may, indeed, ask alms and receive them, and the bestowment of them is well-pleasing to God.

What, then, does the passage mean? It means this — that God will so bless the righteous and so watch over them by His providence, that though they may be in need, yet that need shall be supplied. Thus David in all his life had never seen the righteous in absolute want — perishing for want of bread; nor is there any such occurrence recorded in Scripture. No; the supply when needed always came from some source. For God hath said, "Bread shall be given him; his water shall be sure" (Isa. 33: 16). This promise shall never fail; but God must have His own way of fulfilling it. At one time, he fulfilled it in the case of Elijah, by ravens; at another time, by a poor widow's alms; and afterwards He supplied both the poor widow and Elijah himself by miraculously increasing her substance. So Christ fulfilled the promise, when the disciples and the multitude were hungry, by miraculously multiplying five loaves and two fishes to feed thousands of people.

—W.C.

During the past few months, discussions and preparations have been underway for an extensive tour of the Ecclesias in North America. Out of the scores of letters that have been written, of preparations that have been made, of discussions that have taken place by long-distance telephone, there has emerged a very ambitious programme that will take us round the world.

These few notes, therefore, are written with my mind in a turmoil as I try to cope with the thousand and one duties that remain to be done, and which protracted travel abroad demands. They are in the nature of a farewell to friends at home, for by the time the next issue of "Logos" is in the hands of readers, we should have commenced the first stage of our journey.

The journey is taken in answer to invitations from U.S.A. and Canada to participate in the work of the Truth throughout the North American Continent. It is also proposed to continue on to England, Europe, the Middle and Far East, and return via Western Australia. We will thus encircle the globe, and as most travel will be done by air, we have purchased a "round the world" ticket with Qantas Airways.

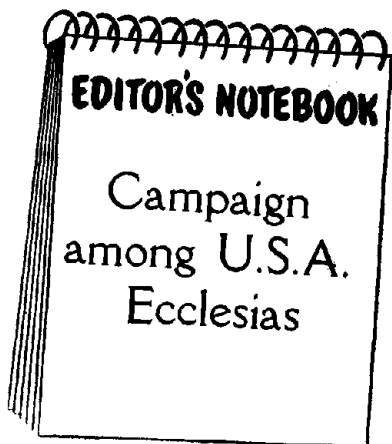
The "We," by the way, comprises my son, Peter, my nephew, Eric (both of whom are in the Truth) and myself.

I have been pressed to write up some of our experiences for "Logos" and for that reason I now outline these preliminary details. Travel to distant parts is no longer an uncommon experience, and perhaps there is nothing more irritating than the long-winded traveller who forces upon his reluctant friends a wordy account of what he has seen and done.

But there is a great advantage to the hearer when the account comes by medium of a periodical—he can always turn the page!

And there is this about the journey—it is not being conducted from the standpoint of a normal tourist. We go because we are interested in the things of the Truth throughout the world; it is the Ecclesias that comprise the magnet attracting us to any given place—and not the desire to see a city, a mountain, a lake, or a waterfall.

There is perhaps one exception to that statement that makes it not wholly true. There is one spot on the face of the globe which does act as a magnet, and which draws us to it, though no Ecclesia may be found there. I refer to the Land of Israel. We travelled there seven years ago, and were deeply stirred by what we saw. We hope to visit it again on this occasion, and see, not only the Israeli side of the border, but that of the Arab countries as well.



We take the trip from selfish motives. We do not travel to U.S.A. or England with the object of GIVING as much as GETTING. We bear in mind the value of our visit to England seven years ago, when by contact with brethren we were stimulated in the things of the Truth.

I believe that "Logos" benefited greatly as a result of that trip—that it improved immensely due to our contact with those of "like precious faith" on the "other side of the world."

We are confident that this will be the case with this trip as well.

There are a hundred difficulties associated with a journey of this nature. Ecclesial appointments must be completed, correspondence brought up to date, arrangements for ordering, despatching and accounting of "Logos," etc., business arrangements must be attended to, taxation clearances effected, passports obtained, permission received, visas arranged, and red tape, frayed nerves, tensed feelings coped with as day inexorably follows day with not sufficient work done.

A flood of letters has been received from overseas inviting us to visit various parts, extending greetings and fraternal wishes for the journey. Scores of air letters have been written, confirming, altering, seeking advice, providing details for the journey.

I plan to attempt part editing of "Logos," "Herald of the Coming Age," and "Story of the Bible" whilst in transit from place to place, and have arranged for voluntary labour at home to take care of wrapping and despatching of periodicals. Brother G. E. Mansfield will attend to final editing, and all editorial matter should now be directed to him at Box 226, G.P.O., Adelaide, South Australia. The accounting and secretarial work will be undertaken by volunteers at home, and on their behalf we ask for the readers' co-operation.

The "signs of the times" were impressed upon me, as I went about with the preparations. Discussing details of the journey with the Qantas representative, I was forcibly reminded of the words of Daniel: "Many shall run to and fro" (Dan. 12: 4). The speed of travel is reaching frightening proportions. We leave Sydney, N.S.W., by jet plane on 15th June, at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, and we arrive in Hawaii at 8 o'clock the morning of the same day, having passed over the date line.

In U.S.A. appointments include attendance at several of the Bible Schools which appear to be a feature of American Ecclesial life. The Schools meet for one week, and the day is divided into sessions during which a series of subjects are taught. Portion of the advertisement for the Pacific Coast Bible School, advertised as a "Spiritual Vacation Land," is as follows:

"No matter what our spiritual status might be, we ALL need the benefits of this God-given oasis to rejuvenate our inner man. Think of it! For one solid week — no radio, no television, no newspapers—just Bibles, Hymn Books, and the most capable teachers your committee could secure.

"This could be the final spiritual cleansing our hearts and minds will have before our Master returns. Let us resolve to be there..."

From New York there came an invitation to visit the Garfield Ecclesia, and with the letter an outline of the background of the Ecclesia:

"Garfield is located about 12 miles west of New York City. It has a population of about 30,000 mostly immigrants from Europe. The Ecclesia was started about 35 years ago among the Italian

immigrants, and for many years, the services were held in Italian. Later the services were conducted in English as more came into the Truth. . . . In addition to our Sunday morning services, we have Bible lecture in the evening, a youth circle on Monday, Bible Class on Tuesday, Italian Bible Class on Wednesday. . . . If you stay with us for a week, we will go to work on a campaign, and fill our meeting place as many times as you can speak for us. . . ."

And from Pittsburgh we received an invitation to visit Ecclesias in Ohio, and to co-operate in a special effort at Piketon, a small farming community in southern Ohio.

"We have located a group of two churches who, for over 100 years, have believed and preached the Gospel of the Kingdom as revealed in the Bible. As far as we can tell, their views are virtually identical with what we understand. It is truly amazing that such a people have been able to maintain themselves in any kind of entity over such a long period of time. . . . The people are tremendously anxious for us to preach to them, but it has not been possible to go there much more often than every other weekend, since Piketon is 250 miles from Pittsburgh. The average attendance at the Saturday evening lecture and class has been 50. They have had a pastor in the somewhat usual sense of the word, except that he has not received any formal training, or is not hired by the ecclesia. He is a carpenter by trade. He is a somewhat eccentric gentleman of 68 years of age who delivers sermons only once a month for each church. They have pleaded with us to have some of our people move to Piketon and we are trying to find someone prepared to do this. The closest they came to obtaining another pastor to help with the work was through the national Church of Christ, but since the fundamental requirement was that they contribute a minimum of \$50 per sermon, and since the people are poor farm folk, they were not able to obtain this man. . . ."

To co-operate in such an effort as this would be a sheer delight. We would be happy to contribute the 50 dollars for the privilege of doing so!

Another invitation from the Western Bible School, outlines a sample of a day's procedure:

6.45, Arise; 7.30, Breakfast; 8.30, Morning Assembly with day's announcements plus brief morning service with 10 minute talk by young brethren; 9.15, First Class Period; 10.05, Recess; 10.15, Second Class Period, 11.00, Recess; 11.10, Third Class Period; 11.55, Recess; 12.15, Lunch; 1.30, Fourth Class Period; 2.15, Recreation; 5.00, Optional Class. Evening programme includes a lecture or talk.

To arise at 6.45 every morning is rather a grim outlook for one who is used to retiring regularly after midnight each night! But, perhaps it is just the tonic we need.

So that is the programme for the next few months, and I hope to speak through this column telling of our experiences. In any such effort as this we rely not upon our own strength, but in Yahweh. The words of Psalm 127 are constantly with us: "Unless Yahweh build the house, they labour in vain that build it." Upon Him we rest, to Him we seek for guidance, knowing that no effort performed in His name is without its use. May His blessing be with the effort.

EDITOR.



For Private Study

NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE

An itemised Exposition of the Book of Revelation, based on
"Eureka" and designed for home study and for Bible marking.

(Continued from page 278)

REVELATION, CHAPTER 4

The Political Order of the Kingdom of God

VERSE 1

"A door"—A door is an entrance. The one John saw led into the political heavens. At present, politics are closed to the saints because they have been taken "out of the nations" (Acts 15: 14; John 17: 16), and must remain separate from them. Christ's promise to those who overcome, however, is that they will one day exercise "power over the nations" (Rev. 2: 26). Armageddon will inaugurate a state of things necessitating the return of Christ. An entrance, or door, to the political heavens will be opened, and the saints will be elevated to positions of authority therein (cp. Zech. 14: 1-5; Rev. 5: 9-10; 2 Tim. 2: 12).

"In heaven"—The political heavens—Isa. 65: 17-18.

"Voice of a trumpet"—The trumpet was used to gather the people together (Num. 10: 9). For that purpose, the Day of Atonement was preceded by the memorial blowing of trumpets (Lev. 25: 9; 23: 24). Christ returns with the "voice of a trumpet" which though silent to the ears of man will call together dead and living saints (1 Thess. 4: 16). The trumpet was also used in time of war, and Christ's return and the gathering of the saints to him will be accompanied by war on the nations (Rev. 11: 18; Zech. 9: 14; Isa. 27: 13).

"Come up hither"—John accepts this invitation as a representative of his class, i.e., of the saints as a whole.

VERSE 2

"A throne"—The throne of David (Luke 1: 33). It was "cast down" (Ps. 89: 44), but is to be "raised up" (Acts 15: 16).

"In heaven"—The things here recorded relate to matters which John was told would be fulfilled "hereafter" (Rev. 1: 1). Hence the heaven does not relate to that above, nor does the picture presented concern Christ's present position. It concerns the future, when the throne of David will again be established in the political heavens.

VERSE 3

"A jasper and a sardine stone"—Christ is the Stone of Israel (Gen. 49: 24-25; Isa. 8: 14; 28: 16). His dual origin as both Son of God and Son of Man is symbolised in the metals here referred to. The Jasper symbolises the Spirit. "A beautiful cerulean gem, clear as crystal, is the symbol of the Deity's spirit condensed into substance" ("Eureka"). The light and glory of the heavenly Jerusalem is represented by a

Jasper stone (Rev. 21: 11), and in verse 23 this is identified with the Lord Jesus. The Sardine stone is "a carnelian, and so called from its colour, having a resemblance to that of flesh" ("Eureka"). It symbolises the fleshly descent of the Lord through his mother. In Hebrew, the word "sardine" and "Adam" have the same consonants, though different vowel points, but as, originally, Hebrew was written without these points, both words then appeared the same. Hence, in the use of these joint metals, there is graphically symbolised that the Stone of Israel would be both Human and Divine.

"A rainbow"—This is the "token of the covenant" (Gen. 9: 16-17). A rainbow is formed of seven different colours, speaking of the perfect or complete manifestation of Divine glory. It is a reflection of the glory of the sun on falling rain. Scripture speaks of the Sun of Righteousness (Mal. 4: 1-2), and of the saints as falling rain (Ps. 72: 6). In them will be seen the glory of their King, who, in turn, reveals the glory of Yahweh. A rainbow in the sky speaks of how the glory of Yahweh will cover the earth in due time (Num. 14: 21).

"Like an emerald"—i.e., bright green, indicating the reviving effect of Christ's reign (Isa. 40: 6; Ps. 72: 6). The law of Christ going forth to mankind after the judgments of Armageddon, is represented as "rain falling upon mown grass" (Ps. 72: 6). The effect of this "rain" is to cause the "grass" to spring forth in healthy lusciousness. The saints will carry that law and teaching unto men (Rev. 10: 11).

VERSE 4

"24 seats"—These are positions of authority, and they are occupied by those who sing a song that identifies them with the Redeemed (Rev. 5: 8-10). But what is the nature of the authority indicated by the 24 seats? For an answer to that we go back to the times of David, for that is the prophetic pattern of the future to be established by Christ (Amos 9: 11). David divided the priests and levites into 24 separate orders (1 Chron. 24: 4; 1 Chron. 25: 31). Their duties were to minister to the needs of the people in teaching (2 Chron. 15: 3), and religious service. He also provided for 24 orders of musicians (1 Chron. 25: 1; 31) who were appointed to "prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals" (v. 1). They were not selected merely to provide harmony and a pleasant sound, but to "prophesy," or to "speak unto men to edification, exhortation, and comfort" (1 Cor. 14: 3). In Revelation, those occupying these seats are represented as the priestly musicians of the future (cp. Rev. 5: 8-10; 14: 3). The 24 orders, therefore, indicate the priestly functions of the future age which will be modelled on that established by King David.

"24 elders"—The immortal priests of the Age to come whose functions will include teaching and judging the people, ministering to their religious needs, prophesying with the songs of Zion, in the service of the Temple.

"Clothed in white raiment"—The priestly garment of righteousness speaking here of immortality (Rev. 19: 8).

"Crowns of gold"—Lit., "coronal wreaths of gold." The coronal wreath was the symbol of victory given to the successful contestants in the Grecian games. Here, however, the wreaths are of gold, which is the symbol of a tried faith (1 Pet. 1: 7), so that the symbol as a whole speaks of the victory of faith (1 John 5: 4).

"Out of the throne"—Directed by the One sitting on the throne.

"Proceed lightnings, thunderings and voices"—Symbols of wrath and war (2 Sam. 22: 15; Ps. 144: 6; Zech. 9: 13-14). A storm breaks out upon the world as Christ, established upon the throne in Zion, extends his conquests to the ends of the earth. In this war of aggression, Israel is used as his "battle axe and weapons of war" (Jer. 51: 20; Mic. 4: 3; Ps. 19: 11-14).

"Seven lamps of fire"—These represent the seven Spirits of God. But there is only "one spirit" (Eph. 4: 4). The seven, in this case, represents that "one spirit" multitudinously manifested. It will be by the power of the Spirit that the nations will be brought into subjection to Christ (Zech. 4: 6).

VERSE 6

"A sea of glass like crystal"—The nations today are represented as "a troubled sea, casting up mire and dirt" (Isa. 57: 20). They are to be subdued unto Christ, and made subject to his law. Peace and righteousness will come to the world, so that in contrast to Isaiah 57: 20, the nations are represented as a sea of glass—completely calm—like crystal—purified of dross.

"Four beasts"—Lit., "living creatures." From their song (Rev. 5: 8-10) we learn that they represent the Redeemed, and from Ezekiel 1: 5; 10: 20 that they are identified as the Cherubim. The "four faces" of the Cherubim (Ezek. 1: 10) are identical with the four standards under which Israel marched. When Israel marched out from Sinai, the 12 tribes were organised into four divisions (Num. 2), and at the head of these four groups flew the standards of the principal tribes: Judah (v. 3), Reuben (v. 10), Ephraim (v. 18), and Dan (v. 25). These four marching columns became the "four living creatures" of the desert, marching in the Name of Yahweh, to occupy the Promised Land. As a symbol, the four beasts represent the saints in militant manifestation, whereas the "24 elders" represent the saints in their priestly functions.

"Full of eyes"—The eye is the symbol of intelligence. The angels act as the "eyes of Yahweh" (Gen. 18: 21; Exod. 23: 20; Ps. 103: 20; Heb. 1: 14) watching over the destiny of nations (Dan. 4: 17). In the future age this will be the privilege of the saints (Heb. 2: 5; Zech. 4: 10). Thus the four beasts of Rev. 4, which represent the multitude of the Redeemed, are said to be "full of eyes." Their penetrating vision extends to all points of the compass.

VERSE 7

"Lion, calf, eagle, man"—These were also the likeness of the faces of the Cherubim (Ezekiel 1). They represent the four standards of Israel. The standard of Judah was the Lion, that of Reuben was the Man, that of Ephraim was the Bullock, that of Dan was the Eagle. God is light (John 1: 5), spirit (John 4: 24), fire (Deut. 4: 29). The ancients selected the lion, eagle, and bullock to represent these. The shining eyes, tawny gold-like colour, flowing mane, and resistless strength of the lion is descriptive of the velocity and irresistibility of light; the curved horns, the curling locks on the forehead of the bull or ox, and his relentless fury, is descriptive of the appearance and dreadful effects of fire; the lofty skimming of the eagle, suggestive of air in motion, is a fit representation for the Spirit. And the man is representative of the medium through which God reveals himself.

VERSE 8

"Six wings"—This identifies the symbol of Revelation with the seraphim, as well as the cherubim. See Isaiah 6: 2-3 and compare with Rev.

4: 8. "Seraphim" is derived from a verb meaning "to burn or consume." When applied to the Redeemed, it reveals their mission to burn and consume all that is evil in the Kingdom of God (cp. 2 Thess. 1: 3; Dan. 7: 9, 26). But why "six" wings? Numbers have a spiritual significance in Scripture. Seven, for example, represents the Covenant number and speaks of completeness. Six is the number of man (Rev. 13: 18), for Adam was created on the sixth day. It is appropriate that the number of man should be associated with this symbol, because the four beasts have to do with man. They, themselves, represent Deity manifested in man, and they extend their conquests to overshadow mankind. There were 24 wings in all, for each of the four beasts had six wings, so the militant aspect of the saints represented by the four beasts is also joined with their priestly functions, indicated by the use of the number "24." The saints as a nation of king-priests (the true Israel) will conquer the world.

"They rest not day and night"—They are immortal and need not rest; their service to humanity is constant, never ending, for they represent Yahweh on earth. In that they are like the priests in the Temple, contingents of which served day and night (Ps. 134: 1). No matter what time an Israelite looked towards the Temple, he knew that there were ministering priests in attendance. A similar continuous service will be a feature of the Age to come.

"Holy, holy, holy"—That is, "most holy." The "Most Holy" typified the immortal state which Christ figuratively entered at his resurrection (Heb. 10: 19-20). It is the state of complete union with the Father (John 17: 21), which we can only attain unto when clothed upon with His nature (2 Pet. 1: 3; Rom. 5: 1-2). The four beasts proclaim that they have attained unto this state.

"Lord God Almighty"—In Hebrew: Yahweh El Shaddai (see "Eureka"—vol. 3, p. 379, old edition). "He who shall be the might of the powerful ones"—Isa. 24: 23.

VERSE 11

"Thou hast created all things"—This is spoken to him who sits upon the throne, i.e., to the Lord Jesus. The "all things" relate to the new order of things then established on earth (cp. Rev. 21: 5).

"Ruth" Issue of Logos

"I feel I must let you know what pleasure and profit I gained from the September issue of 'Logos.' Never before have I seen the significance of the Book of Ruth as I now grasp it. I know that every verse of Scripture has a lesson for us, but seldom have I seen the hidden treasure without help from others. The manner in which your special issue dealt with the subject of Ruth gave me an inspiration as to how to go about the study of the Bible."

—M.O. (N.Z.)

Vilification has been a well-used implement in the hands of malice. Paul had his share of the experience. He speaks of "evil report and good report" as being alike his experience. Why should we think it strange if we have a taste of the same?

—R.R.

Questions



Answered

WHAT CONSTITUTES THE "PURE LANGUAGE"?

Zephaniah 3: 9 declares: "I will turn to the people a pure language that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent." Does that mean that God will give mankind one language as before the building of Babel? Will Esperanto constitute that language? (E.H., N.Z.).

The confounding of languages at the building of Babel (Gen. 11: 4) irreparably destroyed any hope of unity among the nations, and created a barrier to world peace that man has not been able to bridge. It has led to differences of thought and outlook ever since, and played a profound part in the conflict and disunity among nations.

This is seen even today in the antagonisms that exist between nations speaking different tongues. It is far easier for America and Britain to express their point of view to each other, than it is for Britain and France, or Germany and Russia. Speaking a common language greatly aids in common thought and outlook.

Hebrew will undoubtedly be the official language of the Age to Come, and not the artificial, hybrid concoction that men call Esperanto, the so-called universal language. Hebrew is a Divine language through which Divine ideas are more easily expressed than in any other. To properly "call upon the Name of Yahweh" is to understand the significance of that Hebrew Name. Before men can do that in the fullest extent, they must be educated in its meaning.

When men are united in language, they will more readily find the means of expressing themselves

in such a way as to aid the cause of unity and peace among each other. But they will also be united together by doctrine. The word used by Zephaniah (Heb. saphah) is translated "lip" in Mal. 2: 7; Ps. 31: 18, and in both places relates to the doctrine spoken rather than the language used. The word seems to have the dual significance of both language and doctrine in Zephaniah 3: 9, for as a result of this "pure language" the people serve Yahweh with one consent.

When men speak a common language and believe a common doctrine the foundations for unity and peace will be well and truly laid down.

We experience this in measure even today. In Israel, Hebrew is unifying Jews who flood into the land from all points of the compass, speaking diverse languages, used to different customs, brought up in strange environments. The learning of Hebrew not only overcomes the barriers which thus exist, but give Jews a true sense of national identity, divorcing them from the past, uniting them as one.

In similar manner, the Truth unites those of different outlook and national environment, as they "come out" of every "kindred, tongue, people and nation" (Rev. 5: 9) to become united with one another and with Christ, in Hebrew doctrines if not in the Hebrew language. Such are "made one" in Christ, and the barriers of status and language are destroyed by the Truth believed (Gal. 3: 28).

The same principles will unite all nations when the pure language of Hebrew, and the pure doctrines of Christ, become the common rule of life throughout the world.—E.P.

VOLUME TWENTY SIX

THE LOGOS

Upholding the Purity of Apostolic Doctrine and Practice

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Thoughts for the Times

The World : Fit Only for Destruction

“The world,” said Dr Thomas (“Eureka” vol. 1, p. 303) “is today precisely what it was in the days of the Apostles.” In the first century the world lay in wickedness, and “woe” awaited it. So now the world is hopelessly corrupt, and annihilating judgments are impending. What is the world? Human society—the great mass of men and women around, whose thoughts and ways are antagonistic to the word of divine revelation. In the light of the character of the world and its approaching doom, how vital it is for us to heed Scripture counsel on the subject. “Love not the world” — Keep “unspotted from the world” — “The friendship of the world is enmity with God” — “The world passeth away.” To give the go-by to this counsel is our temptation and danger.

The world in its morals sinks lower and lower. Since the war it has retrograded at such a pace that the Bible student

is justified in concluding that its doom is very near. Men are talking loudly in terms of reproach and scorn of the "goody-goody" ways of the Victorian era (a period most cleanly, compared with the present). The piety of that time they condemn as austere, narrow-minded, and tinged with cant and hypocrisy. They rejoice, too, at the passing of what they style the "abysmal gloom" of the old-fashioned Sunday. The clergy are largely responsible for all this declension. Many of these good-for-nothing ecclesiastics are arguing the innocency of Sunday sports, the ennobling character of the stage, and the harmlessness of a host of other things that would have horrified our grandparents. They say the world has its amusements, and counter-attractions on the world's lines must be introduced into church affairs if religion is to prosper. Under this plea they arrange their "bright and breezy" services, with bands and solo music, and organise for the young whist-drives and smoking concerts. To please their flocks (and themselves) and to wheedle from them their "filthy lucre," they likewise institute bazaars and garden parties, with all imaginable tomfoolery — pierrots, palmists, theatricals. It is Israel's conduct over again. Instead of God, Mammon and Pleasure are worshipped, and their devotees increase more and more as the great day of reckoning draws near. Let Christadelphians open their eyes to the ungodly trend of these last days, and let them take care that they are not swept along by the beguiling and insidious rush.

—A.J.

"Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin"

"In confirmation of the comment from M. H. in the current "Logos" under the heading, 'Weighed in the Balances,' which suggests that the words had relation to weights which measured up to the times of the Gentiles, I direct your attention to the Westminster Dictionary, p. 634, which bears out to a certain extent this thought. Smith says (p. 739) that a talent was 'subdivided into the maneh' (i.e., part, portion or number), a word used in Babylonia, and in the Greek 'mina.' However, he gives 1,200 gerahs to a menah. Westminster states that there was a heavy talent and a heavy shekel, and a light talent and shekel. He gives the Babylonian monah at 60 shekels (the heavy shekel), and the Palestine 'mina' as 50 shekels (the light shekel). He translates Ezekiel 45: 12 as 'The shekel is to be twenty gerahs; five shekels are five, ten shekels are ten, and fifty shekels shall be your maneh.' Moffatt's translation supports this. Thus the idea of M.H. seems well supported, and is worthy of further thought."

, — D.H. (W.A.)

Eureka in the Light of Today

WHEN ARAB HOSTILITY SHALL CEASE

“Let the wilderness and the cities thereof exult, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit; let the inhabitants of the rocky country (Arabia Petraea) sing, Let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory unto Yahweh, and declare His praise in the habitable lands’ (Isa. 42: 11). Now it must be evident to everyone that before the wild, untamed marauders, who inhabit Arabia Deserta, Arabia Petraea, and Paran, Horeb, Sinai, and the tents and villages of the Kedarite Arabs can glorify Yahweh, and rejoice with joy and singing, and become the intelligent, happy and contented population of this newly created Paradise, they must have been subjected to the severe discipline of the sword; to subsequent instruction, as to the true character of the New Power (then) so recently developed in Teman; and made witnesses of the wonderful transformation of their section of Asia from an arid, sandy and rocky wilderness into a well watered park of choice, odoriferous trees and shrubs! And such is the testimony of the prophets.”

“Eureka” vol. 3, p. 599.

The Joy set before Us

Christ is coming and will reign on earth! This is the supreme message of the prophets. Brother Thomas quotes the historian Gibbon to shew that the “ancient and popular doctrine of the millennium” is taught in the Apocalypse. He then demonstrates that this doctrine did not originate in the Apocalypse, but that “it is the burden of the prophets from Moses to Malachi.” This theme he develops further in the “Apocalypse rooted in the Prophets” (“Eur.” vol. 1). Thus “the Name of Yahweh cometh from far, burning in His anger, and the burden thereof is heavy . . . to sift the nations with a sieve of vanity . . . Ye shall have a song and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to go into the mountain of Yahweh to the Rock of Israel” (Isa. 30: 27-29).

Messiah comes to execute judgment and vengeance upon nations, to bring them into subjection to his rule, and to establish his throne upon the ruins of the kingdoms of this world. “When Thy judgments, O Yahweh, are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.”

The first of the nations to feel the power of these Divine judgments, and to receive some measure of instruction in ways of righteousness, will be the Arabs. When the glorified

Body of the Redeemed issues forth from the precincts of Sinai, having been joined to Christ their living Head in the marriage of the Lamb, its first concern is for Israel, about to be inundated by the floods of the latter-day Assyrian (Isa. 8: 7-8; Mic. 5: 5). Israel will experience her final humiliation, so that in her extremity she must turn to Yahweh for succour, and rejoice in the appearing of her long awaited Messiah. As part of the work of that day, the Arabs will first be prepared for the part they are to play. Their traditional hostility must be replaced by a spirit of co-operation, in order that they might extend towards Israel both help and refuge from the effects of the Russian invasion. To that end, after sending Elijah on a mission of restoration to Israel scattered abroad (Mal. 4: 5), the first work of Christ and his saints is the disciplining and instructing of the Arabs, and supervising the transformation that will take place in their land.

The Past Foreshadows the Future

Before the birth of Ishmael, Hagar was told, "he shall dwell in the presence (lit. Before the face) of his brethren" (Gen. 16: 12). This was illustrated in his lifetime when Abraham, at the request of Sarah, and with Divine sanction, sent Ishmael away so that the son of the bondwoman would not be a co-heir with Isaac in the inheritance of Abraham (Gen. 21: 10-14). Later, Abraham bestowed all his possessions upon Isaac, giving gifts to the other sons who had been born to him by Keturah, and sending them away into the east country (Gen. 25: 5-6).

Thus Ishmael died "in the presence of all his brethren" (Gen. 25: 18), that is, in the east country, in the presence of the sons of Keturah.

He had previously dwelt in the wilderness of Paran, but evidently had transferred from there to the east country, for the territory occupied by the Ishmaelites covered all the Arabian Peninsula south and east of Canaan. There they were closely associated with the sons of Keturah, particularly the Midianites (Gen. 37: 28, 36; 39: 1; also Jud. 6: 33; 7: 12; 8: 24).

In conformity with the type, when Christ returns, Ishmael is not to be co-heir with Isaac; he will be driven out of the land eastward, and will dwell in the midst of the Midianites and Cushites in the regions of Sheba and Dadan.*

*From a comparison of Gen. 25: 3 and 1 Chron. 1: 9 it appears that the line of Cush was merged with that of Keturah, perhaps a daughter of Raamah married Jokshan, so that Sheba and Dedan are Arabian tribes descended from Cush and from Abraham.

He is also to be disciplined.

Habakkuk, in vision, saw this (Hab. 3). He describes how the mighty one (Eloah) will ascend from Teman and Mt. Paran, travelling onwards in his might, moving from Sinai in the south towards the sanctuary of Zion, to cleanse and avenge Immanuel's land from the defilement of Gentile oppressors. He saw him smite the rivers (Euphrates and Nile, representative of all Gentile powers) riding upon his chariots of salvation. In the progress of this triumphal advance, he saw the tents of Cushan in affliction, and the curtains of Midian trembling in fright. The Mighty One shall turn his hand against the Arab tribes, and force them to acknowledge his sovereignty, causing them to submit to his instruction, and preparing them as a refuge for Israel in her day of trouble.

This will be the first blow struck at Gentile domination, and the time of trouble it will inaugurate is described as a "day of Midian" (Isa. 9: 4) when Gideon and his three hundred unarmed heroes pursued and destroyed the armies of the Midianites, Ishmaelites and children of the east. The yoke of Midian will be broken forever, the Arabs will be no longer hostile to Israel, but will be forced to extend kindness to the brother whom they have so long despised and tormented (Gen. 21: 9; Gal. 4: 29).

An Amazing Prophecy Predicting a National Miracle

A remarkable prophecy concerning this change of heart on the part of the Arabs, is found in Isaiah 21: 13-15. Combining the A.V. and R.V. renderings, we read: "The oracle concerning Arabia. In the forest at evening shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies of Dedanim. The inhabitants of Teman shall bring water to him that is thirsty; they shall meet with bread him that fled . . . from the grievousness of war."

What a change this suggests from the age-long suspicion and inhospitality of the Arabian "wild ass" man! It is not customary for these desert nomads to meet fugitives and refugees with acts of kindness (cp. Deut. 23: 4), yet here we read of them "at evening," showing such kindness to their former enemies when they flee from the hostile invader of their land.

The use of the word "forest" also implies the regeneration of their land. There are no forests in Arabia, and the fulfilment of the prophecy demands that the fertility of the land must be greatly multiplied to produce the luxuriant growth

thus suggested. Other prophecies clearly show that the Arabian wilderness will be transformed into a paradise in which the desert nomads will lead a settled occupation (i.e. "ye shall lodge") and will be thus in a position to offer generous hospitality to any passers by.

This is confirmed by Isaiah 43: 19-20: "I will make rivers in the desert" . . . "The living things of the plain shall glorify me, swift things and the daughters of voracious ones,* because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to My people, My chosen. This people I have created for Myself; they shall show forth My praise."

The statement, "the living things of the plain," or the Arabs, shall "glorify Me," implies the subjugation of the freebooters of the Arabian desert, and its fertilisation which will make its people glorify the conqueror, and sing for "joy" ("Eureka" vol. 3, p. 598). But the primary reason for this transformation of land and people is to provide "drink for My people, My chosen," that is, for Israel.

Isaiah continues to accumulate evidence to the coming regeneration of this present arid land and its people (see Ch. 35: 1-2; 41: 18-20; 42: 11-13). He speaks of how the desolate regions shall become like the glory of Lebanon, clothed with myrtle, fir, cedar and oil trees, of how the happy and contented population of this newly-created paradise will sing and rejoice together, glorifying Yahweh and ascribing praise and honour to His name.

This national miracle will silence forever the claims of Islam, and will transform the hearts of its people.

In a recently published book entitled: "Islam in Modern History," the writer declares:

"Islam today has behind it some thirteen centuries of history. No one knows the future; yet a Muslim might presumably look forward to another thirteen centuries still to come . . . In the uncertain flux of man's mundane development, and especially now amid the radical transformation already begun in all man's social forms, prophecy is precarious. Yet one prediction would seem not rash: that the history of the next century will for all of us be different. Life on our planet is full of rapid novelty: problems, possibilities, dreams and threats are new . . . Something is being brought to birth. . . ."

The prophets of God show that Islam cannot look ahead to thirteen centuries of history. They reveal that in this age of change, to which this quotation gives testimony,

*Dr. Thomas' translation. The wild Arabs are figuratively styled "dragons" and "ostriches" in the Authorised Version which he renders: "living things of the plain," "the daughters of voracious ones."

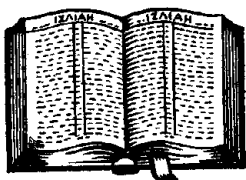
greater changes than man can imagine face all nations. We live in a time when the foundation of great changes to come is being laid; the secret of the Divine purpose has been whispered in our ears; and we are privileged that we can look out upon a troubled world with the knowledge that we know what it is all about.

With the establishment of the kingdom in all its glory, the Arab peoples will be found, having discarded the Islam superstition and embraced the hope of Israel. They are mentioned among those whose wealth will be converted to Zion (Isa. 60: 5-6, 11; 1 Kings 10: 15), whose sacrifices and offerings will be presented at the altar in Jerusalem to ascend as an acceptable aroma to Yahweh (Isa. 60: 7). In that day, Yahweh's name will be great in all parts of the earth, and in every place, incense and a pure offering shall be made unto Him (Mal. 1: 11).

A glorious and wonderful future thus opens out for the Arabs, the descendants of Abraham. They will dwell in their regenerated land, adjacent to the Land of the Covenant, "before the face of their brethren." They will be thus treated "because they are the children of Abraham" (Gen. 17: 20; 21: 13). Because Abraham was faithful, therefore his descendants will be blessed. How much greater will be the blessing that shall accrue to those who are the children of Abraham by faith (Gal. 3: 7, 9; Rom. 4: 13; Jno. 8: 39)?

Meanwhile, Middle-East hatred between Jew and Arab is a problem that troubles the world, and threatens to plunge humanity into war. Statesmen search for a solution in vain, for there is none apart from that which the Word reveals. Christ, the "Prince of Peace," is alone capable of solving this problem by the omniscient wisdom and omnipotent power that he possesses. Until he comes to weld men together in one great hope, to destroy the religions and superstitions of man that breed only hatred and evil, the world will seek in vain for solutions to the problems that trouble it. In Mount Zion, he shall "destroy the covering that is cast over all nations, and the vail spread over all people," for "wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of his time" (Isa. 25: 7; 33: 6).

—F. RUSSELL (S.A.)



Things New and Old

No. 13—

“Deliver Us From Evil”

In many ways, this phrase of the prayer is similar to the one we considered last month.

The emphasis changes, however, from considering how to resist the wiles of the devil and how to respond to trial, to more direct petitions about actual troublesome situations that face us. The asking will involve introspection, for in some measure we bring our troubles upon ourselves — but, in the main, this prayer is the child placing his hand in his Father's, and saying “Lead Thou me; without Thee I shall fall.” It is the child fearing what lies ahead, and in loving trust reminding the Father of promises He has made, such as, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” To plead such promises with the Father is to grow in conviction that they are true and sure.

The Scriptures are too numerous on this subject to do more than touch the fringe of them. The Psalms especially abound.

Evil is the inevitable corollary of sin, thus the creature is made subject to vanity. What do we need delivering from? From sin and death. This is something for ultimate deliverance, though it depends on things that happen now. But even now there can be persecution, strife, scheming of others, extreme poverty, business disasters, fire, flood, earthquake, burglars, rebellious children, family dissension, ecclesial discord, unbearable employers, tedious work, drab surroundings, serious physical illness, unjust accusation, undeserved punishment, mischievous gossip, mental illness, sudden accidents, unfaithful friends or partners, violence, bombs, failing sight or hearing, overwhelming fatigue, overwork, inconsiderate husbands, ambitious wives, nagging husbands or wives, isolation, no privacy, no leisure, the acid tongue, friendlessness, worldly surroundings . . . we all at some time in life experience some of these evils; when you read the whole list and realise that it could be doubled, it is somewhat

daunting. How wonderful that we can say at night: "I will both lay me down in peace and sleep: for, Thou, Yahweh, only makest me to dwell in safety" (Ps. 4: 8).

How remarkable! He sitteth on the circle of the earth; before Him the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers, and the nations as the drop of a bucket; they are counted to Him less than nothing, and vanity (Isa. 40)! Yet He is nigh unto all them that call upon Him in truth (Ps. 145: 18). He instructs His angels to minister unto him that are heirs of salvation: "The angel of Yahweh encamps round about them that fear Him and delivereth them." "This poor man cried, and Yahweh heard him and delivered him out of all his troubles" (Ps. 34).

"All things work together for good"

Will God really deliver us from all our troubles? He says He will. Through the Apostle He declares that "all things work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to His purpose." This means, of course, that the ultimate issue of all things will be good; that all experiences, good and ill, will knit together into a pattern — if we let them — which will be to our eternal benefit. Therefore the deliverance for which we pray is from ultimate evil — not from every incidental evil on the way to the Kingdom. Yet, in a sense, if we pray for deliverance from ultimate evil, it does mean that we are asking God to control each experience of evil so that we may emerge unscathed from the point of view of eternal things; and we ask knowing that He will perform.

"I will be a God unto thee"

Knowing His promises, we are assured that evil can do us no real harm when like Ruth we have come to trust under the wings of Yahweh Elohim of Israel. One of the key promises to Abraham — one which receives insufficient attention — is: "I will establish My covenant . . . to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." Repeatedly throughout the Scriptures this phrase rings out: "They shall be My people, and I will be their God." "We may be troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed" (2 Cor. 4: 8-9). The knowledge that we lean upon the Rock of Israel should give us in each trouble as it comes, a serenity that robs it of its sting, so that, like Paul, we can say: "I have learnt in whatsoever state I am to be therewith content." It is in the moment of prayer: "Deliver us from evil," that we

achieve the peak of such content, the peace that passeth understanding. Then the trouble may be faced as something not evil but for ultimate good — it has robbed us of fleshly confidence, and led us to realise that only in God have we any hope. Thus, as we have so often seen, prayer brings an immediate answer. The poverty may be none less real, the employer no more pleasant, the surroundings no less drab, the illness no less serious, the acid tongue no softer, the human relationships we mentioned no smoother — and yet we have been delivered from evil. The very mention of these matters in prayer has weakened their power to harm.

This is not to say that God does not actually deliver us from an evil situation when He sees that we have had enough; and there are certain minimum conditions He will not normally suffer us to fall below — for example, David said: "I have been young and now I am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (Ps. 37: 25).

"Thou art with me"

The words of the 23rd Psalm are perhaps blunted by over-familiarity — but try to read them as if for the first time, and find that same assurance of protection and deliverance from evil: "Yahweh is my shepherd; I shall not want. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me."

What unspeakable honour — a literal truth — "Yahweh is with us," if, in spite of our failures, we truly seek Him — with us all the time, not only at the major crises of life. He promised Joshua, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Josh. 1: 5), and Paul is inspired to say that the promise is to all who share Joshua's faith, so that we may boldly say: "Yahweh is my Helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb. 13: 5-6; Ps. 118: 6). A knowledge and experience of good and evil is the process by which God makes man in His likeness (Gen. 1: 26); the Potter is shaping the clay in the little day by day things, as well as at the major turning points.

Joseph

However He does not always deliver at once. It would not be for our good if He did. How Joseph cried to be delivered from evil as envious brothers lowered him into the hope-destroying pit; and how desolating the experience which tore him from his father's bosom to slavery in Egypt. With what tears he would have besought the God of his father Jacob,

But on into Egypt he went, and God moderated the evil, and tempered its blasts by promotion in the house of Poti-phar. Then again disaster struck and evil was the reward for righteousness — with Joseph eating out his heart in prison. Here, again, some alleviation was found in the responsible work he was given to do instead of a futile dungeon. Each time the record says something like: "Yahweh was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper" (Gen. 39: 23). Of course Joseph had to do his part, and labour for his masters "as unto the Lord." While he waited two long years after the butler's dream it would not have seemed as though "Yahweh was with him." Sorrow upon sorrow had overtaken him, and he seemed forsaken, and then — overnight — he was made second in the kingdom.

We read the story in a short time — even if we reflect on it with help from Brother Robert Roberts in that loveliest of his works: "The Ways of Providence." We are apt to forget that more than 20 years elapsed between the day he was sold into slavery, and the day he saw his father's face once more. Yet God never left him. His prayer to be delivered from evil was answered; and he learnt to understand the meaning of all his vicissitudes: "God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance" (Gen. 45: 7).

In the uttering of the prayer: "Deliver us from evil," I find much help in trying to see circumstances in the lives of such as Joseph that bear some slight resemblance to my own troubles and fears.

David

Take David. Consider all the ups and downs of his life. Share his spirit. He saw God's hand in the little things — in the protection of his sheep from the lion and bear; and also in the big things — even to the slaying of the giant who defied the armies of the living God. Chased from rock to rock by the evil spirit of an insane King, he knew that God was counting his wanderings, putting his tears into His bottle, and writing them down in His book (Ps. 56: 8). He had his moments of weakness. Who would not have done? Twice he went to the land of the Philistines, and he who puts himself among the Philistines cannot hope to come out entirely unscathed. It is the failures of God's great men that help us to feel confidence that God can love us as he loved them. Deliverance from Saul did not exist in Philistia — but even from situations brought upon him by his own misjudgments, Yah-

weh delivered David. The lowest ebb of his fortunes was when the Amalekites invaded Ziklag and carried captive the families of David and his followers. Mourning and counsels of despair — there was talk even of stoning David — but the real son of God that he was, "David encouraged himself in the Lord his God" (1 Sam. 30: 6). We all know the sequel: a throne in a matter of days.

Later his own folly brought judgment on him — yet as he fled from Absalom, the real David whom God loved could say: "Truly my soul waiteth upon God; from Him cometh my salvation; He is my defence, I shall not be greatly moved" (Ps. 62). And as for Shimei's curse: "It may be that Yahweh will look upon my affliction and requite me good for his cursing this day" (2 Sam. 16: 12). The great feature of David's life was "in all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3: 6). He forgot a few times, but he rose again. So may we.

The Struggle Upward

Let us never feel we are not good enough to beseech God's deliverance. If with all our hearts we truly seek Him, He will be found of us, in spite of our follies and weaknesses. The life in Christ is a struggle upwards towards his image, not a triumphal march to glory. But we are never alone in the struggle, and this prayer, "Deliver us from evil," will ever keep this fact in mind, leading us into fruitful reflection upon the consoling thought that "God's hand is not shortened that it cannot save."

—E. WILLE, Eng.

Inspired to search deeper

Sirs: I have hereto attached filled-up clippings and my request for the publications^s respectively stated therein.

The few pamphlets which you have sent me have inspired me more to learn about the "Herald of the Coming Age." I, therefore, most sincerely request that you furnish me complete literature about this publication besides those described in the clippings, so that I will have a logical and complete knowledge of your views from the beginning to the end.

I trust you will not deny me who am interested in learning the truth about the Bible.

Sincerely yours: A. Ensoy (Philippines).

(Those readers who have generously supported the Gospel Proclamation efforts — see inside back cover — will see some of the fruits of their assistance in such letters as the above. We can sow and water — but God gives the increase . . . Editor.)

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

The Future Glory
Foreshadowed in the Past

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready . . . Blessed are they which are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb" (Rev. 19: 7, 9).



There is no more inspiring message in the Scriptures than that contained in the words quoted above. The phrase, "marriage supper of the Lamb," conjures up the hopes and expectations of all saints. It speaks of the final and complete union between the Lord Jesus Christ and his friends, apocalyptically styled "the Lamb's wife," "the bride."

The foundation for the stimulating picture thus presented is drawn from the events narrated in Genesis. In the formation of Eve, the divine principles of the true marriage union is firmly established, so that our subject draws closely together as one, the first and the last books of the Bible. The final intention of Yahweh is prefigured in Genesis, and in the glorious vision of Revelation we see the consummation.

The first man, having been formed of the dust of the ground, and energised into a "living creature" (Gen. 2: 7) by the spirit of Yahweh Elohim, was without an associate of the same "image and likeness." The Spirit records that this was "not good" (v. 18); and it was resolved that a consort for Adam was a vital necessity in completing the "very good" state of Edenic creation.

"And Yahweh Elohim said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help fit for him" (Gen. 2: 18—Dr. Thomas trans.). Eve was not designed as a "help meet" for Adam, as the A.V. implies, but rather a suitable associate, a necessary part of the man's existence, one who was "fit" to join him in his worship of the One Who had given them both "life and breath." Adam and Eve were intended to be a balanced combination, being drawn together by mutual feelings, and each assisting the other in their worship of the Deity "in spirit and in truth."

In this incident, we have a graphic foreshadowing of the coming figurative marriage between Christ (the last Adam—1 Cor. 15: 45), and the Ecclesia (the antitypical Eve—2 Cor.

11:2). Paul drew a powerful lesson from this incident of the past. He wrote: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve . . . so your minds should be corrupted" (2 Cor. 11: 3). In the previous verse, he likens the Ecclesia to a "chaste virgin espoused" to an husband.

The union between Adam and Eve, therefore, was designed to illustrate the complete and harmonious existence that should exist between Christ and his Ecclesia. Paul again makes reference to this in Ephesians 5:

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Ecclesia; and he is the saviour of the body. As the Ecclesia is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands love your wives, as Christ loved the Ecclesia, and gave himself for it . . . For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Ecclesia . . . (vv. 22-33).

But whilst today it can be said that the saints are "of his flesh and of his bones" in the sense of lofty spiritual union, the true significance of these words will find their complete fulfilment when the Bride is more literally so—in being clothed upon with Divine nature. There will then exist a union and a compatibility, more nearly answering to that which must have existed between Adam and Eve in Eden. This glorious state of physical perfection is reserved for those who are found worthy to be arrayed in "fine linen pure and white."

The creation of Eve brought discomfort and pain to Adam. As the rib was taken from his side, and from it Eve was built up, so the bride of the Lord Jesus figuratively issued forth out of his side, when the spear of the Roman soldier pierced his body. His death brought to an end a life of sacrifice; for his whole life was a delivering over of the will of the flesh to the obedience of the Divine will. The Scriptures require that those who aspire to marriage with the Lamb must follow the pattern of their bridegroom by pouring out the life of the flesh during the period of their fleshly existence (Gal. 5: 24). And as with the Lord Jesus Christ, so it must be with his bride; the final outpouring of the flesh cannot be completed until the life of the flesh has ceased. This is a principle of vital importance. Our life of sacrifice must not end until it is claimed by death, or we are called to the judgment seat. How striking then, is the similarity

between the sacrificial missions of both the bridegroom and his bride.

Sarah

The wives of the three patriarchs provide distinctive types of the Lamb's bride. A few moments' thought devoted to these great women of faith will assist us toward a greater understanding of the "types and shadows" that are recorded "for our learning . . . that we might have hope," as well as revealing what the Lamb requires in his bride.

PERFECT MARRIAGE

Complete mutual love and sympathy existed between Adam and Eve, for they were not only "one flesh" by marriage, but also by creation, for Eve was formed out of Adam by the action of a common parent. They would thus both inherit common aspirations and ideals. No other marriage has been quite like that one. The exact counterpart is found in the marriage of the Lamb and his Bride for in their case also, the one has been formed out of the other by the action of a common spiritual Parent . . . Editor.

The names of Abram and Sarai were changed when the covenant was sealed with the rite of circumcision. Significantly, both names were changed by the addition of but one letter, the fifth (H), which is the number of "grace" and "restoration." This letter is also common to the Divine Name (YHWH) and the title "Elohim."

Sarai ("my princess") became Sarah ("princess"). This subtle change altered Sarah's spiritual status and purpose. Instead of being Abraham's personal and exclusive property ("my"), she became an individual symbol for the "generation of them that seek Yahweh" (Ps. 24: 6). The symbolic title of Princess for the bride of Christ is appropriate; it expresses both her femininity and her royalty (1 Pet. 2: 9; Rev. 5: 10). It is the proper title for the bride of him who is to be known as Prince in the days of the restored Kingdom (Ezek. 45: 7).

Sarah remained barren during the time she dwelt with Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees. This is true also of the Lamb's wife. Like Sarah she must come out of Babylon, and become a Hebrew (a "cross-over") before she can become fruitful. We note, however, that even after coming out of Babylon, Sarah required Divine help before she could bear a child (Gen. 21: 1-2). Similarly, Christ's bride will receive

help from on high. The Spirit will be poured out upon her, and the union of the Lamb and his wife, will result in the "little sister" (Songs 8), the children of the Kingdom who will be "accounted worthy" to receive eternal life at the end of the millennium. Then shall the Prince see the fulfillment of Isaiah's glorious prophecy: "He shall see his seed" (Isa. 53: 10). This is the avowed purpose of Yahweh with Sarah, personally and typically: "I will bless her, and she shall become nations" (Gen. 17: 16, A.V.mg.).

—JOHN ULLMAN (W.A.)

(Further Types of the Bride will be considered next issue).

The Doctrine of God Manifestation

We are having an introductory study of the doctrine of God-manifestation, and have been again impressed with the depth and beauty of this subject. We have our problems, as you may well imagine, but some interesting facts emerge. For example, in seeking to explain the statement of Isaiah 45: 21: "There is no Elohim besides me (El)," it was found that the word "beside" twice occurring in the verse, is translated from two different words, which would make the verse read, "There is no Elohim apart from Me; a just El and a Saviour, none beside Me."

John in Patmos was restrained from falling down before an angel (one of the Elohim — Rev. 22: 8-9), and Manoah was directed to offer his gift to Yahweh, and not to the angel (Jud. 13: 16). Yet Psalm 144: 9; 145: 1 together with other references, exhort us to praise and worship Elohim. Is the only explanation to say that these verses refer to the Father alone, who manifests Himself (His glory and attributes) through Elohim? If so, when worship and praise is the theme of the inspired writer, why are not the terms El or Yahweh used?

C.H. (N.S.W.)

(When "Elohim" is applied to the great Increate it reveals Him in a certain light — in multitudinous manifestation; whereas El and Yahweh reveal Him as the First Cause of creation, and the great Covenant Maker, respectively. There are other titles such as El Shaddai, the Father, and so forth, which reveal different aspects of his manifestation. The Scriptures use these differing Names and Titles to bring unto his sons the variety of ways in which He has revealed Himself unto men . . . Editor).

The students of the Word, who bring all things to the law and the testimony, are alone able to distinguish that which is "an odour of life ending in life" from "the saviour of death ending in death" (2 Cor. 2: 15-17). They receive nothing upon authority; but search the Scriptures for themselves, and therefore believe.

—J. THOMAS.

The Supposed Pre-existence of Christ

JOHN 1: 1-14

(Cont. from p. 293)

"A Man Sent from God"—v. 6

This description of John is both interesting and suggestive. He was a man with a mission, pre-named before birth. Of him, of Jeremiah, of others, and of the Lord it can be said with equal meaning:

"Before I formed thee, I knew thee; and before that thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jer. 1: 5).

Jeremiah, like John, was thus known, named, sanctified, ordained and sent unto the nations before he was born!

If the language of Jeremiah 1: 5 was used to describe the Lord Jesus, pre-existent theorists would rush in to quote them in support of their idea.

But nobody would be so foolish as to suggest that Jeremiah pre-existed, or that John literally descended out of heaven!

It shows that we must exercise wisdom and discretion when seeking the true meaning of Scripture, and not rush in with preconceived ideas, bending and twisting the Word to do service to such.

Similar words to those of Jeremiah 1: 5, are used in relation to the Lord:

"Yahweh" said unto ME: Thou art My servant, in whom I will be glorified . . . Yahweh formed ME from the womb to be His servant to bring Jacob again to Him" (Isa. 49: 3, 5).

Who is the person thus speaking? Who is the "Me" of these verses? Is it the pre-existent Christ, or the Spirit, the Logos (Word or Declaration) speaking through the prophet?

Undoubtedly the latter, for the whole statement is set in the past tense. The birth has taken place in the terms of the prophet's words, and the "Me" is one miraculously born to perform Yahweh's bidding as His servant.

Though couched in the past tense, some seven hundred years had to pass before the prophecy was fulfilled.

The Scriptures reveal that God's foreknowledge is infinite: "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15: 18).

The Scriptures also show that He is omnipotent: whatever He decides should be, will be. "He speaks, and it is done," (Ps. 33: 9), therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are called upon to "stand in awe of Him" (v. 8).

Because of this, He is able to use a different style of language from that of mere mortals. "If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that" is the language of mortals (James 4: 15).

But there is no need of Deity speaking in that fashion. He can use the language of absolute certainty in speaking of things yet to be accomplished by Him in the future.

He can, and does, use the future tense for things that are yet to happen. He speaks as though Abraham is living, because it is His intention of bringing him again from the grave, and all such "live unto Him" (Luke 20: 37-38). As Paul observes: "He speaks of things that be not as though they are" (Rom. 4: 17).

Mortals reason upon these utterances of an Omniscient and Omnipotent Creator from their limited human standpoint, and thereby mistake what He intends to teach. In their lubrications they "limit the Holy One of Israel," they bring Him down to the level of mere man, and read these future intentions of God couched in the present tense as though they have been already accomplished. Their theories destroy the beauty of the Divine revelation. They force them to teach that Christ existed before he was born. This drives them into an impossible position. What happened to the personality, the pre-existent being of the Lord, his divine nature when (according to their theories) he assumed the status of a human 1900 years ago? They are forced to teach that when he became a baby, he lost all his knowledge, personality, and identity with his previous self, and had to learn it all again. Scripture teaches that the Lord "increased in wisdom and in favour with God" (Luke 2: 52), but how would this be possible if he pre-existed? Did he lose all favour with God when he became a baby?

Thus from any reasonable, logical standpoint, an impossible theory is developed because a fundamental principle of Divine revelation is not understood. That principle is that God can and does speak of things that be not as though they are.

If it be asked, How can we determine when such a principle of interpretation should be used in any individual case? the verse we have cited above from Jeremiah 1: 5 provides sufficient illustration.

Here God says that He knew Jeremiah before he was born, and sent him as prophet to the nations.

Was that literally true?

Did Jeremiah pre-exist?

Is there any trouble in ascertaining the exact meaning of that reference?

Why do we find no difficulty in properly understanding that passage, and yet speak of the pre-existence of Christ when we come upon similar statements made in regard to him?

The answer is not far to seek; it is because of the theory of his supposed pre-existence.

Christ was foreordained before the foundation of the world it is true (1 Pet. 1: 20), but so also were his followers (1 Pet. 1: 2—same word in the Greek).

Christ had glory conferred upon him before the world was (John 17: 5), so also have his followers (Rom. 8: 29; 9: 23).

Christ was sent from God; so also was John Baptist.

Yet when some read these statements concerning the Lord they must needs give a different explanation to them than when they read similar statements concerning others. Thus there is developed the idea of the so-called pre-existence theory.

John was a man sent from God. This does not mean that he once lived in heaven, and was sent from heaven to earth; it means that he was sent forth with Divine authority on a mission of mercy. His name was Divinely given him, and was a suitable caption for the purpose God had with him. John means: "Yah hath been gracious." He went forth to prepare

the minds of the people for Yashua (Gr. Jesus) which signifies: "Yah's salvation." Combined, the two names taught: "Yah hath been gracious, and Yah will save!"

"He was not that Light" — v. 8

He witnessed to Light as a forerunner of THE Light.

He, himself, was a "burning and a shining light" (John 5: 35) illuminating the darkness of Judea, but he was not "that light (which was destined to appear) though he was sent to bear witness of that light."

Though the A.V. styles John a "light" (Jhn. 5: 35), the word in the Greek is different to that contained in the verse before us. In John 1 the word is "phos" and signifies "light" such as the light of the sun; in John 5: 35 the word is "luchnos" and signifies a mere hand-lamp.

The "light" referred to in John 1: 8 is obviously not Jesus because John never realised at that stage that his cousin was the Messiah. He confessed to this later himself, saying: "I knew him not" (Jhn. 1: 31). It was after the Lord's Messiahship had been publicly proclaimed at his baptism that John realised the exalted status of his relative, and declared: "Behold the Lamb of God."

How, then, did John bear witness to the light?

He did so by drawing the attention of Jews to the fact that the manifestation of the Saviour, promised so long in the Logos or Declaration of God from the beginning, was now at hand. He was not the Messiah but he testified that the Messiah was about to come. In that way he "bear witness of that Light." His was the final voice of the many that had been raised "from the beginning" testifying to this great fact.

The Authorised Version has printed the word "Light" with a capital initial to distinguish it from the light of v. 4. It is quite unwarranted in doing so. The word is not so distinguished in the original. John was sent to proclaim the coming of the Messiah without knowing who the Messiah was. But if the Lord pre-existed, would not John have known it? How then could he have said: "I knew him not"? (v. 31).

The fact is that John did not know of a pre-existent Christ, and the theory which forces this idea upon his utterances, and the wording of John 1 absolutely destroys the beauty of the Divine revelation of God manifestation in a son.

—H.P.M.

An Exhortation from England

“Let No Man Take Thy Crown”

“Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated. And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.”

—Dan. 3: 19-20.

This was a most critical time in the lives of three of God's children. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were Jews who had been led captive into the land of the Chaldeans by Nebuchadnezzar, and were striving to remain faithful to Yahweh, in the midst of the paganism of Babylon. When Nebuchadnezzar, the dictator, erected an image and decreed that all should fall down and worship it, they refused. “Be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up” (v. 18). Even the threat of the burning fiery furnace, did not deter these faithful men from doing that which they knew was right. They trusted in Yahweh. “Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.” (v. 17).

How their calmness and confidence in God must have infuriated Nebuchadnezzar! How jealous he must have been of the God of the Hebrews, who commanded allegiance such as this! How humiliated he must have felt, when, as he peered through the flames which had brought death to the soldiers who threw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the furnace, he saw them walking harmless in the midst of the fire . . . their bonds removed . . . their clothes intact . . . and with them an angel of the Most High!

Their faith had delivered them from what seemed certain death. By this miraculous incident, Nebuchadnezzar was brought to realise, that the God of the Hebrews was far superior to any of the gods of Babylon. “There is no other God that can deliver after this sort” (v. 29). A lesson which, unfortunately, he soon forgot.

God's Saints in a Strange Land

In Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, are represented the saints of the Most High down the ages. They were strangers in a strange land, striving to serve God faithfully and well in the midst of the attractions of Babylon. Their minds would often wander to the land which Yahweh had promised to their race, and to Jerusalem their city. We likewise, are strangers. Our Babylon is the World, from whose attractions we must strive to remain separate. Our mind should ever wander to the "city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God." For us to resist the attractions of the world, often means that we suffer tribulation — as the furnace of affliction followed the refusal of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, to worship Babylon's image. But their deliverance shows, that if we are prepared to stand apart from the world, and suffer joyfully the affliction that this may entail, then we too, shall be delivered, and life in a fuller sense than that given to Daniel's friends will be ours. Even their promotion to a position of honour by Nebuchadnezzar after their deliverance, has a personal message for us. It speaks of the positions which God's faithful will occupy as "kings and priests on the earth" in the future.

Trial Before Victory

The events of Daniel chapter 3 mean a great deal to us. They teach us to see our life in the Truth as a **trial** which has been set. They speak to us of **affliction** which must be endured. They tell of **life** which will be given to those who succeed. "Blessed is the man who endured trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him." (James 1: 12 RSV). The crown of which James speaks, is not the crown which a king wears. It is a "stephanos" — a wreath which was given to the successful competitor in the games of the day. Paul similarly likens this to our walk in the Truth. "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? so run that ye may obtain . . . Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." (1 Cor. 9: 24-25).

The Athlete

We are thus exhorted to think of ourselves as athletes; and a very good exercise it is, for it makes us realise how much God requires of us. Consider an athlete who is to run

in a marathon race — a real test of endurance. Think of the hours of consistent training. Think of the self control he must exercise, both during the training, and the race. Think of the intense, nervous anticipation of the day of the race. Think of the hours spent in planning exactly how the race is to be run — what points in the course are in his favour — what are the disadvantages — how they can be overcome. Think of the effort, the sweat, the agony of the race. All this, he does for a corruptible crown. Yet compare his preparation, with our own feeble efforts in the race of life, and remember, that **we are running for an incorruptible crown!** The Apostle Paul voices a powerful exhortation: “**PRESS** toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God” (Phil. 3: 14).

The End of the Race Draws Near

We are running our race in times unparalleled in wickedness, except by the days preceding the flood. In those days men gave their whole attention to the things offered by the world. They stopped running; the effort was too much for them; it was easier to forget God, and to spend their whole time eating, drinking, marrying, building, and planting. When the flood came, it was too late!

Our times are similar. It is so easy, in these days of leisure and luxury, to drift with the world — to relax our efforts — and to spend our time pandering to the flesh. But the days of this age are rapidly drawing to a close. When Jesus comes he will find that many who have started in the race, have stopped running; it will be too late then, to start afresh. It would be sheer madness for an athlete, intent on winning a race, to tie lead weights to his hands and feet. Yet the more we sport with the world, the more weight we add to ourselves, and the slower we run in the race for life.

In Hebrews 12, the apostle wrote to an ecclesia, which so early in the history of Christianity, was getting tired of running. Their hands were heavy; the knees feeble; they had forgotten that the obstacles which they met during the race, constituted chastening from God, to keep, and re-direct them on the way of life. “Wherefore,” Paul wrote to them, “seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside **every weight**, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Heb. 12: 1-2).

Strength to Run

In the verse quoted above, we are exhorted by Paul, to fix our eyes on Jesus, who has endured, and has received the crown of life. His trials, his shame, and his agony are to be constantly before us. His faithfulness is to be our guide, and we are to meditate daily upon the priceless words which fell from his lips. We are to see him in vision, crowned with glory and honour, waiting at God's right hand for the command to return and bring mankind under his control.

The Lord is the only one who has run the whole way without stopping, slowing down, stumbling, or falling. The method of his success is constantly revealed in the record of his life. His preparation for the race can be seen in two forms: his constant meditation on the written Word (Matt. 4: 4), and his continual approach to his Father, in prayer (Matt. 26: 38. Luke 22: 41). As such, he is our example. "Consider him," the apostle has told us, "lest ye be weary and faint in your minds." If we wish to receive the victor's crown, we must follow the attitude of the Lord. We must prepare ourselves through the **Word of Truth**, and seek strength from

Work in the Philippines

Reference has been made in "Logos" to the labours of brethren Davis and Herman in the Philippines; it is also the hope of the Editor to visit the Philippines in the course of his present tour, and co-operate with these brethren in the work of the Truth. It seems that there is an opening there for such labours. Here is a typical letter received from an interested friend who receives the periodical "Herald of the Coming Age."

"Sir: Thank you very much for sending me various kinds of religious magazines and reading materials which expound very clearly and authoritatively the truth about God. My friends and I are very jubilant over your great benevolence in keeping us informed of God's ways. Here are some questions which many Christians in this country cannot clearout(?).

"Question: Is it possible that a man through repentance and prayer to God can be saved even though he was unbeliever and unbaptised like the malefactor who was nailed on the cross side by side with Christ? (Luke 23: 42-43). Christ put away sin, etc. (Heb. 9: 25). Christ died for our sin (1 Cor. 15: 3).

"Question: Is a person already saved when he believes and is baptised? Is he not accountable of his conduct from the date of his baptism till he dies?

"Thank you very much for any enlightenment you will give regarding those problems.

"May God be with us now and forever.

"Yours sincerely: Abdon P. Vafior."

our Heavenly Father in prayer. These two things are essential; but there can be no denying that they are sadly neglected today.

This is an age of indifference to spiritual things. Nominal Christian communities today, may have a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof. This spirit of indifference and apathy, is gradually and imperceptively, eating its way into our midst. The reason for this is not hard to find. As far as the necessities of life are concerned, we lack nothing; and most of us have more than is good for us. There is in this country today no such thing as poverty. How often, when Israel of old were enjoying peace and prosperity, did they leave off serving God, and turn to idols! Our circumstances can tend to lead us, like Israel, away from God. Let us therefore, beware! To neglect the Word of God and the privilege of prayer, places us in the position of the ecclesia which said, "I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." By their actions, the Laodiceans implied that they did not need God's help, not realising that in God's sight they were "wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked."

What was the remedy? They were, firstly, to buy of him "gold tried in the fire, that they might be rich." Gold speaks of a tried faith. Therefore, they were to be more faithful in their actions. Secondly, they were to concentrate on buying "white raiment, that they might be clothed." By their actions they had rejected Jesus and the work which he had done. Now they must confess their unworthiness, and take refuge in the garment of righteousness which Jesus had made available. Finally, they were told to "anoint their eyes with eyesalve that they might see." The eyesalve of God's Word had been sadly neglected in Laodicea. Its application, even at this late stage of the ecclesia's existence, could have saved them.

The exhortation to the Laodicean ecclesia, provides divine counsel for the brethren and sisters in this modern age. It reminds us that the way along which we are running is narrow; that the gate at the end of the course is straight; that we must be continually on our guard against the insidiousness of our environment.

Let us heed the note of urgency, much needed in these last days:

"Behold I come quickly; hold fast that which thou hast, THAT NO MAN TAKE THY CROWN."

—A. JOHN ALLFREE, England.

For Private Study



NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE

An itemised Exposition of the Book of Revelation, based on
"Eureka" and designed for home study and for Bible marking.

(Continued from page 311)

REVELATION, CHAPTER 5

The Seven-Sealed Scroll

In this chapter, John is given a seven-sealed scroll which, when unsealed, reveals the course of future events in relation to the purpose of Yahweh. This scroll, in turn, reveals seven angels whose trumpet blasts summon the nations to pour out judgments on the Roman Empire (Rev. 8: 1-2), and the final trumpet sound introduces the seven vials which pour out the Divine wrath upon a blasphemous world leading to the establishment of the Kingdom (Rev. 11: 14; 16: 1).

VERSE 1

"In the right hand of him that sat on the throne" — This links the symbolism of this chapter with the vision of Ch. 4. The "one on the throne" is the Lord Jesus. The vision of ch. 4 reveals his glory. The prophecies recorded on the seven-sealed scroll set out the long history of violence and wickedness which precedes the glory to be ultimately revealed. Thus we have here a prophetic principle that is frequently used in the revelations of Deity—namely, the setting forth first of the final purpose of Yahweh. An example of this is found in Isaiah 2, where first the final glory is given (vv. 1-4), and afterwards the means whereby this will be accomplished (vv. 11-22). Another example is found in Revelation 11, for in v. 15 the final picture is given, and, again, in v. 18, the means whereby it shall be attained. We are thus taught by this principle to ever set before us the grand hope of our calling.

This book is found in the "right-hand" of Christ, because it is he who is directing the course of events (1 Pet. 3: 22), and they will be found to reflect to his glory ultimately.

"Within and on the backside" — Lit. "within and on the outside." The writing on the scroll concerns events ecclesially and politically, things relating to the purpose of God both "within and without" the One Body of Christ (cp. 2 Cor. 5: 7).

"Sealed with seven seals" — "Seven" is the number of completeness. This scroll is completely sealed against human knowledge as, indeed, the future is apart from Divine revelation (cp. Isa. 29: 11).

VERSE 2

"Strong" — Despite his power he could not unloose the seals (cp. Mark 13: 32).

"Loud voice" — There was an urgency in the desire of further knowledge of Yahweh's purpose (cp. 1 Pet. 1: 12).

"Who is worthy to loose the seals" — Daniel was given certain information, but also told that the book was sealed until the end (Dan. 12: 4-8). The Apocalypse given at the end of Jewish times (cp. Heb. 1: 1) revealed in symbol what will be plainly revealed in the earth at the end of Gentile times (Hab. 2: 3).

VERSE 3

"No man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth" — No one living, dead, or angelic, could unloose the seal. It required the perfect sacrifice of one coming in sinful flesh to accomplish this. Meanwhile there remained the anxious desire of all true servants of Deity to discover His future purpose.

VERSE 4

"I wept much" — This shows how keenly John felt his ignorance of the Divine purpose. He lived for the future, not the present, and desired to have a spiritual vision that could take him into the glory to be revealed. This anxious desire for knowledge of the Divine will and purpose characterises all those who "hunger and thirst" for knowledge. See Rev. 6: 10; 1 Pet. 1: 10; Dan. 12: 10; Hab. 1: 2.

VERSE 5

"The Root of David" — Christ is both "root and offspring of David" (Rev. 22: 16). As "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3: 16) he is the root of David, and as the Son of Mary he is the offspring of David (Rom. 1: 3). He is the root of David because all that David stands for in Scripture is only possible through Yahweh's purpose in His son, even though the son was not then in existence. David became king, was established in triumph, was given a covenant of promise, was provided with seed because of Yahweh's purpose in Christ (see 1 Kings 11: 36). Thus this purpose became the root of David.

"Hath prevailed" — Christ's victory over sin opened a new phase in the Divine purpose (Mat. 28: 18; 1 Pet. 3: 22). He had prevailed personally, a token that he will prevail universally. When Rome is finally judged, Christ will have fully prevailed, and in doing so will have literally accomplished all the things symbolised in the book, bringing everything into subjection to himself (Heb. 2: 8). At that time, the book will be opened to the fullest extent; its meaning will be clear to all.

VERSE 6

"In the midst" — The Lamb is the centre of Yahweh's purpose.

"Seven horns" — Omnipotence, or perfection of power.

"Seven eyes"—Omniscience, or perfection of vision, cp. 2 Chron. 16: 9.

"Seven Spirits" — The one spirit (1 Cor. 12: 11; Eph. 4: 4) multitudinously manifested throughout the earth. By command of this spirit Christ will prevail over his enemies (cp. Isa. 11: 2-3; Zech. 4: 6).

VERSE 7

"He came and took" — The Lamb is represented as taking the scroll from the King. Both Lamb and King represent the Lord in two aspects, as also do the joint symbols of Lion and Lamb. The one on the throne represents Christ in the fulness of glory after having prevailed; the Lamb represents him in the course of prevailing.

"Out of the right hand" — The hand of privilege and power (cp. Ps. 80: 17; 1 Pet. 3: 22).

"Him that sat on the throne" — Cp. Ch. 4: 2-3. Christ is thus shown in two relationships — as Deity in manifestation and as the slain Lamb. Having triumphed as the Lamb that had been slain, he was granted knowledge he previously lacked (cp. Acts 1: 6; Rev. 1: 1). As the Lamb he took hold of the glory unto which he attained, so that Lamb and Deity were united in one.

Songs of Rejoicing at the Final Triumph — Vv. 8-14

VERSE 8

"When he had taken the book" — The book is really a scroll. The taking of it in hand anticipates the final triumph of the Lord which it predicts. See note v. 5.

"Harps" — A symbol of gladness and rejoicing. The priests in the Temple "prophesied with harps" (1 Chron. 25: 1). This verse introduces us to the King-priests of the Age to Come. See note on Rev. 4: 4 (p. 309 of "Logos").

"Golden vials full of odours" — i.e., Incense, symbolic of the prayers of saints (Ps. 141: 2). When the priest burned the incense every morning, true Israelites engaged themselves in prayer (Luke 1: 9-10), recognising the significance of the ascending odours. See margin and explanatory comment of the Revelator: "which are the prayers of saints." Saints pray for the time when the glory shall be revealed in the earth.

VERSE 9

"They sung a new song" — See Ps. 33: 3; Ps. 144: 9. This song may well be sung at the second advent of the Lord, on a day of national celebration in the Temple, such as is suggested in such places as Ps. 45: 12-15; Phil. 2: 9-11; Ps. 2: 7; Heb. 1: 6 mg. The prophetic Scriptures indicate that there will be a grand day of celebration when the newly-built Temple, the House of Prayer for all nations (Isa. 56: 7) will be opened for service, and the King in his glory will be presented to the people thus assembled — the immortal saints, angels from heaven, and mortal representatives of the nations. All, in turn, will raise their voices in praise of the King in their midst.

"Out of" — Greek "ek"; from which "ecclesia" is built up. Vv. 9-10 represents the "new song" of the glorified redeemed from out of the nations. Cp. Acts 15: 14.

VERSE 11

"Many angels" — There will be angelic representatives present in this day of Christ's triumph who will raise angelic voices in his honour. Cp. Luke 12: 8; Heb. 1: 6. This latter reference should read as the margin: "When he bringeth again the firstbegotten into the world, He saith: Let all the angels of God worship him."

"Ten thousand, etc." — Frequently used in Scripture to define a large undefined number, cp. Deut. 33: 2; 1 Cor. 4: 15; 14: 19; Ps. 3: 6, etc.

VERSE 13

"Every creature" — All creation: angelic, immortal and mortal; both Jews and Gentiles. The terms are symbolic. "Heaven" represents the ruling places, the government; "earth" has relation to the "first dominion" (Mic. 4: 8); "under the earth," the "bottomless pit of nations" (Rev. 11: 7), "the sea," other Gentile powers. Thus all creation finally ascribe glory to the one whom for so long has been ignored in the counsels of men and nations. And this wonderful consummation is brought about by the "prevailing" of the Son of God, by the outpouring of Divine judgments upon the earth (Isa. 26: 9).

REVELATION CHAPTER 6

THE SEVEN SEALED SCROLL

The first six seals are broken, and reveal a series of prophetic pictures leading to the overthrow of paganism and the establishment of Christianity as a State Religion in the time of Constantine.

1st Seal: Progress of Christianity — A.D. 96-183 (vv. 1-2)

Comprising the period of the reigns of Nerva, Trajan, Adrian, the two Antonines, and the first three years of Commodus.

VERSE 1:

"I saw" — This is the true spirit of prophecy, and is in line with expressions such as are used by the Old Testament prophets. Consider the statement of Isaiah: "The vision of Isaiah . . . which he saw concerning Judah" (Isa 1: 1). The prophets were often eye-witnesses of the predictions they made. They lived in the future, and acted as reporters of the things they were caused to see. Originally they were called "seers" (1 Sam 9: 9). They were men who lived in advance of their times — mentally, they lived in the future (see notes on Rev. 1: 10).

"Opened" — Previously the knowledge contained in this seven sealed scroll was closed to human understanding (Rev. 5: 4), but Christ had prevailed to open the book, and to him the understanding of future events was given that he might pass it on to his servants (Rev. 1: 1). Thus the first seal was opened.

"Thunder" — Implies storm; i.e. trouble (cp. 1 Sam 2: 10; Zech 9: 13-14). Domitian, the great persecutor of the Ecclesia was assassinated in the year AD 96, and the way cleared for a change in human affairs.

"One of the four beasts" — They represent the Redeemed (Rev. 5: 9-10), whose prayers were ascending to heaven at this time for some relief from the persecution of Domitian. They were eager watchers of the "signs of the times," and are here represented as saying, "Come and see!" The events in the political heavens were guided for their benefit (2 Cor. 4: 15; Jer. 27: 5; Rom. 8: 28).

VERSE 2:

"Behold a white horse" — White symbolises righteousness and peace. The horse was a common symbol for Rome and was dedicated to Mars. The symbol thus represents a period of peace for the Roman Empire (contrast v.4).

"He that sat on him" — In each case, the rider does not refer to any personal individual, but to a series of agents who performed the work of controlling, guiding, or influencing the Roman horse — or people — to enact the events which the seals symbolise. The rider on the horse thus represented those who guided the destiny of Rome. In the period of this seal, Christianity was daily gaining a greater hold upon the masses, large numbers of whom were being influenced by its teaching.

"A bow" — In Zech. 9: 13-14, "bow" symbolises a multitude; i.e. Judah. In Psalm 64: 3, it is used in connection with "speech," or "the

word." Thus the bow can represent a multitude imbued with the Word. This bow was an arrowless bow, indicating that the weapon was not used for the purpose of war.

"A crown" — Greek word is "stephanos" or coronal wreath. It was the symbol of victory in the games that were celebrated in those times. It is here used to indicate that Christianity would gain the victory over paganism, by its use of the arrowless bow — its doctrines. The stephanos "was a circlet of evergreens offered as a prize of honour and glory to the victor in the public games celebrated in the service of the gods. Before the combatant could receive the "stephan," he had to go on conquering according to the rules of the fight; then, at the end of the conflict, he was adorned with the emblem of victory" ("Eureka").

The period of this seal was one of peace for Rome, but not for Christianity. The Christians suffered persecution, especially under the reign of the pagan philosopher, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. The following extract from a letter by Tiberianus of Syria to the Emperor Trajan indicates something of the struggle of Christianity for the victory:

" . . . I am wearied," he wrote, "with punishing and destroying the Galilleans, of those of the sect called Christians, according to your (the Emperor Trajan's) orders. Yet they never cease to profess voluntarily what they are, and to offer themselves to death. Wherefore I have laboured, by exhortation and threatening, to discourage them from daring to confess to me that they are of that sect. Yet, in defiance, of all persecution, they still continue to do it. Be pleased, therefore, to inform me what your highness thinks proper to be done with them."

Pliny, in a letter to Trajan towards the end of the 1st Century, reports on the vast growth of Christianity: "The number of culprits (i.e. Christians) is so great as to call for serious consultation. The contagion of the superstition hath spread not only through cities but even villages and the country."

"Conquering and to conquer" — This expresses the rapid growth of Christianity. Pliny's letter to Emperor Trajan, quoted above, reveals this fact. Thus, the opening of the first Seal, revealed a time of peace and prosperity for Rome; during which Christianity, though persecuted, made much progress. Five Emperors in succession promoted the internal peace of the Empire, though they persecuted the Christians. Gibbon records that this period represents: "the most happy and prosperous time of the human race." He writes: "The armies were restrained, and the Emperors delighted in the image of peace, and considered themselves as the accountable ministers of the laws."

What a different state was revealed a few years later, when the events of the second Seal were unfolded.

2nd Seal — PEACE TAKEN FROM THE EARTH — A.D. 183-211

(Vv. 3-4).

Comprising the period of Commodus (180-193 — who was strangled); Pertinax (193 — assassinated); Didjulus Julianus (who gained the Empire by paying £200 to each of the Praetorian Guards, but who only reigned for 63 days, when he was beheaded by the same guards); Septimus Severus (193-211 — the last eight years of whose reign brought a betterment of conditions to Rome).

VERSE 3:

"Come and see" — The absence of Thunder (cf. v.1) indicates the peaceful accession of Commodus at the age of 19 (ct. v.1). For three years he reigned peacefully, guided and assisted by the influence of his father's ministers. In 183, however, an attempted assassination made on his life by some of his Senators, generated the worst passions of his gloomy nature, which, once aroused, could not be appeased. Suspicious of all about him, he exercised his revenge in such a way as to plunge the Empire into an orgy of executions and bloodshed.



Why is Psalm 119 Divided as it is?

A.C. (N.S.W.): Could you please explain the significance of the words standing over the paragraphs into which Psalm 119 is divided: Aleph, Beth, Gimel, etc.?

Answer: These words comprise the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. They stand as they do in this Psalm because, in the Hebrew, all the verses that follow the particular letter, commence with that letter. For example, in the Hebrew, all the verses that follow the letter Aleph commence with a word having that letter as its initial. The next paragraph, which stands in our Bible under the letter "beth," have words opening each verse which commence with the letter "B." So the Psalm continues thus to the end.

In other words, this is an acrostic Psalm, but the point is missed through the translation. It is like the A.B.C. in Hebrew poetry; and the Psalm was most likely composed in that way in order to aid the memory.

There are other features of this Psalm that are quite interesting. The name Yahweh occurs twenty-two times throughout, agreeing with the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet. The various words that were used to define the law are all used throughout this Psalm. Thus it refers to "law," "testimonies," "His ways," "precepts," "statutes," and so on.

There are other Psalms similarly arranged. Psalm 34 is a case in point. In the Hebrew, the various verses open with the letters of the alphabet in order. Thus v. 1 opens with a word (in Hebrew) commencing with the letter Aleph; v. 2 opens with a word commencing with the letter Beth; v. 3 opens with one commencing with the letter Gimel, and so on throughout the Psalm.

Other Psalms are formed in the same manner, as is also the Book of Lamentations. This form of composition was an aid to memory.

THE RUSSIAN MENACE

Dr. Thomas was positive as to the destiny of Russia. His convictions, as we know, were founded not on appearances, but on an intelligent reading of the Scriptures. "Russia," said he, "may lose many battles, and experience considerable reverses; but this will only prove that its efforts have been in the wrong direction, or that it has been going ahead too impetuously for the times and purpose of God. Its success eventually is certain, and none can repulse it, until the sling stone of David's Son shall prostrate the Giant upon the mountains of Israel." ("Herald," 1855).

Since these lines were penned, Russia has had many set-backs, but she has outlived them, and is today "the one great menacing and overpowering figure." Newspaper articles abound with similar statements. This is the way they write:— "No power on earth is capable of conquering Russia" — "The future of Russia is assured" — "She will emerge triumphant" — "Out of chaos in Russia, will arise one who will speak effectively that almighty word, 'Forward'."

The future awaits the advent of the "Mighty Warrior," who will dash in pieces all nations who oppose His will.

THE MEMORIAL FEAST

Can we set aside a divine appointment without incurring disastrous consequences and God's displeasure? Those who absent themselves from the Lord's Table should think of this. To refrain willfully from assembling together on the first day of the week is not only to display a shocking lack of appreciation of the importance and profit of the appointment, but is a direct insult to Christ. Weariness in this matter is a sign of declension from the Truth. It is not the final step, but is one of many along the road which leads to final rejection. It was so in the first century, and it is so now. "But supposing I am ill or prevented by unavoidable causes from obeying the command, what then?" Christ does not exact impossibilities. But what he does expect is an interest taken in his appointments and an effort made to comply with them.

FROM THE PEN OF THE PIONEERS

To say that the Bible is "reliable" is good as far as it goes; but it does not go far enough. You want to say it is the work of inspiration, and then you give us a foundation for the reliability. Otherwise the reliability is a matter of opinion, and therefore, of uncertainty. A writing that is not from God may be wrong, especially a writing dealing with God's views and will. If our Bible is human in any degree, our foundation is a shaky one; for we have no other foundation in this age of the world. It is not a matter to be compromised.

—R. Roberts.

Our face is set; our purpose is fixed; the truth is our guiding star. To the croakings of the miserable creatures that roost in the sides of death's valley, and flap their clammy wings at the passing pilgrim to life eternal, we give no heed. We shall gird up our loins, and hold on our way, uninfluenced by the counsel of the ungodly.

—R. Roberts.

VOLUME TWENTY SIX

THE LOGOS

Upholding the Purity of Apostolic Doctrine and Practice

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Thoughts for the Times

"BE OF ONE MIND"

"Be of one mind" is an exhortation that runs through Paul's writings (2 Cor. 13: 11; 1 Cor. 1: 10; Phil. 1: 27; Rom. 15: 5-6). This oneness is not impossible of attainment, whatever men may say to the contrary. The Ecclesia manifested this unity at the commencement, and did so as the result of a hearty reception of the Truth as apostolically delivered (Acts 2: 41-42; 4: 32). The Babel which the religious world has become, is the outcome of unfaithfulness to the divine teaching. This deplorable condition of things was foretold, and the brethren were enjoined to be watchful lest they would become parties to its development. How solemn are the warnings: "Stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (2 Thess. 2: 15); "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them! for in so doing thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Tim. 4: 16).

Let us, who in this late day have been blessed with a knowledge of the Truth, heed the divine warnings, and stand apart from those who do not believe, or who do not obey, the words of inspiration. It is the only way of preserving both the Truth and the required unity. An obedient stand in this matter will bring down upon us the censure of those from whom we have to separate, but what of that? If we are faithful, we have the satisfaction of knowing that we are obeying Christ, and following in the steps of approved first century believers. If Babeldom is to be augmented from the ranks of those once holding the Truth, let us see to it that we are not instrumental in the business, either by condoning or promulgating unscriptural teaching. Our safeguard — the divine preventive — is the earnest, sincere, humble, daily meditation on Bible revelation.

— A.J.

The Divine Purpose in Israel

"Is the Holy Land to continue for ever as it is at this day? Is the little Horn of the Goat always to divide it for a price among his pashas?" These are questions of great interest to all who believe the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and His Christ . . . the answer in a full assurance of faith and hope is an emphatic "No, it is impossible." Yea, verily, it is impossible that it can always be desolate and subject to the horns of the Gentiles. If it were, the Kingdom of God could never be established; for the Holy Land is the territory of the Kingdom. To all, then, who believe "the things of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ" how intensely interesting must the future destiny of this country be! Well may it be said by the prophet, "Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give Him no rest, till He establish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth" (Isa. 62: 6-7).

—"Elpis Israel," page 414

The one great principle forgotten above most others by the present religious world which claims the name "Christian," is that the Scriptures are completely Israelitish in character. They reveal the background, current history, and ultimate development of the Jewish people. God selected this nation as the medium of His revelation unto all men. The writers of the Divine messages were Israelites; the great theme of the Bible — Jesus of Nazareth — was the Messiah of the nation, its supreme prophet, priest and king; the hope it sets before all men is the national hope of Israel (Acts 28: 20).

The Jews failed because they did not comprehend the true character of their Messiah. They wanted a military leader who would overthrow their enemies and immediately restore the greatness of their nation. They did not understand that he must first be revealed as a sacrifice and a priest, that individual salvation must precede national regeneration. When he refused to claim his kingship and fight the Romans they had no use for him, and rejected his claim to be Messiah.

The Gentiles fail at the other extreme. They are prepared to accept him as sacrifice and priest, but not as the king of Israel. Therefore they reject the basic principle of the Kingdom destined to be set up on earth (Dan. 2: 44). The Jews wanted him as a king, but rejected his sacrificial work; the Gentiles desire his sacrificial covering, but deny him his right as King of the Jews.

The Truth embraces fully both aspects, and sets them clearly before men in a balanced positive fashion.

Without grasp of the Israelitish nature of the hope, the Scriptures cannot be rightly understood. God reveals Himself as the "God of Israel"; the Jewish people are described as "Israel My People" (Ezek. 38: 16); the Kingdom of God is the "Kingdom restored to Israel." (Acts 1: 6); and the believer is said to be adopted into this hope (Luke 1: 32-33; Acts 28: 20; Rom. 9: 8; Gal. 3: 26-29; Eph. 2: 12).

Such thoughts are particularly apt with respect to the views of the self-styled "Jehovah's Witnesses." Despite what they affirm, there can be no reversing of the plain words of God, that the same Israel which was punished for its iniquity, is to be regathered at the "time of the end," to be purified and resettled in the land promised to their forefathers, as the nucleus of the Kingdom of God on earth. "He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock" (Jer. 31: 10). To deny this is to make God false to His word, and qualifies one for the title of "false witness!"

God has declared twice for emphasis, so that there be no possibility of misunderstanding: "Ye are My witnesses" (Isa. 43: 10-12). His words apply to the Jewish people. The remarkable fulfilment of the prophetic word in Jewish affairs is a continual sign to all who examine the evidence, that all God's words are truth, and that the greatest confidence can be placed in all that He says.

Israel's history, whether past or prophetic, constitutes the fundamental theme of the Bible's message to man.

God's Purpose in Israel

But what was the Divine objective in saving Israel from Egyptian oppression? This is often misunderstood, even by Christadelphians. The nation was called to witness to the glory of Yahweh, to "fear that glorious and fearful name, Yahweh thy Elohim" (Deut. 28: 58). They were called out to become a "holy people unto Himself," to so walk that "all people of the earth shall see that they are called by the name of Yahweh" (Deut. 28: 9-10).

Thus Israel was called out to become a witnessing people, to demonstrate the Divine purpose to others, that they "might be unto Yahweh for a people, and a name, and a praise, and a glory" (Jer. 13: 11). To that end, God chose them, guided them, educated them, and revealed His will to them, in order

that they might reflect His glory, and that they might be equipped to pass on to others the message of His plan.

But the Divine indictment is: "They would not hear" (Jer. 13: 11).

Hosea sets the same indictment in different words: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will reject thee . . ." (Hos. 4: 6).

This was the general attitude of the nation, but it was not the universal nor inevitable attitude of all. Paul reminds us that a "remnant were saved by faith." In the midst of a disobedient people, there were the "few" who remained loyal to the principles to which they had been called, and within the midst of Israel raised their voices in warning at the general apathy and apostasy (Cp. Hab. 1: 1-3).

It was this fact that saved the nation. Israel was told:

"Thus saith Yahweh, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not: for a blessing is in it: so will I do for My servants sakes, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of My mountains: and Mine elect shall inherit it, and My servants shall dwell there" (Isa. 65: 8-9).

Brother Thomas makes the point in his writings, that the Divine purpose is yet to be revealed in Israel. It is not seen today. The nation does not reflect to the glory of Yahweh in the midst of the nations. It is not passing on to others the message of His plan. That is yet to be. Jeremiah proclaimed the Divine purpose:

"Behold, I will bring it (Jerusalem) health and cure, and I will cure them (the Jews), and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth. And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me . . . And it shall be to Me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it" (Jer. 33: 6-9).

Thus, the regathering of Israel is for "Yahweh's sake" (Isa. 48: 11). So keenly interested is He in its consummation, that He is said to "wait for it" (Isa. 30: 18). The great joy among the angelic hosts at that time is expressed in the words of the prophet:

"Sing, O ye heavens; for Yahweh hath done it: shout ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for Yahweh hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel" (Isa. 44: 23).

Israel's Failure Foreknown

It must be distinctly understood that the failure of Israel in the past does not mean that the Divine purpose had failed. As we have seen above, a remnant was saved in each generation, and the Divine purpose in the nation as a whole is yet to be revealed.

God foreknew the iniquity of the nation, and provided accordingly. "I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you," Moses told the people (Deut. 31: 16-18, 29). Isaiah also recorded:

"Because I (God) knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I showed it thee . . ."

And so Israel suffered. The supreme villainy of the crucifixion was followed by the supreme punishment of the terrible siege of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70, when over a million Jews were massacred, and the Egyptian slave markets became glutted with captives.

The iniquity still persists, as Moses predicted it would. The hint contained in his declaration of Deut. 31: 29, "In the latter days," speaks of the time of the end of man's misrule of the earth.

And because it persists, Israel continues to suffer. The recent publicity given to the dramatic capture of Eichmann, and the smuggling of him into the land of Israel, has underlined how much the nation has suffered.

But with our tears of sympathy, there must be mixed a realisation of why these things happen: "Because thou hast rejected knowledge . . ." "Blindness in part continues in Israel" today, and the nation continues to suffer.

Yet for all its suffering, in spite of all the misery Israel has experienced throughout the centuries, it still retains its identity. In this it is unique. No other nation has gone through the persecution and dispersion that Israel has done, and retained its identity. They have all disappeared from the face of the earth. Israel alone survives, and the existence of the people constitutes a sign that they are, in fact, Yahweh's Witnesses. The tiny nation of Israel today, constitutes an island of hope in a raging sea of hate. It commands attention far beyond its importance in size. It is drawing all nations towards the area where the crisis of the last days will be developed.

And in view of the destined outcome of that crisis it is impossible to over-emphasise the importance of the events in Israel.

We live in the epoch of Christ's coming. "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory" (Psa. 102: 16); "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" (Rom. 11: 15).

Who will Build up Zion?

Let us not make the colossal mistake of imagining that the present-day regathering of the Jews to Palestine constitutes the fulness of the prophecies relating to the Restoration. The latter requires the full manifestation of David's throne with Christ ruling therefrom. What we see today is but the token of what Yahweh will accomplish tomorrow. The majority of references to Israel's regathering relate to that "tomorrow."

And that is the work of Christ. "I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up" (Acts 15: 16).

The tabernacle of David is not being rebuilt in the land today. That is a future work. Today we witness the fulfilment of Brother Thomas' words (based, of course, on the Bible):

"A partial restoration of Jews to form the nucleus of Christ's work in the future . . . returning to rebuild their Commonwealth" ("Elpis Israel").

The future will find the prophetic parable of Christ fulfilled. He found a fig tree, full of leaves (talk), but without fruit (actions). He "cursed" it, and it withered up (Matt. 19: 18-22). The fig tree was a symbol of Israel (Joel 1: 7). When God's heir came, he found this "tree" barren of fruits, or faith and virtue, as a result of which it withered to national death in A.D. 70. But the Lord also said, that when summer is near, the fig tree will bud again (Luke 21: 29-33). The indications of that are apparent today. They should cause in all true saints the greatest rejoicing: "When ye see these things begin to come to pass, Lift up your heads for your redemption is at hand . . ." The unfolding of the Divine purpose in Israel demonstrates that we are rapidly nearing that stage in His plan when it shall be said: "There shall be time no longer."

T.S. (Eng.).

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

What The Lamb Requires in His Bride

Last month we considered the future figurative marriage between the Lord Jesus Christ and his ecclesia. The union of Adam and Eve, and the example of Sarai revealed characteristics of the Divine Bridegroom and his Bride of the future. We continue the discussion on the lives of the three Patriarchs as they reveal examples of the "Lamb and his Bride."

Rebekah

In a beautiful word-picture, the 24th chapter of Genesis records not only the circumstances of Isaac's marriage with Rebekah, but also foreshadows that of the Great Prince with his Princess.

The thought of Isaac being joined in marriage to a Canaanitish woman was abhorrent to his father. Such a union was strictly forbidden. "Thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell" (v. 3). To Abraham, his Canaanitish contemporaries were comparable to the Nephilim ("ones greatly fallen") of Noah's time cp. Gen. 6: 4), in contrast to "my kindred" (Gen. 24: 4). It was also emphasised that Isaac should not return to the land of their fathers: "Beware that thou bring not my son thither again" (v. 6).

These points applied to the Greater Father and Son speak for themselves.

Abraham, with characteristically unshakeable faith, believed implicitly that Yahweh would provide a bride for his son (v. 7). The Lord Jesus expressed a similar attitude: "Behold, the bridegroom cometh: go ye out to meet him." (Matt. 25: 6).

There was, then, only one principle upon which a bride would be acceptable to Isaac: freely she had to "come out" of Babylon, as Abraham and Sarah had done earlier, "rich in faith." The bride of Christ will be acceptable only upon this same principle. The words of the Spirit, in invitation and warning, challenge those who aspire to become Christ's bride: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate . . . and I will receive you" (2 Cor. 6: 17). Abraham was emphatic that there should be no compromise. In the event that a chosen woman should refuse to "come out," Eliezer was absolved from all responsibility (Gen. 24: 8).

How wonderful that the Gentile Servant, Eliezer, should meet Rebekah at the well (vv. 15-18). This is the duty of Christ's bride in these days, to invite the unenlightened to "take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22: 17). This must be her faithful duty both now and in the Age to come.

Rebekah means "captivating." Her beauty was such that her betrothed was immediately drawn to her. Rebekah's anti-type must display such a degree of spiritual beauty that her Lord will find her "captivating"; and to show forth such beauty she must learn and practice spiritual development. There is no other way. Christ's desires must be hers. Christ's purpose must be hers. The affinity between the two must be strong and binding. "Christ is the head of the ecclesia . . . the ecclesia is subject unto Christ . . . Christ loved the ecclesia and gave himself for it . . ." (Eph. 5: 23-25). When understood and lovingly embraced, these things will result in the formation of a bride who will indeed be "captivating" to the Lord Jesus.

Rebekah was a virgin (v. 16), a significant characteristic that must be evidenced in the Lamb's bride. "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins" (Rev. 14: 4). The "women" of the Apocalypse are the "mother of harlots" and her daughters (Rev. 17: 5), symbols speaking of the Papacy and her offspring, the numerous churches of Christendom. These are they with whom the true bride has not defiled herself. Through the ages she has held herself aloof from the teachings and practises of these organised purveyors of spiritual adultery. The true bride is doctrinally pure, knowing that without this purity she is lost. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, **hath not God**" (2 John 8). In these days of worldwide spiritual darkness there are influences at work within the ecclesias that would break down the barriers which should testify to our spiritual virginity, and these influences must be strongly resisted if we are to survive as a "people prepared for the Lord." There can be no compromise with the Clergy, either in doctrine or practise. "Let no man deceive you with vain words," is the admonition of Paul in Eph. 5: 6, "for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (lit. unbelief, unpersuadable). The Ecclesia at Ephesus won commendation from the Lord because they could not "bear them which are evil" (Rev. 2: 2), and it is only by making such a stand, that Christ's bride can be presented to him as a "chaste (R.V. 'pure') virgin" (2 Cor. 11: 2).

The meeting between Isaac and Rebekah is touching and dramatic. He had come from the well Lahai-roi ("the well of life and vision"), and in the evening "lifted up his eyes and saw" her coming (Gen. 24: 62-64). The Lord Jesus similarly, is dwelling in the precincts of the "well of life and vision," soon to go forth at the evening of Gentile times, to greet his bride and take her to himself.

Rebekah was arrayed in a change of garment (v. 53); the Lord's bride will "put off" mortality and "put on" immortality (1 Cor. 15: 53). Rebekah was then adorned with silver and jewels of gold as a sign of her new station; the bride of Christ is to be made "rich in faith" (James 2: 5), possibly only through the Lord's sacrifice: "Though he were rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. 8: 9). Gold is a symbol of her tried faith (1 Pet. 1: 7), and silver speaks of her redemption (Exod. 30: 12-16; 38: 25-28).

Rachel

The 27th to 29th chapters of Genesis reveal a gripping record of human conflict. Hatred, love, fear, sorrow, joy, are some of the emotions written into the events that were crowded into the life of Jacob. These chapters record the account of his flight from home, his journey into a distant land, his trials, and his final triumph in winning the bride he loved most. Jacob's experiences foreshadow the greater bridegroom, the Lord Jesus, who will similarly seek out his bride and lay indisputable claim to her.

Genesis 27: 43 states that Jacob left his surroundings and removed to Haran, the dwelling-place of his mother's brother, Leban. Like the Lord Jesus (Luke 19: 12), he "went into a far country." Jacob was forced to leave his people because of the hatred and hostility of his brother (Gen. 27: 41), and the Lord also suffered at the hands of his brethren (Psa. 18: 17; 38: 12; Matt. 27: 12).

Although the recipient of great and precious promises from his father (Gen 27: 26-29), Jacob left the land without having received them. In Luke 19: 12, the Lord Jesus Christ is revealed as going into a far country to "receive his kingdom."

It was only after much trial that Jacob received the bride he really loved. He was forced to work two periods of seven years each (the "complete" time cycle; repeated to emphasise the completeness and fulfilment of the period) before he claimed her as his own. There is likewise a "set

time" to favour Zion (Psa. 102: 13), when the Bridegroom will greet his bride and establish her in his Kingdom. Meanwhile, she is "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (lit. "set time" — 1 Pet. 1: 5).

The one for whom Jacob bore such a deep and lasting love was named Rachel, which signifies a "sheep" or "lamb." Thus this woman is linked as a type with the mystical bride of the Lamb; a bride who is not simply a "help meet" for her husband, but is also, in character and mission, like her beloved one. She must exhibit and proclaim the same lamb-like, sacrificial qualities that characterised the life of her Lord. The Lamb's wife is collectively termed a "flock" (Luke 12: 32), and "the sheep" who hear the voice of Christ (John 10: 27). "Present your bodies a living sacrifice" is an instruction that cannot be ignored by those who desire to be accepted as the Lamb's wife (Rom. 12: 1).

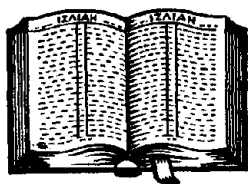
Our final thought reveals the glory of the future. Jacob left his home under difficult conditions and without receiving the fulfilment of his father's blessing. He finally returned to his land with the bride of his heart and great riches. Then in honour of Yahweh's great goodness and mercy towards him, he built an altar at Shechem, which he named "El-Elohai-Yisraail" (The Strength of the Mighty Ones of the Prince with El). Here is foreshadowed the glorious consummation between the Great Prince and his Princess, when they will be united, as one, with Divine Nature and the unlimited power of Yahweh, to manifest the Father's glory in all the earth.

—John Ullman (W.A.)

(This theme will be continued next issue).

Keep Yourself from Idols

Destroy it utterly (Deut. 13: 15-17). Such was the edict of God concerning an Israelitish city that abandoned itself to the sin of idolatry. "Shame," cry some, on reading the Scripture. The wise, however, will read and note the lesson it yields. "I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right." This was David's mind, and let us seek to make it ours. Idolatry is a great sin. God is jealous, and will brook no rival. Let us be on our guard. There are many ways in which God can be dethroned, and the sin of idolatry committed. Paul tells us that a covetous man is an idolator. Why? Because he places his trust in riches instead of in God (Eph. 5: 5). It is idolatry to put our supreme confidence in the flesh (Psa. 146: 3). To allow anything or anyone to come between us and God is idolatry. Let us tremble to give God a second or wrong place — it is easy to do wrong in this matter.



Things New and Old

No. 14—

“US”

We have seen how the “Lord’s Prayer” covers almost every aspect of life in the Truth. At first glance, however, it does not seem to include any petition concerning other people either in the brotherhood or in the world.

Such an omission would be strange, as a deep concern for the welfare, temporal and eternal, of other people is the hallmark of a saint who has truly caught the spirit of his master. “Greater love hath no man than that he lay down his life for his brethren.” “He laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 John 3: 16). Such love will surely find expression in prayer.

“Making Mention of You in My Prayers”

How often Paul told his children in the ecclesias that they were ever in his prayers. He “**ceased not**” to give thanks for the brethren at Ephesus, making mention of them in his prayers that God would give them the spirit of wisdom (ch. 1: 16-19). “Always in **every** prayer” he made request for all the Phillippians with joy (ch. 1: 4); thanking God every time he thought of them (ch. 1: 3). He prayed **always** for the Colossians (ch. 1: 3), and asked them to pray for him in his work of proclaiming the Gospel (ch. 4: 2-3). In both his letters to the Thessalonian brethren, he tells them of his prayers for them (1 Thess. 1: 2; 2 Thess. 1: 3).

Individual brethren also came into his prayers. He remembered Timothy in his prayers without ceasing night and day (2 Tim. 1: 3); and he always mentioned Philemon (v. 4).

Indeed, Paul’s prayers must have taken quite a time while he considered with the **Father**, the “care of all the ecclesias” and discussed in prayer the needs of all those many saints whom he had begotten in the gospel or strengthened in the Faith.

We should not be less concerned about our brethren, and ought to make petition to God concerning them.

Why then is this aspect omitted in the Lord's Prayer?
It isn't really.

Read it again! Is it a selfish prayer? Does it say "My Father which art in heaven . . ." "give me this day my daily bread; "forgive me my trespasses;" "deliver me from evil;" and so on? Certainly not! It is "our Father," "our daily bread"; "our sins;" "deliver us." The plural means that this is a prayer of fellowship in which our petitions are joined with those of all other true saints; and as we pray about our own needs, we should think of theirs as well.

"Look every man on the things of another"

Paul constantly exhorts us to be deeply concerned about the well-being of our brothers and sisters — to feel with them and for them. "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love: in honour preferring one another . . . rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with those who weep" (Rom. 12: 10-15). "Live together in harmony, live together in love, as though you had only one mind and one spirit between you. Never act from motives of rivalry or personal vanity, but in humility think more of each other than you do of yourselves. None of you should think only of his own affairs, but also of the interests of others" (Phil 2: 2-4).

These are not natural things to do — but it is in prayer that we make resolves and receive strength to these ends. The truth would be so easy to live, we sometimes think, if it were not for other people — but that is why they are there: for the development of patience and concern, compassion and love in us. As Paul exhorted the Thessalonians: "Warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men" (1 Thess. 5: 14).

I find it helpful as a means of making sure that I think of others in prayer, to go back over the headings of the Lord's prayer and repeat them in relation to the needs of others where I know them. Sometimes, of course, the needs of others are so prominently in mind that they are mentioned in the primary prayer; this will be increasingly so, as we learn the difficult achievement of thinking more of others than of ourselves.

"OUR Father"

This phrase is an acknowledgment of fellowship and brotherhood with the other sons of God. We think of old sister X or brother X living on their own in difficult circumstances — with perhaps just an old age pension. God is their Father — He will care for His children. But then we begin

to blush, for we are **their** brethren and it is easy to leave it to the Father when we might be **His** instruments for good. Thus, as we pray, resolution forms within us and before God we begin to think of ways and means. Many an old person cherishes a sturdy independence; we must not hurt in helping. So we have to experience tact: the help may not necessarily be money or goods—it may be a garden dug, shopping done, or just our company. Care must be taken not to despise any of God's little ones, because perhaps they are simple men or women of little intellectual power, but of strong faith. They are children of our Father.

“Give US . . . OUR daily bread”

Benevolent funds and relief societies among the ecclesias cannot be substitutes for individual “bowels of mercies.” A fund or a society cannot feel (though the trustees may well be men of compassion); and a donation, although a mild expression of concern, may well be a conscience salve to let us feel we have done our bit. Everyone contributing to a fund probably doesn't hurt as much as the individual doing the good that lies at hand.

It is not my purpose to comment adversely on funds and societies for relief purposes — but with their tendency to become centralised and impersonal they are not necessarily expressions of the qualities the Father seeks in us. Consider the personal involvement in the words of 1 John 3: 17-18: “But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue — but in deed and truth.” Again James 2: 15-16: “If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding, ye give them not those things which are needful for the body; what does it profit?”

God is interested in our personal attitude rather than in the efficiency of the brotherhood's charitable machinery. Too often a business approach is involved — “will the one being helped make good use of the help?” Brethren and sisters: it just isn't our worry. John and James and Paul and the Lord have told us our duty and we just do it. Again, gifts for those in need are often cluttered up with the world's paraphernalia of tax free covenants and similar devices — but the tender spirit of Christ is often crushed in such a calculatory atmosphere.

Help given with a critical mind is largely nullified. God is our example, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not (James 1: 5). Brother X ought not to be poor if he did this or that; if he were more methodical; if his wife were a better manager; or if he were more efficient at his job? But such a carping generosity is mean — men and women are just not all of one mould — but they may have hearts of gold: and as to efficiency in a job, a brother who is a “square peg in a round hole” needs our loving sympathy not our lofty despising. Many a brother earns his bread in tears because he doesn't really fit.

These are just some of the thoughts which may go through our mind when we pray: “give us our daily bread.”

“Forgive US OUR sins”

It is at this stage in our second consideration of the prayer that in the privacy of our minds we think about our brethren's spiritual needs — not in the spirit of criticism or superiority but in the spirit of James 5: 19: “Brethren, if any of you do err from the Truth, and one convert him; let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death and shall hide a multitude of sins.”

Such recollection of our brethren's need for forgiveness needs to be with care, remembering that if the Lord were to mark iniquity, none of us would stand. “Let him that thinketh he stand take heed lest he fall.”

Forgiveness means “a being loosened” — we desire to be loosened from our sins and we desire it for our brethren. Yet so often we can identify the splinter in their eye and can't see the plank in our own. You, brother, who have never been to a cinema or looked at a television screen, as you criticise your brethren as “worldly,” are you also aware of your “smugness,” or of your grasping attitude in business, or the coldness of your fraternal relationship? Not that we justify worldliness of any kind (it means world-like-ness and we are called to god-like-ness-godliness), but worldliness extends beyond the external things such as novels and lipstick (granted that these do not build up the man in Christ) to the inward spirit with which we act. Let us aim at “these ought ye to have done and not to have left the others undone.”

But let us not assume our own spiritual strength from the vehemence of our denunciation of others. A gentle, almost tearful, concern is required when we see our brother

going wrong; not an eager call for the exercise of ecclesial discipline (if such a phrase is appropriate to an age in which no authority is vested in the ecclesia). I remember in my teens putting up my hand to vote for "withdrawal" from a young brother who had become somewhat irresponsible in his attitude to life, and who had also entered the merchant navy, which, although non-military, was rather undesirable in wartime. I remember my main thought at the time was to get him out of the ecclesia lest his actions contaminated us. Oh what a lot I needed to learn! What sighings and groanings and prayers there ought to have been that he might yet rise up to the things he knew! (He did come back many years later).

I have since learnt that while sometimes there is a wicked man from whom we should categorically turn aside or withdraw ourselves — there are others who are more weak than wicked, and who, even if the fullness of fellowship is somewhat shaken, we yet admonish as brethren. After all, we are fellow-strugglers upward toward the likeness of Christ. Let us hope that a happier day has dawned in the brotherhood and that in the present reunion there lie the seeds of an understanding that the spirit of Christ is too delicate a thing to be formalised or institutionalised.

It was a sentence of prayer about our brother's failings that helped me greatly to get away from harshness in this matter: a brother wrote "withdrawal . . . Christian withdrawal . . . is carried out by men on their knees before God." My eyes were opened, yet it is only now that I am really appreciating fully what he meant. "Forgive us our sins" — not just me mine.

"Deliver US from evil."

Let us not be so concerned with the pitfalls which beset us in our own life, that we forget our brother's problem is just as real to him, and that God's care is for him as well as us.

During the last week it has been under this heading that I have thought of a sister whose husband (a keen "Logos" reader) collapsed and died in a Stourbridge shop. God will not at this stage bring him back — although he was a brother of firm faith and will surely, if one may judge, rise again to die no more. Yet if our sister (and others like her) realise fully that for him the call to the judgment seat of which he often talked came in that shop in Stourbridge — then, little by little, as the numb feeling goes, she will even

be delivered from the evil of her bereavment, although the bereavement will remain. We all know someone who needs our prayers like this.

Without prying, we should try to be aware of the inward troubles of our brethren: only thus can we give the word in season — how good it is. We should be touched with the feeling of one another's infirmities — and it is at the footstool of the throne of grace as we pray for our brethren's deliverance, as well as our own, that we may make a little progress towards "bearing one another's burdens."

A last word on the Lord's Prayer

I commenced these articles with the intention of presenting from the Word the reality of the Kingdom for which we long. I said I would not be too formal, but would follow where the Word led. After talking about being "sealed in the forehead" by the Word and experience, I felt I must say a little on prayer, not realising that it would take five or six articles, and embrace so many aspects of our walk in Christ. In many ways these articles have been most inadequate — but let us all resolve to approach nearer to the holy place and deepen the quality of our prayer life. Then in due course may our eyes behold the King in his beauty and we shall be able to speak to him face to face. Weak as we are now: feeble though our fellowship in prayer often seems; one day we hope with reverence actually to see and speak to "our Father" to whom for years we prayed.

—Edgar Wille (Stourbridge, England).

(Next issue, God willing: "The War of God Almighty").

Not of Human Authorship.

One of the many evidences of the divine authorship of the Bible is to be found in its types and antitypes. These are inwrought in all its parts, so that the greater the familiarity with the Word, the more apparent does this particular line of evidence become. Adam and Eve (Rom. 5: 14; Eph. 5: 32); the Tabernacle and its multifarious associations (Heb. 8: 5); the experiences of Israel (1 Cor. 10: 6, 11); and much more were foreshadowings of future things. Can we suppose that God would have left the record of these important adumbrations to chance — to unaided man to have penned? Impossible. This thought applies equally to the antitypes as to the types. Divine guidance was needed to make certain that an accurate account should be revealed to evince the harmony that exists between the one and the other. Those who perceive the value of this evidence will not only realise the super-human character of the Scriptures, but the gravity of tampering with them. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning."

DEATH OF BROTHER JAMES MANSFIELD SENR.

It is with sadness that we advise of the passing of Brother J. Mansfield Snr., of Adelaide, South Australia, on July 15th. We reproduce an extract of the words of Brother L. J. Colquhoun, who officiated at the graveside:

"A GRAVESIDE EULOGY TO A FAITHFUL WARRIOR IN ISRAEL"

"The late James Mansfield attained to the good old age of 81 years. He was a worthy son of worthy parents. His father was a consistent, dominant factor in pioneering the Truth from Goolwa in South Australia, and his mother was a kind, sweet, beautiful woman in Israel. A blending of their characteristics influenced his life.

"From a child, he was nurtured in the fear and admonition of the Lord. The Holy Scriptures throughout boyhood; his baptism into the sin-covering name of Jesus Christ in young manhood (at 17 years); into middle life, and old age, completely enveloped his life.

"For many years in Willard Hall, Wakefield Street, Adelaide, and later in the Temple, Halifax Street, Adelaide, he was the recorder, and then an Arranging Brother of the Adelaide Ecclesia. His was a powerful influence in the spiritual upbuilding of the Body. At all times he was strong in the purity of the doctrine, and the character of life attendant thereon. His suggestions and decisions, though firm, were given with a kindness and understanding, which endeared us, young and old, to him.

"On a number of occasions he journeyed to countries overseas, and constantly visited the Australian capitals in the Eastern States, and Perth in the West. Wherever he went, his first and paramount thought was to preach and teach the gospel of the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ.

"His name was deeply respected in many Ecclesias.

"As President of the Adelaide Gospel Extension Society, by kindly demeanour and quiet inspiration, he led us to extend the gospel near and far. How well I remember that night in the early 1930's, when he declared that a call had come from Macedonia, and took me with him into the Victorian Mallee district around Walpeup, on from Pinnaroo, on the South Australian border. By constant visits and ministrations, he was instrumental in forming a virile Mallee Ecclesia, there being between 30 and 40 baptisms over those formative years.

"He proved that the pen is mightier than the sword in his associations in editing the 'Logos' magazine. He also wrote the booklets: 'Compel them to come in'; 'The New World Order'; 'Is War With Russia Inevitable?'; 'The Jewish Problem'; 'The Divine Charter for the Future'; and others, and was responsible for reprinting 'Preaching the Truth.' In every booklet the principle pointed forward to the time when wars shall cease; when nations shall beat their swords into plowshares; and when peace, wondrous peace, will fill the earth, and the hearts of men thereon, from pole to pole.

"He had a deep knowledge of the Scriptures of Truth, and of the writings of our beloved pioneers — Brethren John Thomas, Robert Roberts, Henry Sulley and others. From the doctrine and prophecy set out in their works, based upon God's Word, he never deviated an inch, and powerfully swept us forward to the downfall of the Kingdom of men, and the establishment of God's Kingdom in its stead.

"He brought untold numbers to a knowledge of the Truth.

"His love for Zion was great. He looked forward to that wondrous day when God's hill at the centre of the earth will be beautiful indeed; its antagonisms swept away; and the Divine Law issuing forth from its

portals for the teaching of all mankind. He loved the Jews; was an ardent Zionist; and did all in his power to promote interest in the building of the Jewish State in Eretz Israel. Over many years, in the midst of Jewish tears, sorrows, and gladness, he encouraged them, and us, to help bring their sons and daughters from the lands of their back to the homeland in Palestine.

"Our brother earnestly watched for the coming of his Lord and Master, and was ever prepared to meet him, midst the toils and strivings associated with his mortal life. His later influence in the suburban Ecclesias at Woodville, Cumberland, and Enfield was great, and they, with us, will sadly miss him.

"He was loved and honored by his family. His children, and their children, have risen to call him blessed, and his sons can remember him by continuing to carry on their duties in the vineyard.

"In speaking for myself, for over 40 years, he was to me as a spiritual father in Israel, a true friend, and deeply understanding counsellor — as one who sticketh closer than a brother.

"Surely he could say: 'I have fought a good fight, I have run the race, I have guarded the Truth.' Now he sleeps, the faithful warrior in Israel, until the resurrection morn, when at the trump of God he will appear before his Master at the holy mount of Sinai — and, we fervently pray, receive from the Master's lips the welcome: 'Come, thou faithful one, my friend, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World.'"

The above words are evidence of the esteem in which Brother J. Mansfield was held. Our sympathy goes out to those who mourn. May He who caused it to be written: "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people," comfort them in their sadness. It is we who are the losers by the passing of such as Brother Mansfield, for Ecclesias need the steady influence of men of principle, who are not afraid to voice their mind on matters of precept and doctrine.

— Logos Committee.

An "Opinion."

An "opinion" is not worth discussing. It is a more intangible affair than even an assertion, for which presumably a man has a reason which you can examine. If any friend, after so much argument, adopts the "opinion" that uninspired men wrote Samuel, or that Moses is merely the compiler and not the writer of the writings which Jesus says "he wrote," what can you say, but that you are sorry he so exercises the prerogative that belongs to an age of liberty as to place himself in antagonism to the facts. You cannot always be arguing. There comes a time to stop it, and go each his own way in peace, reserving the issue for the final adjudication that lies ahead. There is a great difference between those who can discern and who use the truth as a thing to live by, and those who either cannot make up their minds about it, or like it as a thing to argue about.

The Supposed Pre-existence of Christ

JOHN 1: 1-14

"He was the true light" — v. 9.

There is a very significant change in this statement, from the verses that go before. Previously the reference was to "light," here it is to the "true light." The difference between the "light" and the "true light" provides the key to the solution of the problem that besets many who see in this chapter of John the teaching of a pre-existent Christ.

The word "true" distinguishes the one from the other.

It is translated from the Greek word "alethimos," which signifies "very" or "real," and defines the "genuine" or "substantial" in contrast to the shadowy or symbolic.

The use of the word is seen in Heb. 8: 2; 9: 24, where the "true" tabernacle is contrasted to that which was built by Moses. Paul refers to Christ as "a minister of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Heb. 8: 2). Here is a reference to the "genuine" or "real" tabernacle in contrast to the shadowy or symbolic.

The Bible speaks of the Tabernacle in two ways: that built by Moses, and that founded by Christ.

That built by Moses was tangible and real as far as man was concerned, but in fact it was but a shadow, or a symbol, of that which was to come. It pointed forward to Christ who fulfilled its prophetic symbolism. He was the genuine reality of that which it typed and foreshadowed. He was the perfect sacrifice, the true altar, the complete priest, the genuine mercy seat.

The sacrifice, altar, priest, mercy seat under the Law only functioned through his offering, though it had not then been made. It was the certainty that Yahweh would ultimately provide the means of redemption that made these shadowy institutions efficacious.

He was the true, the reality; they, but the shadow, the type.

The Jews completely misunderstood this. They imagined that the Tabernacle or Temple was the reality, and failed to appreciate the real status and mission of the Lord.

Those advocating the theory of a pre-existent Jesus have been similarly led astray.

It is important to emphasize this. The sacrifice of Christ reached back as well as forward. Through it, the sins of Abraham were forgiven, as are those of our own. It was the reality which was set forth in shadow by animal sacrifice under the law, or the bread and wine upon the table.

All this is expressed by the use of the word "alethimos," and rendered "true."

Transfer the same idea to John 1.

The "light" manifested by the logos from the beginning, set before men the hope of the Redeemer; the reality was revealed by the Lord Jesus.

The logos from the beginning revealed God unto men by its teaching; the Lord did so in visible, concrete form. He was the true light, as he was the true tabernacle.

The logos from the beginning, and the tabernacle of old, set hope before man in an incomplete way (Eph. 3: 3-5; 1 Pet. 1: 10-12), but the coming of the Lord and his offering revealed clearly all that had previously been predicted or foreshadowed. Paul could thus write: "The revelation of the secret which was kept secret since the world began, now is made manifest . . ." (Rom. 16: 25).

Perhaps our point may best be illustrated by reference to the work of Creation in the beginning. The works of physical creation recorded in Genesis 1 foreshadow the intentions of Yahweh in regard to His spiritual creation.

Out of chaos and darkness, God brought order, light and life such as reflected to His glory. The prime work of creation was the formation of Adam and Eve, and their union as one in marriage before Him.

It foreshadowed His purpose with man.

As the 6th day saw the formation of Adam and Eve before it merged into the seventh day of rest, so this sixth millennium will witness the fulfilment of the type in preparation for Messiah's kingdom. It will see the manifestation of the perfected second Adam in the earth, together with his bride and the second Eve (2 Cor. 11: 1-2).

It is significant that Genesis also speaks of two forms of light. In the beginning, on the first day, the Divine fiat commanded, "Let there be light," and light was provided. But on the fourth day, the "true light" was seen; the sun and the moon made their appearance in all their glory. Paul in Hebrews shows how the "word spoken by angels" was from the beginning whereas the "true light" shone forth in the fourth millennium when the Lord Jesus commenced his ministry, preaching: "I am the light of the world."

The pre-existent theory would reverse this process.

"Which Lighteth Every Man."

Again, care needs to be exercised in relation to this statement.

In a literal sense, the Truth does not enlighten "every man that cometh into the world."

What does the statement mean?

It means that Divine illumination is now available to all men, both Jew and Gentile, without distinction. Paul declared: "Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy" (Rom. 15: 9). To the Ephesians, he wrote in similar terms: "Now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2: 13).

The logos in past ages illuminated only Israel; it was exclusive to the Jewish race. But in Christ Jesus it was extended to include all men without distinction of race.

"That Cometh into the World."

"World" is "kosmos" in Greek, and signifies "order," "arrangement." It relates not so much to physical, as to political, social or religious order. The world of this verse is that which Christ came to save; that is, the Divine order. It is the "world" referred to in the declaration: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8: 12). Again: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3: 16).

It is quite obvious that the "world" referred to in these verses is different to that referred to in 1 John 2: 15: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." There are thus two "worlds" or orders referred to in Scripture, one to be saved, the other to be destroyed — one we must cleave unto, the other reject — one illuminated by light, the other shrouded in darkness — one related to the hope of Israel, the other connected to the times of the Gentiles — one that is eternal, the other that is temporary.

Christ came to save the Israelitish world, "kosmos," or order, which is founded on the promises of God. In doing so, he will ultimately destroy the Gentile way of life, the way of the flesh. The "world" he illuminated is the true Israelitish "kosmos" or order, not to be confused with Judaism. He did

not illuminate the world as a whole, nor, in the words of the Authorised Version, "every man that cometh into the world," if, by "world" we understand the Gentile way of life about us. The majority of men are not "lightened," and the world as a whole lies in darkness.

But every man who enters the Divine order in the way appointed is illuminated by the Christ-light, though most prefer the darkness. "This is condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil" (John 3: 19). "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see" (John 9: 39). "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness" (John 12: 46). And to Pilate: "For this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth" (John 18: 37). Elsewhere we learn that "truth" is synonymous with "light."

"He was in the World" — v. 10.

The subject of this statement is the light. In the Greek, "light" is a neuter noun, and in strict conformity to the requirements of grammar, the personal pronoun "he" should be replaced by "it": "It was in the world (order), and arising from it, the order was brought into existence, and the order did not understand it."

This verse thus describes the kind of world, or order, referred to in the previous verse. It was a world, or order, that had been brought into a state of being by light, a world founded on Divine principles and promises. Yet though founded on light, the world, or Jewish order of things, did not fully understand or comprehend the light that gave it being.

How true this is of the Israelitish constitution of things. Throughout the epochs of the nation's history we find the people rejecting the light that shone upon them from out of the Law and the Prophets. Though light was in the world, it was not comprehended by those who should have understood.

The word "made" of this verse is translated from the Greek "ginomai" which we have considered in a previous article. It does not relate to the making of a thing in the sense of creation, but signifies to "bring to a certain state of development." In the many times it is used throughout the New Testament, it is never used in the sense of create, but always in the sense of "bringing to pass."

The Diaglott renders: "The world was enlightened through him," in place of "made by him." "Ginomai" permits

of this as well as any other word, for it signifies to bring to a certain state of development, without stating specifically the development arrived at.

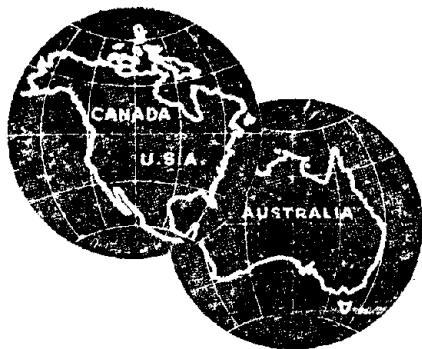
It should be particularly noted, however, that verse 10 defines the kind of world to which Christ came. It was one in which light was found, which had been brought into being by light, but which did not fully comprehend the significance of the light. To such a world Messiah came.

As these verses stand in the Authorised Version, they lend themselves to a little confusion. They read as though Christ was in the world to which he came (cp. vv. 10-11). In fact, the "he" of v. 10 relates to the "light," and that of v. 11 to the "true light." The two verses teach that the "true light" came to a world in which light shone, though its full significance was not understood by men.

— H.P.M.

Editor's Notebook.

From
Australia
to
Honolulu



It is Tuesday, 14th June, and the time is 2.30 p.m. The engines of the large Viscount plane have roared into life, and the aeroplane is straining to be off. From the small window inside the plane we give one parting, lingering look at the company of loved ones and friends who have met to bid us God-speed, and from whom we are to be parted for six months. But now the wheels begin to turn, the plane taxis down the air-strip, drawing us out of sight of the little crowd at the gate, the wheels turn quicker and quicker as the plane speeds to take off, then it is air-borne, and the trip around the world has commenced.

The plane banked and turned, giving us a last swirling picture of Adelaide sandwiched in between hill and ocean — and then we were swallowed up in the thick clouds that canopied the city on this day in mid-winter.

Inside the plane, seat belts were unbuckled, magazines were handed out, and travellers settled down for the three hour run to Sydney.

Our mind roamed over the last few hectic weeks of preparation: appointments completed, loose ends tied up, work brought up to date, correspondence for the trip finalised. We had much to remind us of the thoughtfulness and kindness of loved brethren and sisters whom we have left behind. This includes a number of presentations from Ecclesias and classes with which we have worked, and the spirit of which is greatly appreciated. Among these was a beautifully prepared chart of Armageddon measuring some 12 feet across, neatly done up in a bag, designed for lecturing purposes. From various parts of Australia, both country and city, came messages of goodwill . . . from as far west as Perth, and as far east as Melbourne and Sydney. Among these was a particularly nice letter, in which was included the following poem:

A Parting Prayer.

Wherever you go, whatever you do,
 Our thoughts, and our prayers shall go with you.
 By sea, or by land, wherever you fare,
 The hand of the Lord shall guide you there.
 If tempest arise, or darkness affright,
 The lamp of the Lord shall give you light.
 If danger approach, or evil appal,
 The might of the Lord shall save you from all.
 Wherever you go, whatever you do,
 The love of the Lord encompass you;
 In safety and cheer, by night and by day,
 God bless you and keep you the whole of the way,
 God bless you and keep you forever and aye!

The journey to Sydney was a little rough, and the plane was in consequence somewhat delayed, but we arrived in time to attend a farewell meeting that had been convened. We were pleased to meet Brother Ron Herman at this meeting, who plans to leave on June 25th in company with Brother Davis, to conduct a campaign in the Philippines. As we plan likewise to touch down at the Philippines for a week during our return journey (God willing), this gave us a wonderful opportunity to discuss with Brother Ron plans for such an effort.

At the due time we were driven to Mascot Aerodrome in Sydney, to board the Boeing Jet plane for the first "hop" of our journey to Honolulu. This large, beautifully fitted plane, represents the very latest in modern transport. It is 134 feet 6 inches in length, with an approximated take-off weight of 247,000 pounds. The plane is fueled by kerosene, not petrol, and consumes 380 gallons per hour. To give it a boost of power for taking off, some 625 gallons of water are injected into the engines to cool the air and make it more dense, thus giving extra thrust to get it off the ground. The take-off speed is 170 miles an hour, and it shoots steeply up at the rate of 1,200 feet per minute, attaining in our case, some 33,000 feet and flying at 550 miles per hour.

But all this speed and sudden thrust upwards is minimised inside the plane. There is no sense of speed, and very little discomfort in the rapid and steep climb. The air-conditioning and comfortable seating make the travel very pleasant.

What a contrast to the means of travel available to Brother Roberts when, some 60 years ago, he, too, left Sydney for San Francisco! He travelled by ship, and the ships of his day were not to be compared with the luxury liners of today. His ship struck a tremendous storm which sent most people to their bunks, but which gave Brother Roberts the necessary isolation to complete his final work before his sudden death in San Francisco. He travelled at perhaps 15 m.p.h., suffering all the

discomforts incidental to such a trip in those times; we were travelling at 550 m.p.h., in the height of comfort. He took weeks to reach his destination; for us it is but a matter of hours. Thus modern invention has made the world smaller, and brought nations into touch with one another which were one time completely separated. The influence of this is seen in world events, for with the passing of time, and the perfection of modern inventions, nations widely separated from the scene of conflict are drawn into crisis that would one time not concern them in the least. This rapid acceleration of speed in travel comprises one of the signs of the times (Dan. 12: 4).

We touched down briefly at Fiji, but an hour later were in the air again on the way to Honolulu. We flew through the night and arrived at Honolulu at 8 am. Wednesday morning, that is, the morning of the afternoon we had left Sydney! We had actually made up time in covering the 6,225 miles from Adelaide! This is a token of man's cleverness in this age of materialism; but how sadly he lags behind in spiritual development. Morally, the world was a happier place in the days of Brother Roberts; men were more interested then in the Bible, even though their understanding of it was far from correct. The past sixty years have witnessed a sad degeneration in man's spiritual development. Where God was once revered, He is now ridiculed; where the Bible was once respected, it is now mocked. But though man has set his back to the ways of God, he is not the happier for it. The intervening years have witnessed trouble and war, with an even greater one looming on the horizon. The very machines that man has made and perfected can be the means of his own destruction; they comprise a tyrant that can shatter and ruin him.

We saw evidences of that in Honolulu, the capital of Oahu. We landed at the international airport, and made our way to the custom's office. But constantly, as we waited for clearances, we were disturbed by air-force planes taking off to encircle around the Pacific and to return. The U.S.A. had one terrible experience in Pearl Harbour in 1941, and is determined not to have a second.

But for the moment, Honolulu and Waikiki are places given completely over to pleasure. It is the business of the people, and visitors are quite serious in their intentions of being amused. There is a constant round of pleasure, and holiday-makers show a determination to take it all in. Oahu is indeed a beautiful island, with a lovely climate that averages some 75 degrees throughout the year, with an adequate rainfall of some 30 inches in the plains to upwards of 250 inches in the mountains, making the valleys lush and green. Everything, from the buildings, to the forms of entertainment, is on the modern scale, and "fabulous" is the only adequate adjective.

What amused us most, was the attitude of tourists. They showed a determination to cram as much into their pleasure as possible. Money seemed no concern. And the places of pleasure compete with one another to outdo its competitor in the unusual. Certainly there is nothing comparable to this in Australia.

Yet the people are not really happy. They wear their strange Hawaiian hats, the curious native gowns, they queue up at the places of entertainment, they look goggle-eyed at the strange native customs that are kept alive for the amusement of these tourists, but discontent is written all over their faces. They are not really happy, but seek a pleasure and a form of relaxation that eludes them. With grim determination to outdo other tourists they go from pleasure to pleasure, seemingly weary of it all. We were far happier in our hotel-room doing the daily readings from the Word, steeping ourselves in a pleasure that

comes not from beneath, but from above. The world about us fully reflects the condition that existed in Sodom and Gomorrah: "Pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness" (Ezek. 16: 49), and perhaps nowhere is this found as in this island of pleasure. That is why it is so hard in these times to impress the value of the Truth upon the minds of men and women. They are absorbed in a form of life that seems to offer so much, and they cannot see the need of sacrifice.

But underneath this veneer of pleasure-seeking, this worship of the god of flesh and self, there penetrates a warning of things to come. We saw it as we toured this island with eyes opened to the purpose of Yahweh with this world of wickedness. The island is a beautiful one — towering mountains and deep valleys, lovely rolling plains, lush verdure everywhere, and a prosperous, pleasure-seeking people. But even in this island of idleness, there is maintained a constant vigilance against enemy attack. The planes roar out continuously. In the local barracks some 14,000 young men are training to kill, and opposite the barracks (though nothing to do with it) there is a large sign which with grim humour says: "He who throws in the towel gets all washed up!" Thus whilst the mad round of pleasure continues, the little cluster of islands which stands on our maps as the Hawaiian Islands is constantly circled by war planes. The people only have to look up to heaven to be reminded that this way of life can quickly end — and if they look further into heaven, or into Heaven's revelation to man, they will learn what will replace it.

How privileged are we that the secret of the Almighty has been whispered in our ears.

We travelled through the centre of Oahu down a road that leads to Pearl Harbour. On that sunny day, it was a stretch of deep blue, peacefully glistening in the bright sunlight. It looked like that also, on the 7th December, 1941, when a world was locked in war though it had not involved U.S.A. But that day proved a day of tragedy, for swiftly and suddenly, Japanese planes swooped out of the heavens to launch their attack on the 98 warships sheltered in the harbour. Five 1,000 lb. bombs were launched, one of which went straight down the smoke-stack of the warship Arizona, which blew up and sank in 8 minutes with 1102 men on board. It was not the only casualty. Another warship, the Utah, suffered a similar fate. Today the hulls of these two ships are seen in the Harbour with the Stars and Stripes waving above.

And today a greater menace than Japan threatens world peace. Our Hawaiian driver reminded us of this, by telling us of an article he had recently read in the newspaper. It recorded that in World War 2 Germany had the largest submarine fleet of all the warring powers, and was able to menace allied shipping as a result. Today, Russia has five times more submarines than U.S.A., and in its fleet, it has many nuclear submarines equal to anything that U.S.A. can produce, which could stand off from the shores of any enemy territory and launch H-bombs against the cities. Peaceful and quiet the Harbour looked as we saw it, but it must have been a raging inferno when the Japanese planes swooped out of the sky to drop their loads of death and destruction on the unsuspecting ships below.

We passed a radar station perched high on the top of a hill, so powerful, claims the U.S. marine authorities, that it can intercept any object as far distant as the moon itself.

But, in spite of these grim forebodings of future trouble, the lovely warm climate, the beautiful scenery, the luxury and glamour everywhere in evidence, is sufficient to lull one asleep.

And to aid all this is the prevailing superstitions.

Many churches are represented — fashionable show places which

attempt to compete with the luxury about. The Jews are building an ornate Synagogue called the Temple of Emmanuel, or God with us! If only they appreciated the great prophecy of Immanuel contained in Isaiah 8 and 9, which speaks of how they will look upon the true Immanuel in such a way that he shall be "a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel" (Isa. 8: 14), how that because of their blindness they shall "stumble and fall," but the truth will be "sealed among the disciples" of the Lord (v. 16). The prophet shows that even when Immanuel would appear they would reject him until the time will come when they will be forced to receive him. Meanwhile "they curse their king and their God" and experience trouble, anguish and dispersion (v. 22).

Yet this synagogue of glamour set in this island of paganism, a token of Yahweh's truth spoken through Isaiah, is called the Temple of Emmanuel.

There is a Buddhist Temple not far from Honolulu. Like Buddhist temples throughout the world, this, too, is very beautifully appointed. The day that we entered it with curiosity, it was in company with a large party of tourists, who listened to a lecture upon the principles of the Buddhist Faith by a Japanese lady preacher, Miss Takiko Ichinose. She explained that the name Buddha is really a title and not a name; that it signifies the Enlightened One, and that we can all attain unto the title. She put forward the proposition that we are all travelling by different roads to the one destination, and that Buddha could contribute to our welfare. She explained the symbolism used in the worship. The Lotus flower, for example, is a symbol of the ideal of every Buddhist to rise out of the mud of his natural thoughts to the glory of better living that will lead to better lives. Thus the Lotus has its roots in the mud, but its flower is opened to the glory of heaven, and reflects to the credit of the Creator. The thoughts of yesterday, she said, have contributed to what we have done today, and so the thoughts of today are helping to mould tomorrow. How vital that we should discipline and beautify our thoughts that we should become changed men and women.

How true much of this is, but how far from rightly honouring the Creator is the mumbo-jumbo of Buddhism. Yet what could the pleasure-mad tourists offer that was better? They listened in polite silence, doubtless agreeing with what the young lady preached, unable to see the palpable flaw in her argument.

In charge of this Temple is a Buddhist Priest, who calls himself by the name of Ernest Shinkaku Hunt. He is an Englishman who came from London and embraced this faith, and is now in charge of the church. He has written books expounding the principles of the Buddhist faith. He presided over the sale of some of these books dressed in his robes, as he told me how he had migrated from London and had taken over his position.

We were shown the rosary beads, the candles burning, the gong to remind the worshippers, the incense burning before the altar. How close to Roman Catholicism! In fact, the book before me, published by this English Buddhist states: "The Christians copied the Buddhist juzu (rosary), the kesa (stole) mark of ordination and teaching authority. So long as we do not copy the cocktail parties and the sacerdotalism, etc., we should not worry."

The time is coming when all this mysticism — so-called Christian as well as paganism — is to be swept into the abyss.

A point of interest is the use of the Swastika as a symbol. It is said to be especially sacred to Buddhists. Its resemblance to a wheel is symbolic of the Wheel of Truth. The four L's of which it is made up symbolise the Buddha of Eternal Life, Immeasurable Light and Bound-

less Love for whom we must ever Labour. The claim was made: "During the past five thousand years the Swastika has gone around the world with a message of peace and goodwill"!!

The six million Jews who died in the concentration camps of pagan Germany provide the answer to that!

On a dominating position in almost the centre of the Island is a beautiful building dedicated to Mormonism. Large gates bar the entrance, an avenue of graceful trees bordering some artificial terraced lakes and beds of flowers, lead to the summit above on which is built the Temple proper. Here again propaganda was well to the fore. An official of the church spake of the significance and virtues of the Mormon worship. It has the answer to many of the problems of today, he alleged. Take divorce, for example. Divorce is rife in America, but not so among the adherents of Mormonism. A Mormon is taught that marriage is forever and indissoluble, not only in this life, but of that beyond the grave. So how can divorce be logically carried out? A Mormon, presumably, would be re-united to his wife after death even if divorce was entered into now! Thus the problem was solved.

This solving of the problem did not seem to appeal to the group of pleasure-loving Americans that surrounded this Pastor.

After the crowd had dispersed, we asked him why the Church was not opened to visitors. We learned that it was not considered a church but a Temple; it was not used as a place in which to worship, but a place at which to worship. Only very few were permitted within the Temple. To gain access they must have a proper permit signed to do so, and such a privilege is only granted in special circumstances when some particular virtue on the part of the worshipper warrants it. The building of such places is fundamental to Mormon system of worship. It is claimed that without them there can be no hope of celestial thrones, and no blessings could be given. The temples build by Mormons are linked with the Temple of Jerusalem. Attention is drawn to the indignant words of the Saviour when he drove the money-making desecrators of the Temple from its precincts, saying: "It is written, my house shall be called the House of Prayer for all nations; but ye have made it a den of thieves" (Mark 11: 17).

Here was the fulfilment of his words!

So it was claimed, and so it is set forth in a booklet that was offered to us explanatory of the Mormon temples and what goes on inside of them.

Here, again, is mystery and superstition; the glorious words of the Scriptures mixed up hopelessly with the imaginations of the flesh. The claim is made that the Book of Mormons is equally to be accepted as the Word of God as that of the Bible. That claim is made in spite of the warning of the Bible: "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book" (Rev. 22: 18). The beautiful prophecies concerning Israel, the Holy Land, the Zion of the future, the Return of Christ are distorted and made foolish by this lying superstition. Yet tremendous wealth is poured into this system, and men bow down to the folly as though it is truth.

But the Truth is proclaimed by a small, despised group of people, often assembling in inconvenient, dirty little halls, and speaking to small communities.

It is part of the drama of the times that these same truths are yet to sweep the world, and bring all men subject to Christ's authority and the transforming power of his Truth.

We were pleased to turn our backs upon this island of iniquity and pleasure, and board the jet-plane for the next stage of our journey among the "little flock" of British Columbia where the Truth is found.

For Private Study



NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE

An itemised Exposition of the Book of Revelation, based on
"Eureka" and designed for home study and for Bible marking.

(Continued from page 342)

REVELATION, CHAPTER 6.

VERSE 4

"Red" — Cp. Isa. 1: 18. Red indicates sin and bloodshed. Peace is taken from the earth.

"Him that sat thereon" — "This equestrian is a symbolical personage, not representative of an individual man, but of a class of agents blindly executing retribution upon those obnoxious to the Lamb's displeasure. He represents a class of agents endowed with the power of the sword, ready and able to wield it in the cause of peace of war" ("Eureka"). This period was dominated by the Praetorian Guard, the soldiers into whose care was placed Rome and the person of the Emperor.

"Take peace from the earth" — In contrast to the peaceful conditions of the first seal.

"A great sword" — The "Machaira" or Dagger. Liddell and Scott Greek Lexicon defines it as "a large knife or dirk; a short sword or dagger; but still rather an assassin than a soldier's weapon." This assassin's sword or dagger symbolised the times: a period of bloodshedding, civil wars, wholesale assassinations and murders. The Praetorian Guards who were responsible for the regal dignity of the Empire, and who had been stationed near the capital by order of Tiberius, abused the privileges that had been granted them, and made ready use of this assassin's weapon. Rome was thus dominated by this "sword," the Praetorian Guard, during this period. They became Yahweh's "sword" to punish the wicked (Psa. 17: 13).

History of the Period:

Commodus rapidly degenerated in character after the attempt upon his life in 183. The "white" of the Roman horse soon became sullied and reddened by excess and bloodshed. The record states: "To him it was given power to take peace from the earth." Gibbon writes of the reign of Commodus: "Distinction of every kind soon became criminal. Virtue implied a dangerous superiority of merit; the friendship of the father (Marcus Aurelius) ensured the aversion of the son. The execution of a considerable senator was attended with the death of all who might lament or revenge his fate; and when Commodus had once tasted human blood, he became incapable of pity or remorse."

In 193 he was strangled to death, and was succeeded by the virtuous Pertinax, of whom Gibbon records: "He found a way of condemning his predecessor's memory, by the contrast of his own virtues with the vices of Commodus." He endeavoured to repair the damage caused by his predecessor, and to restore the peace of the First Seal. In this work he was prevented by the Praetorian Guard, who fearing the suppression of their privileges, power, and vices, assassinated the worthy prince. The

Guard was the disturbing element of the Empire. Gibbon declares: "Their licentious fury was the first symptom and cause of the decline of the Roman Empire . . . Elated by success enervated by luxury, and raised above the level of the subjects, they soon became oppressive to the country, and impatient of just subordination." Again: "The Praetorian Guard had violated the sanctity of the throne by the atrocious murder of Pertinax; they dishonoured the majesty of it by their subsequent conduct." They put the Empire up for auction, knocking it down to the highest bidder, one Didius Julianus, a vain old senator, who gained it by paying £200 to each of the Guards.

Thus, not only was "peace taken from the earth," but "they began to kill one another" (Rev. 6: 4). The insult paid by the Guards to the Empire by daring to offer it up for auction, aroused the anger of three Generals commanding various divisions of the Roman Legions; Clodius Albinus, Pescennius Niger, and Septimus Severus. Each marched on Rome to defend its honour. The first to reach the capital was Severus, and with his legions, trained in war, he prepared to attack the Praetorian Guard. The latter were soldiers in name only, and were not prepared to contest the issue, nor defend the person of Julianus in the face of the determined and skilled warriors of Severus. To appease the latter, they beheaded Julianus, and pronounced Severus Emperor. Severus subsequently disbanded the Guard, replacing it with his own legions.

Meanwhile, the two other generals were converging on Rome from different directions. Severus met them each in battle, and successively disposed of them both. Whilst he was a ruthless and inveterate enemy to his foes, he was a just and firm ruler, and under his control, the last eight years of his reign brought more peace to the Empire.

The sufferings of Rome were Divine retribution for the persecutions that had been levelled against the Christians during the period of the first seal. Nobody can harm the people of God, or oppose His truth with impunity, for precious in the eyes of Yahweh is the death of His saints (Psa. 116: 14). The distress heaped on Rome during the course of this seal, avenged the distress that Rome had heaped upon the Christians during the period of the first seal. Throughout the period of both seals, Christianity continued to make progress, though now heresies were becoming numerous. Persecution was not so acute during the period of the second seal.

The distress of this time when "peace was taken from the earth," was revealed in the terrible rate of mortality during periods of it. During the worst time, civil dissension, famine and pestilence caused through incompetent rule, resulted in the death of no less than 2,000 people daily.

3rd Seal: FAMINE AND DISTRESS — A.D. 212-235 (vv. 5-6).
 Comprising the period of Geta (211-212: murdered by his brother Caracalla); Caracalla (212-217: assassinated); Macrinus (217: murdered); Elagabalus (217-222: assassinated); Alexander Severus (222-235: murdered).

VERSE 5

"A black horse" — The colour changes, so also does the condition of the Empire. Black speaks of distress, intense depression of mind (cp. Job 30: 26-31), mourning (Lam. 4: 8).

"A pair of balances" — The symbol of Justice, or the Administrator of the Law. "In this seal, it is the symbol of agents, whose office it was to execute the laws — the imperial functionaries of the empire; both the emperors and their subordinates" ("Eureka"). Whilst a pair of balances was the symbol of Justice, it does not therefore follow that

Justice, in the strict meaning of the word, was carried out. Roman coins extant have a pair of balances engraved as a symbol of the Emperor, the administrator of Law and Justice.

VERSE 6

"A voice" — Sometimes used for law (Deut. 4-20), also for a governmental decree (Ezra 1: 1 - mg). The "voice" John heard were the edicts issued from the government, and executed by the officials of the Empire.

"The midst of the four beasts" — The voice is heard from the midst of the four beasts, for by this time Christianity was found throughout the length and breadth of the Empire.

"A measure of wheat for a penny" etc. — Bread eaten by weight indicative of famine. The excesses of the Emperors, and bad government caused excessive taxation and universal distress. Farming became profitless through the heavy taxation, so that whole districts became deserted, causing famine and distress. Literally, the voice said: "A choenix of wheat a denarius," etc. There were three choenixes (i.e., measures) in use in Rome. The most common was the "attic" which weighed about 2 lb. The "denarius" was a silver coin worth about 3d. according to Dr. Thomas, but worth much more in these days of inflation. According to this reckoning, wheat would be about £1 per bushel, barley 6/8 per bushel. Dr. Thomas suggests that this was the extent to which these goods were taxed by Governmental decree, thus making the prices prohibitive. The Roman State Tax was heavy in the first place. Then there were employed tax-gatherers who put their charges upon the original tax, and this sometimes amounted to four times the rate originally assessed by the State. Farming became unprofitable (Ezek. 4: 16; Lev. 26: 26).

"Hurt not the oil and wine" — Towards the end of the period of this seal, the sufferings of the people were alleviated a little through the wise reforms of Alexander Severus.

History of the Period:

The bloodshed of the second seal had affected mainly the upper classes of Rome, but the brutality and excesses of the terrible Caracalla caused distress and misery to thousands of Roman citizens of every class, and extended into the provinces as well.

Caracalla, with his brother Geta, succeeded his father Severus in the year 211. He was a man of uncontrollable and unnatural passion. Several times, during his father's last illness, he tried to poison him, and he once unsuccessfully endeavoured to raise a mutiny among the troops against his father's government.

On the death of Severus, the two brothers were established as masters of the world. But rancour and discord soon flared up between them. It was quite evident that both could not reign, and a plan to divide the Empire between them failed. Their mother, Julia, tried to bring about a reconciliation between her sons, but in the midst of the negotiations, some centurians, in the pay of Caracalla, suddenly burst into the conference room, and assassinated his brother Geta.

Caracalla now blackened the Roman "horse" by filling the empire with distress, mourning and woe. He first made his own position sure by conciliating the most powerful element of his kingdom — the Army. He increased their pay, impoverishing the State finances by his reckless gifts to them. The Provinces were taxed heavier and heavier to cope with his wild spending. Soon farming became uneconomical. It was more profitable not to sow grain than to have rapacious tax-gatherers seize that which had cost some labour and money to produce! As indicated by Rev. 6: 6, the cost of foodstuffs became prohibitive, and the distress of the people became aggravated by famine caused not by failure of crops or lack of rain, but by exorbitant taxation.

Meanwhile, Caracalla's mind was haunted by his assassination of Geta. He tried to rid himself of all remembrance of it by destroying all who had known, or who ever referred to his late brother. Even his mother narrowly escaped death from the hands of her son. Gibbon records that "under the vague appellation of the friends of Geta, above 20,000 persons of both sexes suffered death." "If a senator was accused of being a secret enemy of the Government, the emperor was satisfied with the general proof that he was a man of property and virtue. From this well-grounded principle he frequently drew the most bloodthirsty inferences. Delighting in the title of the "Savage Beast of Ausonia." Caracalla was the common enemy of mankind. Wealthy families were ruined by partial fines and confiscations, and the great body of his subjects oppressed by ingenious and aggravated taxes. At Alexandria, he directed a general slaughter of the citizens without distinguishing either the number or the crime of the sufferers. Thus the Roman Empire groaned under a tyrant who made the period black with distress and mourning.

Relief soon came, however. In the year 217, Caracalla was assassinated at the instigation of Macrinus, his civil officer, who had reason to fear that the death sentence would soon be passed on him. No one lamented the death of Caracalla except the army who had benefited from the lavish pay of their master, the tyrant of the Empire. Owing to their influence, he was created a god after his death!

Fate had placed Macrinus in a lofty position of influence, but he was too weak to effectively use or retain it. He was unpopular both with the people and with the army. Realising the necessity of reform, he tried to introduce it into the army, only to find himself with a mutiny on his hands. Bassianus (who assumed the name of Antoninus, and later Elagabalus) led the army against Macrinus, and though he was also able to raise a force, his courage was not equal to the trial. At the moment of crisis, he lost his nerve and fled from the field of battle. This completed his ruin.

The Empire was likewise blackened with distress by the effeminate Elagabalus. His main superstition was the worship of the sun, which he pursued with all imaginable excesses. His lavish expenditure of the public finances drained the resources of the Empire, and causing distress to weigh heavily upon his subjects. His reign is marked by the suppression of all that is good, noble and right, whilst lust and licentiousness were elevated. His vicious practices, and sensuous delights disgusted the whole world. "The wicked are exalted when vile men are high in place."

Gibbon records that "the inflammatory powers of art were summoned to his aid. The confused multitude of women, of wine, and of dishes, and the studied variety of attitudes and sauces served to revive his languid appetites. New terms and new inventions in these sciences, the only ones cultivated and patronised by this monster in crime, signalised his reign, and transmitted his infamy to succeeding time." "The invention of a new sauce was liberally rewarded, but if it was not relished, the inventor was confined to eat of nothing else till he had discovered another more agreeable to the imperial palate." He subverted every law of nature and decency, and asserted without control his sovereign privileges of lust and luxury.

Under such a monarch as this, the people groaned in their distress and misery. Oppressive taxation and famine accentuated the position, until even the soldiers turned in disgust from the effeminate and dissolute emperor, and favourably compared the virtues of his cousin Alexander, whom Elagabalus, as a favour to his mother, had made Caesar,

VOLUME TWENTY SIX

THE LOGOS

Upholding the Purity of Apostolic Doctrine and Practice

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Thoughts for the Times

Our God-Given Work

The divinely allotted work of Christadelphians lies not in the realm of politics, nor in joining the world in its thousand and one enterprises for the amelioration and removal of the many evils with which mankind is cursed. Their work is Christ's work — a work which he left for them to finish (Luke 19: 13). It consists in preaching the Gospel, and in upbuilding the brotherhood on the lines of the Truth — in co-operating with God in the preparation of a people for His name (Luke 4: 43; 2 Tim. 2: 2; Rev. 22: 17; Acts 15: 14). And what a work! — What an honour and privilege to be able to carry it on. And who is there that cannot co-operate in it? All can — the little serving maid, and the "lady of the house" — the labouring man and the well-to-do employer. It is a business second to none.

"Let the dead bury their dead," said Christ to his disciples. What did he mean? Did he mean that the calling of an undertaker was not useful or necessary? No. What he sought to convey was that this work was of secondary, not vital importance, and could well be carried out by the world. The dissemination of the Truth was the believers' especial charge, therefore Christ added: "But go thou and preach the kingdom of God" (Luke 9: 60; Mark 16: 15-16; 1 Thess. 2: 16). Christ prayed for an increase of labourers (Luke 10: 2). There is need now for the same prayer, but let us not pray the prayer, and at the same time voluntarily fritter away our leisure and energy on affairs which are the world's concern and not Christ's.

—A.J.

Nations in Relation to the Time of the End

THE ISLES OF TIN

All the prophecies of the "time of the end" revolve around the return of Israel. Like the needle in a compass, this event points unerringly to the consummation of the age. But before the nation will be really suited for the destiny Yahweh has in store for it, the people must be humbled, disciplined, and educated in the Divine Will. The invasion of Gogue will help to accomplish that. It will inaugurate the "time of Jacob's trouble" out of which he shall be delivered. The prophet declares:

"Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall come to pass in that day, saith Yahweh of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him; but they shall serve Yahweh their God, and David (i.e., the Beloved—the Lord Jesus) their king, whom I will raise up unto them" (Jer. 30: 7-9).

Zechariah speaks in similar terms:

"It shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith Yahweh, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on My name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is My people, and they shall say, Yahweh is my God" (Zech. 13: 9).

Adversity shall thus teach Israel the principles of righteousness. The people will be brought to realise the folly of placing confidence in the arm of the flesh, and will seek the favour of Yahweh. The invasion of Russia will help to induce that state of mind within the nation, and will thus play an important part in the development of Yahweh's purpose with it.

Gogue's Challenger

The invader is challenged, but not halted, by "Sheba, Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish with all the young lions thereof" (Ezek. 38: 13). What power is that? Sheba and Dedan can be geographically traced to locations in Arabia: at Aden, the south-west corner, and Bahrein and Oman on the coast of the Persian Gulf. In both these Arabic sites there are found powerful British oil interests.

In regard to Tarshish, further information is available. Ezekiel describes it as a "merchant power" in conjunction

with "the young lions thereof."

Earlier he describes Tarshish as a merchant of Tyre, trading in "silver, iron, tin, and lead" (Ezek. 27: 12, 25). In other places Tarshish is clearly spoken of as a great (if not the greatest) seafaring power. References to "ships of Tarshish" are found in such places as Isa. 2: 16; 23: 1, 14; 60: 9; 1 Kings 22: 48.

Historically, the Phoenicians based on Tyre, were the sailors of the ancient world. The Mediterranean became a "Phoenician Lake," conquered and dominated by the ships of Tyre. The Phoenicians were intrepid sailors, penetrating the "Pillars of Hercules" beyond Gibraltar, even rounding the African Cape. They charted the Atlantic coast of Europe at least as far as the south of Britain. They were highly skilled mercantile merchantmen, and created an overseas empire

Tartessus was among the most noted of the Phoenician trading centres. The name is said to signify "Tarshish's Island." It was situated off southern Spain at a place which is today identified with Gibraltar.

This was Tarshish of the west.

Tartessus became a centre to which was brought the wealth of the mainland. Minerals were brought down to the Mediterranean coast by river, particularly down the Rhine to Marseilles, and from thence to Tartessus, or Gibraltar. Britain, itself, was found to be rich in minerals, particularly iron and tin. For a time these were also transported across France to the Mediterranean coast, but ultimately, the Phoenicians established trading posts in Britain itself, and dealt directly with the inhabitants who probably had an appearance similar to the Bretons of Brittany, and the inhabitants of Spain. Thus the Phoenicians may well have called them by the same name. Certainly Britain (said to have been derived from "Baratanac" signifying "Land of Metals") became the great source of tin in the ancient world, and was known to the Greeks vaguely as the Cassiterides or Tin Islands (though the Greeks did not know where they were, for the Phoenicians kept this secret).

There are numerous scriptural prophecies, relating to the latter days, addressed to "the isles afar off," the "coastlands of the sea." In the days of the prophet, these expressions would be identified with Tarshish. Some are referred to as follows:

"Therefore glorify Him (Yahweh), every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen" (Zeph. 2: 11).

"The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents" (Psa. 72: 10),

Many other references will be discovered by the use of a Concordance.

Such references as "isles afar off" can only reasonably signify Britain (other islands in the Mediterranean were not mysteriously "afar off"), whilst connection with Tarshish and Tyre signifies a merchant power, a pre-eminent sea-faring nation.

This was Tarshish of the west.

There was also a Tarshish of the east.

Solomon's fleet left Ezion-geber on a three-year voyage in search of cargo from the east. It returned with supplies of "ivory, apes and peacocks" which had been obtained, most likely, from India (1 Kings 10: 22). This was also styled Tarshish — the Tarshish of the east. And it is significant that both places, the Tarshish of the east and that of the west, have been both closely identified with Great Britain.

The identity with the English-speaking world is established further by reference to "the young lions thereof." It is significant that in the prophecy of Ezekiel, they are each represented as speaking for themselves, on their own behalf, and not governed by the decision of the merchant power of Tarshish. Since the British Commonwealth of Nations was established some years back, the once dependent colonies have been fused into a company of independent powers linked together by common ties of self-interest. In time of war, they independently decide for or against participation on their own individual behalf, exactly as the prophecy demands.

Thus there is scope in the prophecy for the powerful U.S.A. as well as for humbler nations such as Australia. All are welded together by ties of mutual self-interest to oppose the invasion of the Russian Gogue.

Today the world is virtually divided between the English-speaking world and that of Russia. When the invasion predicted by Ezekiel occurs, it will be imperative for all nations of what is styled by some the "free world," to unite in protest against the Russian attack. Clearly the world is gradually drifting into a state of things such as Ezekiel 38 indicates—when it is interpreted in the traditional Christadelphian way, as it is in "Elpis Israel." Students can re-read Brother Thomas's expositions of this prophecy with interest and profit. We are convinced that his words will stand the test of time when other, less well thought-out interpretations have failed.

Future of the English-speaking World

Beyond the storms of Ezekiel 38, 39, the Scriptures speak of the humbling of Tarshish's naval power and pride (Isa. 2: 16; Psa. 48: 7), the subordinate but honorable alliance to the King in Jerusalem, and the assistance it shall render in the final restoration of Israel to the land (Isa. 19; 60: 9). The type of this is found in the alliance of Hiram, King of Tyre, with Solomon "in the days of yore."

But as with Israel, before Tarshish is fit to serve Yahweh acceptably, it must be humbled, disciplined, and educated in the Divine will and purpose. The Scriptures speak of this. Isaiah declares that "the day of Yahweh of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low." Among those so humbled are "all the ships of Tarshish" (v. 16). The result will be an honourable alliance between the Victor of Armageddon and Tarshish whose mercantile marine power will be put at the disposal of the Lord Jesus. The prophet gives the final picture thus:

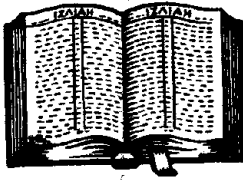
"The isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them" (Isa. 60: 12).

When all the facts are analysed in the light of Scripture, Brother Thomas's exposition of this interesting subject still remains sound, and destiny is working out in accordance with Scripture, in the way he has set it out.

Love Your Enemies (Matt. 5: 44)

The "love" of this commandment must be distinguished from that fond affection which (based on esteem and appreciation of character) can only be felt towards the friends of God. But there is a love which is more akin to pity; which is the softening of our feeling towards those who are in error and wrong. It is in this sense the commandment is practicable, though very difficult. For we may well love our enemies, knowing how vain and blind such enmity is, and how their fury will recoil with tenfold force upon themselves when the day of the Lord comes. The love of Jesus towards the Jews when he wept over Jerusalem, or cried, "Father forgive them," was a different feeling from that which drew the kindred hearts of Jesus and John together; but nevertheless how real his tears; how sincere his prayer! Ah, where can this grace of love be found? Not in the "world;" not in professing Christians generally; can it be found in us?

— A.B.



Things New and Old

No. 15—

GOD, MAN, and the LAND

According to the footnote to my last article, I had intended writing about the War of God Almighty. I was going to do this as part of the general theme I have been following in these articles. We commenced by discussing the reality of the coming age, and how we may attain to it. We reflected on the fact that the return of the Master has nothing in common with magic and fairy tale. The establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth will be a very practical affair, involving much down to earth (though heavenly!) business. Those who are invited to assist in establishing Christ's rule on earth, even though they will have passed through death and resurrection, will be basically the people they became, through the grace of God, during their mortal probation.

We then considered the means whereby men and women become sealed in the forehead by the Divine impressions in the Word and prayer. This took longer than we had expected but now I want to continue our look at the future. After Christ's people are made immortal, the next step is the subduing of a world that knows not God; the conquest of His political, social, and religious enemies; the removal of the veil that is over all peoples; in a word — the War of God Almighty.

The Aims of Divine War

But, who are these enemies? What is this veil? What is wrong with the world? What will the world be like after the Lion of the Tribe of Judah has prevailed?

When a war is waged, we must be clear about the "war aims," or else it is purely negative. When Yahweh is seen as a man of war, what will be His objects?

It seemed to me that we should look at what it is that needs destroying before embarking on the military campaign itself. We must have a vision of the new order that will prevail on earth, when the tumult and shouting die. This will involve looking at the day — the "today life" of the mortal

people of the earth in the future, and comparing it with the world today.

The object of the Kingdom will be to fill the earth with God's glory, and to do this man's pride must be humbled. The final object is "God all in all" — all things in all men. Today He is nothing in most men. Man is puffed up with pride in his own technological achievements; his "taming" of the earth; his "conquest" of nature; his evolution of thought. "God made man upright but they have sought out many inventions." Man has made for himself a complex, tense, and unlovely environment. Side by side with that he has heaped to himself teachers that tickle his ears in religion and in all branches of life. He needs to be humbled, to become ready to receive new teachers, and a new environment in which he may be receptive to such teaching. Restore the simple cycle of life — man rooted in the soil, instead of crowded into cities. Rebuild the pillars of society: **GOD-FAMILY-LAND**, and men will be able to respond to the pastors who shall feed them with knowledge and understanding, and to listen to the voice which shall say: "this is the way: walk ye in it."

As Christadelphians, we readily recognize that man is out of fellowship with God in his religious beliefs and practises. We appreciate that the mother of harlots and all her daughters must be swept out of existence — but in many other things we adopt the world's standards and share in human competitiveness; in man's covetous discontent; in his pleasures; in his pride in science and technical advance. We do not sufficiently realise that man is totally and absolutely alienated from God in all his thinking and ways.

The Gentiles will come from the ends of the earth and say: "surely our fathers have inherited lies and things wherein there is no profit." They will realise that Jordan water on the infant brow was futile; that the bishops, in their mitres and vestments, had for centuries misled them to worship false gods. But most of those living when Christ begins to reign will have little belief or principle at all. God will simply have been absent from all their thoughts. How could it have been otherwise in the bustle of modern life, where man is so divorced from a natural environment that his mind just isn't receptive to Divine ideas.

Reconstruction

He needs a new environment and new teachers (new heavens and a new earth). Before he is given a new environ-

ment, the old one has to be swept out of the way. Hence that day of wrath, that is coming to turn the world upside down and make it reel to and fro, like a drunken man. Much of our attention in building up the Kingdom, if we are permitted to participate, will be given to the provision of this proper background — to the creation of an atmosphere in which the Truth can take root. As the clouds of war recede in any part of the earth where Christ and his people have been victorious, reconstruction will immediately begin. The immediate need will be for food and clothing and practical rehabilitation. It will go hand in hand with mental and moral renewal of the mortal survivors, but even those made equal to angels could not dispense Divine Truth to ragged, hungry, homeless, bewildered refugees. Only if they first helped the

Brother Wille's object in his present articles, is to stimulate a sense of reality about the Kingdom, and the work we hope to do therein. He is trying to piece together direct information and hints from the Word, with facts about the land and systems of man to be overthrown. He would welcome additional points, further evidence, questions, or constructive criticism, and will gather such together into one or two supplementary articles. These comments can be sent direct to him at "Cherry Tree Cottage," Whittington, Kenver, Stourbridge, Worcestershire, England.

forlorn waifs of war to build up a new material life, could they give them hope and new life and new ideals.

Thus the work of establishing the Kingdom will be very practical indeed. But what will the saints reconstruct? Will they enable the mortal people to rebuild their skyscrapers, motorways, aeroplanes, factories, offices, power stations, shopping centres, television studios, luxury flats and industrial concentrations? Assuredly not. These things will have gone for ever. I have an inward conviction of this, not shared by all my brethren, but which, as I see it, is based very broadly on the whole tenor of the Word. I sketched it seven years ago in "Logos." I set it before you again, not dogmatically, expecting that you will agree with me in every aspect, but to stimulate you (and me) to think about the Kingdom as something very real and practical, and to try to visualise some of the actual jobs we hope, in God's mercy, to be doing in a few years' time. I set them before you in the hope that you will feel less rooted in this present evil world, with all its tinsel artificiality and glittering hollowness; that you and I may, at present, truly feel strangers and pilgrims, even in the ordinary things of life.

Back to the Land

Observation of man and study of the Word over the last seven years have more than ever convinced me that life for the mortal inhabitants of the earth in the Kingdom age, will be on a simple pastoral basis, in which vast industrialisation will have no place. Only thus will they attain that serenity of mind in which the peace of God can dwell. I have become more than ever convinced that man's hostility to a fertile soil and a simple husbandry; his preference to herd in masses of concrete is one of the greatest evils of our time. God made man for the field, but they have preferred cities — cities and sin have walked together from the days of Cain. I have felt increasingly, too, that Christadelphian preaching, when it tries to be topical and to ask people to consider problems like disarmament, Russia, the hydrogen bomb, is, like the daily press, playing down many other major problems, such as man's progressive rape of the earth and his inability to feed the population of the earth. Why don't we give lectures like: "How will the Hungry be Fed?"

Without detracting from the importance of testifying to people on political problems (indeed, we might well be more forthright in our campaign against the churches of the Apostasy), I am stressing the other side of things, because within this artificial civilization has been swept out of the way with the besom of destruction, we shall see the real problems to be solved. If Yahweh of Armies did not intervene, the exhaustion of the sources of man's nourishment in soil and seas by human mis-management, would kill the race as certainly as nuclear weapons. This article will not get much further than exposing some of the follies of man which are to be reversed by the war of God Almighty and the rebuilding to follow.

The Cycle of Life

There is a science called "ecology," which deals with the relationship of living things to their environment. Even though the earth was cursed through sin, God has established a wonderful pattern of nature with which man could work (not, of course, without a struggle and the sweat of his face). If he also followed Divine Truth and righteousness he would be blessed in basket and store.

In the natural, material things there is a cycle of life, which, even apart from the hard work engendered by the curse, man has disrupted with his inventiveness and independent spirit. God has given to man the gift of soil. Out

of it springs everything needed to keep him alive. Out of the soil — **not** out of the emporium, out of the tin, or out of the mass-producing factory assembly line. God has given soil, and He has spent many centuries preparing it. And what has civilization after civilization done with it? Thrown it in God's face — and gone to live in cities which later the barren deserts have covered; deserts made by man's misuse.

God caused the rocks to weather in such a way that all the chemical elements needed to sustain the man He should afterward form from the dust of the ground, were present in this storehouse: then He caused herbage to form on its surface, some of it with extremely long root systems to draw up from the subsoil the elements vital to the nutriment of man. Thousands of generations of herbage and the beasts of the field manuring the earth gave to it a fertile topsoil, populated by millions of bacteria and other micro-organisms (more of them in a saltspoon of good soil than there are people in the whole world). This tiny life worked constantly to break down the organic material from plant and beast into a form in which it could be absorbed by the plant, which would in turn be food for the beast and finally for man (the green plant also by action of sunlight draws in elements from the air).

In All Things Giving Thanks

There was a cycle of life; and the introduction of hard work and sorrowful toil (Gen. 3) did not alter this. From soil, with aid from micro-organisms to the plant; from plant to animal and man; from the wastes of man and beast back to the soil to continue the process. Physically man was to be linked to his God-appointed environment — and in it all he was to see the hand of God. For this cause he was to give thanks in all things, knowing that all came from God. As saith the Psalmist:

"He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills, they give drink to every beast of the field; the wild asses quench their thirst. By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches. He watereth the hills from his chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man; that he may bring forth food out of the earth; and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart . . ."

What sublime words are these from Psalm 104! The whole cycle is there, if you think about it, and man's part in it is expressed:

"Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the

evening, O Lord how manifold are thy works. In wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches."

The city, the tin opener, the prepackaged cereal, the bottle of this and the jar of that — all tend to make us forget that God is the giver of all. But a man living in harmony with a natural environment would more easily enter into the spirit of the Psalm:

"These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them they gather; thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good. Thou hidest thy face they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust; thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth. The glory of the Lord shall endure forever; the Lord shall rejoice in his works."

He would hardly rejoice in the ugly sprawl that man has created in so many places. Please open the Word and read that Psalm several times. Let it get into your soul.

The object of the saints in the work of reconstruction will be to create this spirit in men's minds.

The natural things will be the background on which Divine teaching will be given. The very realisation of nature is a witness to God:

"He left himself not without witness, in that he did good and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14: 17).

Yet, of course, nature alone will not teach the inhabitants of the age to come the wisdom of God without direct instruction in His ways, any more than it will for us. The early paragraphs of "Elpis Israel" make this very clear. Thus the saints will teach the people the will of God, as well as link them once more to the soil.

The man who understands his material environment will see himself as the partner of God in all these material blessings. The clerk adding up figures, the factory worker stamping out moulds, the engine driver, the shop assistant selling devitalised, processed foods — while they must do their work as unto the Lord — find it difficult to feel this partnership so strongly. All material blessings spring from the soil, but in this civilization they come to us secondhand.

Moreover, we live in a world which is trying so often to ignore this partnership. Let us illustrate this as part of our endeavour to grasp the change of approach that will be introduced in the Kingdom.

In Psalm 104 we see God's hand developing the earth as a place for man to live in — creating the right "ecological

situation" as the scientist might say. Having bestowed fertility upon the soil, and established the cycle of life based upon it, He also ensured that it should not be washed into the sea. He watered the hills (v. 13); but He did not intend that torrents should cascade down the hills and sweep away the fertility that He had bestowed. He caused grass and herb to grow to trap the moisture and utilise it (v. 14) — on the hills as well as in the valleys. Trees, too, grew on the hillside. All this vegetation retained this moisture of God's provision; it dammed up its onward rush and diverted into underground springs (v. 10). Thus erosion was avoided.

But what has man done? What has been the basic cause of the decline and fall of successive civilisations which now lie buried beneath their own man-made deserts. Let a well-known agriculturist answer:

"Greed, graft, and the softening influence of luxury followed in wake of material prosperity. Man in his vaunted conquest of nature, his inventive genius, and his great mechanical achievements, particularly in the fields of destruction, forgot his dependence on the green plant to synthesise his food from the raw materials of the earth and to trap the energy he needs from the sun. In his greed and incredible folly he destroyed by fire, axe and uncontrolled movement of his grazing animals, the vegetation on vital, vulnerable areas essential to the security of his water supplies. With the destruction of this vital vegetation, there were no plants to trap the water as it fell and it poured down the mountain-side, often with torrential violence, to tear great, ugly gashes in the surface of the earth and carry away the fertile topsoil in flooded rivers to the sea. "And so, inch by inch, year by year, the process of destruction continued. With the destruction of the plants to trap the water at source, replenishment of underground sources ceased and supplies dried up. With the rich topsoil deprived of its protective cover, it was dried to powder by the sun and the wind, and swept away in flooded rivers to the sea. With less soil of lower and lower fertility to produce more and more food for a rapidly-increasing population, starvation set in and continued at an alarming rate. In desperation, more and more wells were sunk for water, but the underground sources were dry. More and more fertilisers were poured on to the land, but it was now too sick to respond. Man had destroyed the basis of his existence, and the grass that once grew on the hills reappeared on the pavements of deserted cities."

These are the words of Professor Lindsay Robb, lecturing at London University in 1957. He was actually looking at the earth through the eyes of an imaginary Martian investigating a 100 years time, why man had died out from the earth!

Artificial Age

The above extract, from someone who is by no means a crank, should give us food for thought. The everyday alienation of man from the God-appointed environment extends

to every aspect of life. We live in an artificial age, where human restlessness has built up a complex civilisation remote from the simple basic things. To give a few illustrations of this will help to show how out of gear man is, in the ordinary things of everyday life. They will need changing when the partnership of God and man in natural things is restored as the background for developing the same partnership in spiritual things.

Man has become alienated from the land and built for himself huge, ugly urban sprawls. Part of the city in which he lives is but a dormitory, where after an evening of watching the little flickering box, he crawls into bed, worn out, but not with the healthful weariness of the man who has toiled in the fields. The other part of the city is a mass of factories and offices, where he performs in the main repetitive, soul-destroying operations in which he can have little real interest. Also in the city is an abundance of synthetic pleasure. The ancient village used to make its own amusement in simple ways — but man is fast losing the art of self-entertainment; Hollywood and the big pleasure syndicates serve it up on a plate for him. Fewer people can even play a musical instrument for themselves. Because mass production is cheap, the old crafts are dying out. Fewer people can work in wood and iron, in lace and silk. The old village crafts which gave men and women pleasure in their work are increasingly hard to find — basket making, cart building, spinning, weaving by hand, thatching, hurdle making, stone carving, furniture making, hand-pot making. Instead, men buy their needs from the department store, probably on credit, and lose the joy of working with their hands the things that are Gods. True, there is the “do-it-yourself” movement, which, even if the articles are prefabricated, shows man’s latent desire to use his hands.

Away From the Land

All these trends have for a long while been drawing men away from the land to join the teeming millions in the city. The cities spread and sprawl — the villages languish. Instead of men being evenly spread in little villages throughout the countryside, vast, ugly housing estates spring up on the perimeter of the cities. Hoardings and television scream daily, telling them what they “just must have.” Demands for a lot of fundamentally-useless things are built up in the mind. Everyone must have all the latest modern devices, mainly because “Mrs. Jones” has got them. They often save labour — and are largely unavoidable while we live in this

sort of civilisation, but think of the labour necessary to get them — and the hire-purchase debt incurred. Women often go out to work and labour hard to afford the machines that will save them labour in the home. Is it not rather topsyturvy? The advertisement industry is a crying evil, stirring up discontent and covetousness wherever it casts its evil shadow.

Behind this city civilisation are the forces of big business. The stock exchanges, the share markets, and the big monopolies, making large profits for the few, out of the folly of the many. Their concern is for financial gain — the good of the community is incidental. If it suits their selfish ends, they will pour out chemicals on the land, and destroy the God-appointed cycle of life; they will cut down the trees and create dust bowls; they will defile the air with their smoke and fumes; they will pour out insecticides into the air, destroying helpful insects as well as pests; they will flood the markets with their patent remedies for all manner of ailments, and to offset the sub-health that flows from an unnatural existence. (True, governments have become alarmed at some of these trends and are seeking to control them).

Science has become deified. Its theories are sacrosanct. It has given to man the gifts of the atomic and hydrogen bomb and the perverting theory of evolution. Science is King and dethrones God in the mind of man. Its gospel is spread by a specialised educational system. There is more education about than ever before — it is the "shibboleth" of the age: but there are probably fewer truly educated people in the broadest sense of the word, fewer men and women who understand their environment and see life as a whole. Instead the world is filled with specialists, who are defined as people who know more and more about less and less . . .!

And so I could go on, describing the evil plight of mankind — not in his major political problems — but in the way he runs his day-to-day affairs in alienation from God. I know we are in the midst of it and cannot avoid living in a twentieth century manner to a large extent, but let us try to have our eyes open and avoid the spirit of a materialistic age that "never had it so good." Let us not be deceived by all this material advancement. Wherever possible, let us try to restore a little balance to our life by having a garden or pleasing craft to fill those moments, when, too tired to study, we would tend to turn to the pleasures of the World. More important still, let us look at the world with the feeling

that we just don't belong; and with the knowledge that its whole fabric is to pass away; and that, after the war of God Almighty, simple ways of life, in which God and man will once more be partners, will be established on the earth. You and I, brethren and sisters, are called to the thrilling task of building the new society. Let us therefore be in sympathy with it now.

—Edgar Wille (Eng.)

(Next month (God willing): "GOD-FAMILY-LAND, in the Word and in the Age to Come").

The Supposed Pre-existence of Christ

JOHN 1 : 1-14

(Continued from page 367)

"He Came unto His Own" — v. 11

At first sight, these words appear to contradict those of the previous verse. How is it possible to speak of the "logos" being "in the world," and then stating "he came" unto his own?

Further: if the "light" of verse 10 relates to the pre-existent Christ, we are forced to the conclusion that Christ was "in the world" before he "came" unto it, i.e., before he was born.

But earlier articles have hinted at the meaning of these verses. The "light" and the "logos" manifested Deity in two ways: in promise and in actual fulfilment. The promise was the words from the beginning, which was in the Jewish world, and by which it was founded. The fulfilment was seen in the Lord Jesus, who "came unto his own," who came unto a world developed out of light.

"His Own"

But to whom did he come? The Authorised Version says that he came "unto his own," and it is natural to think of the people of Israel. But the word in the Greek is in the neuter gender and plural number, and signifies "own things," as it is rendered in the Revised Version margin.

Thus the statement of this verse can be rendered: "He came unto those things to which it (i.e., light) pertained."

What were those things?

Not people, for the word is in the neuter gender.

They were those things to which the Lord could justly lay claim: the land, nation and throne of David. Christ, as the Logos made flesh, could claim all those things, for they were begotten of light.

The words "his own" appear twice in this verse. There is a difference in the words used in the Greek. The word in the second occurrence is in the masculine plural, and thus relates to the people of light, i.e., of Israel.

Thus the verse teaches that when Christ the true light appeared to claim his own things (i.e., the land, nation, and throne), the people rejected his appeal and his claim. They would not receive him.

The statement: "his own received him not," is a general statement, not an absolute one. There were a few who did receive the Lord, and who accepted the truth he taught. To them he gave the power to become the "sons of God" by believing on his name (v. 12).

"Which were Born"—v. 13

Controversy has raged over whether the statement of this verse relates to believers, or the Lord Jesus. As the text stands in the A.V., v. 13 carries on from the previous verse, and the statement is made to apply to believers.

But can believers be said "to be born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God"?

Only if such birth relates to the birth of the spirit, or the begettal that is of the truth.

The Companion Bible suggests that v. 13 should read: "Who was begotten," and thus makes the verse applicable to the Lord Jesus. It claims that this is the reading of such ancient writers as Irenaeus, Tertullian, Augustine, and others who lived earlier than any Mss. of John's gospel at present extant.

This conclusion is supported by Griesbach, who maintains that "who was begotten" should replace the "which were born" of the received text (see the Diaglott).

This alteration, which commends itself to us, makes the verse applicable to the Lord Jesus. This fits in with the context which is concerned with the appearance of the true light as the manifestation of God.

Another important alteration is in relation to the word "born." The Revised Version changes this to "begotten" in the margin. No person is "born" by the will of man, though they may be begotten through the will of the flesh.

It is also significant that in the Greek, the word "blood" is in the plural and should be rendered "bloods." Normal conception is brought about by a fusion of male and female, but in the case of the Lord Jesus this was not so. His was a virgin birth; and the peculiar language of this verse (i.e., the use of the plural "bloods" instead of "blood") is in line with that truth.

"Thus 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."

All the promises of the Old Testament relating to the Redeemer, were fulfilled, made flesh in the Lord Jesus. He was the Law and the Prophets in the midst of Israel; the true light, the true tabernacle, the Logos (or Declaration) made flesh.

John could say of him: "He is preferred before me: for he was before me."

The R.S.V. changes "preferred" to "ranks." His status was higher than that of John.

The words "he was before me" are rendered by the Diaglott: "He is my superior." The word is "protos" in the Greek, and indicates first in time or status. It is translated "chief" in such places as Mark 6: 21 (R.V.), Acts 13: 50; 17: 4; 28: 7, 17, etc. It seems, therefore, that the Diaglott is correct in so rendering this word.

Thus the consideration of these opening verses of John reveals many wonderful facets of Divine wisdom which are destroyed by the theory of a pre-existent Jesus. Yet there is a sense in which the term "pre-existence" can apply to him. He is God manifest in the flesh. That which was revealed in him existed from all time, existed before he was born. It was the Spirit which frequently spake through him (Heb. 1: 1). Thus, in the words of Jesus, we have the words of God, Who existed before him. Brother Roberts writes beautifully upon this feature of the Lord in "Nazareth Revisited." But this explanation of "pre-existence" is entirely different to the false theory current in the world, and which destroys the basic truths of the Lord's appearance in the earth. The Truth is denied if it is believed or taught that the Lord had corporeal existence before his birth of the virgin, 1,900 year ago.

(concluded)

—H.P.M.

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

**Future Glory Revealed
Through Prophecy**

"Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, and in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things." — Psalm 45: 3-4.



Previous articles have shown the Lamb's Wife foreshadowed in "types." We now turn our attention to the writings of the prophets where the Bride is also gloriously revealed.

One of the most expressive of all Messianic Psalms is the 45th. It records a thrilling and stimulating description of the King and Queen of Yahweh's Kingdom. Verses 2-8 speak of the beauty, power, and majesty of the King; then follows a colourful description of the Queen (Vv. 9-15), revealing her obedience, beauty, and glorious apparel. The Psalm concludes (Vv. 16-17) with the focus of attention returning to the Great King, as it speaks of his children being raised to princes; of his name being revered and exalted; and of his subjects offering to him their praises and adoration.

This is a prophecy to encourage and exhort the brotherhood of Christ. It speaks not only of the future glory which can be ours, but also of the need for serving the King today, in a way that will result in his acceptance of us when he takes to himself the bride of his choice.

The Setting of the Psalm.

The Psalms, like other prophetic writings, are often centred in a colorful historical background. Psalm 45 is an excellent example of this, for we find that Psalms 44 to 47 concern the times of Hezekiah, when Judah was delivered from the hands of Sennacherib. During this period Hezekiah married, choosing Hephzibah for his queen. Thus, the Psalm is headed "A song of loves." Isa 62: 4 makes mention of this great event: "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for Yahweh delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married." Hezekiah's wedding was a time of great rejoicing, and Isaiah

used the occasion to prophesy of a grand future yet in store for the people of God. The literal event thus became the basis for a far-reaching prophecy. Hezekiah means: "Strength of Yah;" Beulah means: "Married;" Hephzibah means: "My delight is in her." The time is coming when the "Strength of Yah" (Christ) will be "Married" to the multitudinous bride, of whom he says, through the Spirit: "My delight is in her." This union will usher in the glorious future for Israel, as foretold by Isaiah.

Many of the events in Hezekiah's life reveal him as a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. His first act, after ascending the throne, was to repair the Temple, bringing to an end a period of great apostasy among the Jews. He destroyed the brazen serpent, originally held aloft by Moses, but later adopted by the Israelites as an idol, which they worshipped. At a time when the kingdom was virtually in ruins, Hezekiah invited the scattered Jews to a special Passover, which continued for the unprecedented period of fourteen days. Later, at the head of a repentant nation, he went to war against the Philistines, regaining Jewish cities and dispossessing the Philistines of their own cities (with the exception of Gaza). As the king upon Yahweh's throne, Hezekiah refused to acknowledge the supremacy of the Assyrian empire, thus heeding the advice of Isaiah that he should not surrender to the domination of Sennacherib. The result of his determined stand was soon evident: in one night, the power of Israel's God was revealed, and 185,000 of the Assyrian army perished.

The future work of the Lord Jesus is typified in these events of Hezekiah's life. He will be the Hezekiah ("Strength of Yah") in the final overthrow of Israel's enemies, and in restoring the people of God to a correct and acceptable form of worship: a mighty work he will undertake in association with his glorious queen. This is the message of the 45th Psalm.

The Future Revealed in the Psalm.

The way to approach this Psalm is indicated in the superscription: "Maschil." This instruction appears at the head of thirteen Psalms, and is derived from "sakal," meaning "to scrutinise," "to look well into." The Septuagint version renders it with "sunesis," meaning "understanding." The importance of the Psalm is such that we must adopt the attitude of "Maschil." In one word we are exhorted to scrutinise closely and understand the words we read.

The Psalm opens with an expression of deep reverence and enthusiasm. The phrase is better rendered: "My heart

is bubbling over with a goodly theme." The writer of the Psalm confesses himself "ready" to write upon this glorious subject of the Eternal Spirit to be manifested in a son of David. His subject is "The King," or, as some versions render it: "The King Messiah."

The King in his glory is said to be "fairer than the children of men" (v. 2), more effectively rendered as: "Thou art more beautiful than the sons of Adam." Contrasts are sometimes ludicrous, but in this instance no comparison could be more effective to show the greatness that shall be ascribed to the Lord Jesus. The word translated "fairer" signifies "to be bright"; by implication: "to be beautiful." Compare this vision of the Psalmist with the previous earthly state of the Messiah, as foretold by Isaiah: "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him" (Isa. 53: 2). Faith was needed to appreciate his real depth of beauty, prompted by a careful consideration of the words he spoke. The future will reveal him as "the lion of the tribe of Judah" (Rev. 5: 5) with supreme power, to vanquish his enemies, to redeem his people, to elevate his bride, and to force a wicked and corrupt world to obey his commands.

"Grace is poured into thy lips," the Psalm continues. The root word of the Hebrew for "grace" signifies "poured upon;" and the mention of "lips" draws attention to words that are uttered. The phrase reveals to us that the grace of the Father was poured out upon the Son, and the words he spoke provided proof of this fact. The same grace, the same stamp of Divine approval will continue upon the King Messiah in the age of Israel's restored glory. With these blessings, he is said to be "blessed for ever," that is, "for the olahm" — the period of 1,000 years that remains hidden until the "set time to favour Zion is come."

Verse 3 reveals the King as a "mighty one" armed with a sword. "Mighty" (Heb. "Gibbor") signifies "a warrior," "a hero," and the Scriptures indicate that the "sword" is both literal and spiritual. Isaiah declares the sword to be a symbol for military might in his dreadful warning to humanity: "The slain of Yahweh shall be many in that day" (Isa. 66: 16). But this noble King-warrior will be equipped also with the "sword of the Spirit . . . which is the Word of God" (Eph. 6: 17; Heb. 4: 12); the most effective weapon for destroying corrupt ecclesiastical dogmas and practises, deeply imprinted in the minds of men. With the **Sword of Authority** and of **Truth**, the **Great King** is destined to rule the nations with a

rod of iron, a work which he will effectively undertake, assisted by his bride, the Queen (Psa. 2: 8-9, Rev. 2: 26-27).

In the 4th verse of the Psalm, we turn from the glory of the King to a direct consideration of his purpose: "In thy majesty ride prosperously for the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness" — such is the translation suggested by Brother Thomas, and supported by the R.S.V. It indicates the resolve of Messiah to go forth in defence of truth, meekness, and righteousness; and to attack and destroy the powers that would exalt themselves against these Godly principles. "Ride" in the Septuagint version is translated "reign," but in either case, the warrior of El (Isa. 9: 6) is seen in a position of supreme authority. He will "ride" forth in this war-like manner, as is clearly shown in Rev. 19: 11-15:

"And I saw heaven opened, and beheld a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns . . . and out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."

(Notice the remarkable affinity of thought and symbology between Rev. 19 and Psalm 45).

The Psalmist speaks of the King's activities in words of stark foreboding: "Thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things." (v. 4). These "terrible things" are again mentioned in Psalm 65:

"By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O Elohim of our salvation; who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea; which by his strength setteth fast the mountains; being girded with power: which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people" (vv. 5-7).

The King, in great glory, a figure of dazzling spiritual brightness and beauty, a warrior-hero in the cause of Divine omnipotence, will cause his arrows to strike at the "heart" of his adversaries. (Psa. 45: 5). Thus, his attack will drive

Our Salvation

Find if you can, any ray of hope, any door of escape for this miserable world, save in the promises made to the Jewish nation, and to the Gentiles through and after them, and in the coming of the Lord, and in his universal reign and kingdom. For which, let your souls be stirred up to pray most fervently, while you wait most patiently, and long most anxiously, for the day of the glorious coming of this kingdom, when God's will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven.

— J.T.

right into their very midst, and penetrate to the most vital organ, fatally wounding the seed of the serpent, in its latter-day political and ecclesiastical manifestation.

At this point, the Psalmist introduces a note of reverential adoration, in acknowledgment of the King's conquering power. He is given the title "Elohim" (v. 6), reminding us that, although one individual, Christ is representative of all the redeemed — the chief of the Mighty Ones who will rule the earth for Yahweh during the Olahm of 1,000 years*. The sceptre is the symbol of his royalty, and an insignia of supreme power (Gen. 49: 10). Significantly, this phrase is rendered "a sceptre of righteousness" in Heb. 1: 8. Emphasis upon "of" indicates the source of his power and the authority of his Kingship. "A king shall reign in righteousness" says Isaiah (32: 1); and Jeremiah states: "The days come, saith Yahweh, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch" — and: "This is the name whereby he shall be called, Yahweh-Tsidkenu," that is, He who will be our righteousness (Jer. 23: 5-6 mg.).

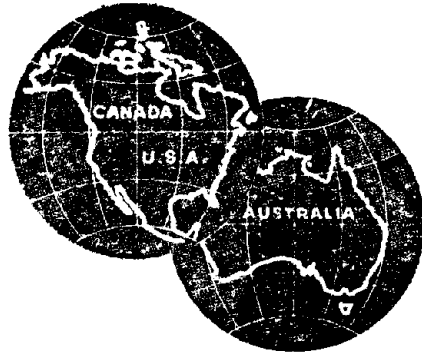
The remaining references to King Messiah speak of his unimpeachable character, his elevated position, and his eternal preservation as the perfect Lamb of God. In our next issue (God willing), we shall see something of the way in which these features are revealed in Psalm 45, and follow the mind of the Psalmist as he next focuses attention upon the beautiful queen, the bride of Israel's Warrior-King.

—John Ullman (W.A.).



*The plural title "Elohim" was also ascribed to the angel who addressed Moses from the burning bush (Exod. 3: 2; cp. v. 4, Acts 7: 30). Although only one angel was concerned in this manifestation, he was a representative for ALL the Elohim, a great myriad of angels. Thus, the use of this plural title should conjure up in the mind of the reader, the Divine principle of "one manifested in many." (Cp. John 17: 21 and Heb. 2: 11: "For both he that sanctifieth and they who sanctified are all OUT OF ONE" (Greek)). — J.U.

Among the Western Canadian Ecclesias



I am typing these notes in the busy, bustling city of San Francisco, having completed the first section of our journey in the American Continent, among the Ecclesias of Western Canada. I am just beginning to feel the impact of this completely different way of life, and am taking a deep breath after completing some 16 meetings in the past two weeks, and travelling some 2,000 miles to do so!

But let me retrace our steps, and link the progress of our trip with what I outlined in our last account.

Victoria, the capital of British Columbia, is situated on the island of Vancouver, about 70 miles from the mainland. There our work was scheduled to commence. The large Boeing jet plane conveyed us to the city of Vancouver on the mainland of Canada, and from thence we travelled by smaller plane over the stretch of water that divides it from the island.

At the airport of Victoria, we were met by a little company of brethren and sisters who had kindly gathered at that late hour (11.30 p.m.) to welcome us. The rapid transit over so many miles at such speed and at such altitudes had left me a little giddy and deaf. This made introductions a little difficult, particularly as we had to also struggle with the blend of Canadian and English accents which now became part of our life in this part of the country where so many brethren from England have found a new home. On their part, they also had to cope with the Cockney-American-Aborigine accent that they claim Australians use!

But this proved only a small detail in the face of the universal language of the Truth, which we had in common, and the kindness and hospitality we have had lavished upon us in all parts.

Paul exhorts us to "pursue hopsitality" (Rom. 12: 13—R.V., mg.). The brethren of this continent have certainly taught us a lesson in that regard. It is a wonderful experience to arrive in a country so far removed from one's own, to be immediately received as a friend and a brother, to learn from practical experience what bonds of fellowship can exist in the Truth. The kindness and consideration of the brethren of Victoria (and particularly Brother and Sister Brierley, with whom we stayed) helped us to quickly "find our feet" in a quick-moving programme, in a land where customs so greatly contrast to our own.

Vancouver Island is a beautiful place, as is all of British Columbia that we saw. It exhibits the handiwork of the Creator, in lofty snow-capped mountains, in forests of pine, fir, and other trees that move in

graceful lines up and down the steep hills and valleys, in fast-moving streams fed by the melting snow, in the constant, everchanging vista of sea and lakes that are everywhere in evidence.

Victoria, the capital, has a population of about 100,000 people. It can be appropriately styled a garden city. It is nicely laid out with wide, spacious streets, and ample gardens and shrubs. The environs are rural in appearance, with undulating, hilly country covered with a mantle of gardens, and, unlike Australian homes, are centrally heated, so that there was a sharp contrast to the warmth inside and the (to us) sharp, cold air outside.

The beauty of natural scenery is blended with conditions of quietness and prosperity which seem to pervade the island. But we were told that this does not reflect the true picture. In the absence of local industry, unemployment is raising its head on Vancouver Island, and many fear they are facing a trade recession.

That is not the only fear that troubles the American Continent in this "time of the end."

We found on all sides that the fear of impending war is more in evidence in this Continent than it is in Australia. Canada and the U.S.A. are so much closer to the centre of world events that it is inevitable that the crises of the times should force themselves upon the people more completely than in the comparative isolation of Australia. We are inclined to "live carelessly in the isles" (Ezek. 39: 6) to a far greater extent than is the case among populations on the "other side of the world." A glance at an atlas of the world will show the reason for this. Alaska is part of the U.S.A., and is only separated from the eastern extremity of the U.S.S.R. by a few miles of water. Russia and America are thus neighbours, and what affects one must affect the other. Moreover, this age of speed has had the effect of shrinking the world considerably, so that no nation can afford to stand aloof from incidents that a few years ago would not occupy its concern (Rev. 16: 4).

The sum result of all this is that whilst men admire the beauty of God's creation, they do so with fear in their hearts as to what destruction man might bring upon himself.

The Ecclesia in the city of Victoria has a very comfortable, attractive meeting place admirably suited for the needs of its membership of some 70 brethren and sisters. The basement below provides scope for Sunday School activities, and Youth Circle meetings. We were taken to see this hall on the day following our arrival, in order to set up the large-scale chart that had been specially prepared for us by Brother A. Cheek, of Adelaide, and presented to us as we left for overseas. The first address had been scheduled for Saturday evening, and we wondered at the response we might expect from a religious address delivered at such a time. In pleasure-loving Australia, a Saturday evening would not be considered a good time for such a purpose, but we were agreeably surprised to find a very nice audience gathered together, among which was quite a number of interested friends.

This public address commenced a series of meetings with the Ecclesia in Victoria, during which we gradually became better acquainted with one another. On Sunday, we delivered the exhortation and second public lecture, and were pleased to find almost every chair occupied for the latter. There is a very nice grouping of young people associated with the Ecclesia and Sunday School, which augers well for the future, if they apply themselves to the study of the Word in preparation for it.

About 65 miles from the capital is the pretty little town of Cowichan

Lake. Here, the brethren of the Nanaimo Ecclesia had arranged for a special address to be given. It was in the nature of an experimental effort, for the Truth had not been proclaimed in this district before. This little town had been selected for this purpose because Brother Nielson, originally from Nanaimo, had removed to it, and was anxious to work for the extension of the Truth.

We were conveyed to the site of the lecture in a Volkswagen Kombe, with Brother Highley acting as both driver and guide. In all, seven brethren and sisters rode in the Kombe, together with our various bags of luggage that at every stopping place seem to become more formidable in size and more difficult to manage. The road winds through some of the most delightful scenery we had seen. Glorious tree-clad mountains run steeply down into the sea-inlets below us, and at every turn of the road a new vista of beauty opened to us.

The lecture was delivered in the Elks' Hall, a large brown building, in front of which a rough notice advertised the impending address. Brother Nielson had laboured well to make the effort a success, giving his time and energy in walking around with handbills which he distributed on all sides among the small community in this country village. These efforts were rewarded in an excellent attendance of some 50 folk, including at least 10 friends, some of whom stayed long afterward to discuss aspects of the Truth. One lady had walked some 10 miles for this purpose, and declared to me her intention of seeking more deeply the message of God's word.

About 10.30 p.m. we bade farewell to our friends of the Ecclesia in Victoria, and were given into the charge of the brethren of Nanaimo. We were driven to the town of Nanaimo, some 60 miles on from Cowichan Lake, arriving about 1.00 a.m.

Though we had not come to Canada to view the scenery, we could not but be impressed with the beauty of this lovely island. It testifies to the glory of creation, and yet men teach that all this is to be destroyed to make way for a "new heaven and a new earth." How the vain philosophy of the flesh destroys the beauty of Divine revelation! A verse is dragged out of its context, and bent to do service to a false idea, Scripture is distorted to confirm a theory. It is true that the Bible teaches that "the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment," but that such expressions do not relate to literal creation is shown by the context. The same Scripture declares: "and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner" (Isa. 51: 6), which would require the destruction of the immortal hosts of heaven!

We had but one appointment in Nanaimo proper — an exposition of Habakkuk 3 for the benefit of the brethren and sisters who assembled in the home of Brother and Sister Beardsmore for this purpose. The chapter takes in the vista of coming events after Christ has appeared in his glory, when, in company with the glorified elect, he emerges from the isolated fastnesses of Sinai as generalissimo of the Divine army of immortals marching against a sin-and-war-ridden world. The subject introduces the question of the judgment of the Household, and the purpose of such judgment. We suggested that it should be viewed as the final act of mercy necessary to humble ourselves of all pride, empty ourselves of all self, and make us fit to be filled with the fullness of Divine being. "How would this be done?" we were asked. We suggested that it will be by revealing to us the true character of our lives from the Divine standpoint. The word "appear" in 2 Cor. 5: 10 is from the Greek "phaneroo," and signifies to "publicly reveal," "to make manifest." Thus, "we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ . . ."

Our lives will be revealed to us from the Divine viewpoint. We will then realise that many things in which we might glory now, have not been according to the Divine will because of the blind ignorance in which we have walked in spite of our so-called knowledge. Thus there is a need to apply the principles of the Truth in our daily walk as much as to know that they exist. It is possible to acquiesce in a principle, and yet deny it in practice.

At this class we met up with Brother C. Deighton again, who had arranged for a short campaign in the town of Vernon, some 400 miles distant from Nanaimo. In order to keep this appointment, we had to bid farewell to the little company of brethren and sisters by 9.15 p.m. in order to travel by car to the ferry that conveyed us across the 70 miles of sea that separates Vancouver Island from the mainland. It was well after midnight when we reached the latter, and domiciled for the night in a motel on the outskirts of the city of Vancouver. These motels are a feature of Canadian and American life to a far greater extent than they are in Australia at present. Scores of them line the main highways leading into the cities, and competition between them seems to be keen.

Early next morning, we took the road to Vernon. It follows the rapidly-flowing Fraser River, which is shut in by heavily-wooded, steeply-rising mountains, on the peaks of which snow lay heavily like icing on a cake. Though we had left Australia in mid-winter, a week before, this was mid-summer in Canada; and the melting snow which gleamed bright and white as the rays of the morning sun played upon it, fed such rivers as the one we traversed, as well as the large and beautiful lakes along the shores of which we later travelled for a 100 miles or more.

In Vernon, Brother and Sister Bartholomew had expended much in effort and money to make the campaign a success. Well-printed advertising brochures, invitation cards, and challenging newspaper advertisements had supplemented the radio announcements that had likewise been used to bring the lecture before the notice of the public. It is encouraging to see such enthusiasm used in the cause of the Truth, for so frequently it is considered the least necessary of our daily obligations. The Truth today is as it is described in the parable of the Mustard Seed—least in the considerations of men. It must not be so with us. We must realise that when we undertake to do its work, nothing but the best is good enough. To sacrifice our time, money and energy in such a direction is like paying a premium for eternity—in the ultimate we will not lose by so doing. And my experience is that we benefit even now from work that is faithfully and enthusiastically performed in the service of the King.

We must do our part, leaving the ultimate result of our preaching to One higher than ourselves.

We must recognise that we are not important in the Divine scheme of things, that God can do without us, though we cannot do without God, and that it is our duty and privilege to labour where possible in His service.

I feel that the Divine blessing was with the work in Vernon. We were encouraged by the effort, and I feel that Brother and Sister Bartholomew were also. In point of numbers, a nice gathering of some 30 in all were present to listen to the advertised address: "Christianity's Challenge to You!" It was followed on the next evening by an informal talk that continued for a couple of hours on the fundamental message of the Bible, at the conclusion of which one friend suggested that further

study nights around the Bible should be conducted. This, we understand, Brother Bartholomew will be doing.

Another Christadelphian family, living in isolation adjacent to Vernon, was attracted to the meetings and attended them both, and a pleasant time was had in their company. Perhaps a little ecclesia may develop out of the effort at Vernon. We feel there is the nucleus for one there.

Sandwiched in between these meetings were periods of conversation around the Word with the Bartholomews in their home overlooking the lovely sheet of blue, edged in by the dark green of the wooded hills that goes by the name of Lake Okanagan. A lovely family of five gave a delightful domestic touch to our work, and showed the influence of firmness and love which is among the best of heritages parents can give their offspring. One delightful little slave — eleven-year-old Chris, waited upon us with tea, as we discussed the things of the Word.

How important is the influence of the Truth within the family circle. In this age of mass-produced pleasure, there is an increasing need to introduce into family life the true, unadulterated joy of Bible study and reading. This is an undisciplined age when civilisation has made much progress in knowledge but has retrogressed in morality, when the home is often used only as a convenient place in which to eat and sleep. There is a need to make it an oasis where can be obtained the water of life, and to that end, the old Christadelphian habit of family reading of the Bible needs to be cultivated.

We returned to Vancouver on Saturday, 25th June, to participate in Ecclesial activities in that city. Vancouver is a large city of perhaps 1,000,000 inhabitants. In design it combines the better aspects of both Adelaide and Sydney. Its broad hilly streets run square and parallel with each other, whilst the lovely sweep of trees, gardens and lawns which borders part of the harbour and is called Stanley Park, commanding an excellent view of Vancouver Harbour and the handsome and large Lions Gate Bridge, reminds one of the Sydney Domain. And ever, in the distance, the brooding dark face of the mountains tipped with snow, stand like mighty sentinels guarding their charge.

There are two ecclesias in Vancouver, but unfortunately they are not in fellowship with each other, though efforts are underway in both Canada and America to effect reconciliation. There is an urgent need, especially in small communities of the saints, to be mutually strengthened in the Word, to draw closely together the bonds of mutual trust and fellowship where the facts are agreed upon. So often, ecclesias that were one time at variance, have found an agreement they did not imagine existed, when they have worked together in a common effort. In view of the very evil and seductive environment that surrounds us in these closing days of the Gentiles, we need to present a solid front to the world and its attractions. We live in an age when the world is invading even our homes in the form of radio and television, and is claiming our children to greater and greater extent, and we aid the world in its nefarious work if we spend our time in polemics instead of the up-building expositions of the Word. I do not mean that we must compromise essential principles of the Truth, or set aside fundamental doctrines, but our conception of Bible teaching must not be limited to controversial subjects, but must be broadened to embrace all forms of Divine revelation. I am convinced, by experience, that young people can be attracted by sound exposition of the Bible, and that it can play a large part in their spiritual development if we encourage them in that direction. How important it is that their elders give a wise lead in that direction!

The Ecclesia in Vancouver had been advised that we would be there until the 30th of the month, and in consequence, had arranged for five public addresses to be given on five subsequent evenings. But our schedule provided for meetings some 900 miles south of Vancouver on the last two nights, and the meetings planned to be held on those occasions, unfortunately had to be abandoned.

The last day of our stay in Vancouver was most enjoyable and profitable. It was made so by the courtesy of Brother and Sister Martyn. The early morning was spent in company with Mrs. Jackson, an elderly lady who had attended the two previous public lectures, and who had evinced a keen interest in the subject of the Truth. Though 77 years of age, she is bright and alert in intellect, and deeply devotional in inclination. For years she has been searching for truth, and now feels that she has found it. Arrangements were made for Brother Martyn to visit her once a week, to further her education in Bible understanding. She undertook, in turn, to try and bring other friends to this weekly class, whom, she thought, would be equally as interested as herself. This was followed by a trip to Mission City about 50 miles distant from Vancouver, and further interviews associated with the Truth that proved to be both interesting and profitable. Then, in the evening, the final lecture was given, and after the lecture, a further talk upon Gospel Extension work in Australia.

At this address there were many friends of both ecclesias, some of whom we had known for many years as correspondents; others whom we had just become acquainted with. And the sad part of such a journey as we are now engaged upon is that as we become more closely known to each other, and begin to enjoy the friendship that the Word provides, the time comes to say, "Goodbye."

We were not to get away as easily as that, however. On the previous weekend the young people of various ecclesias in this part had met together around the Word, and during their discussions with one another had evolved a scheme for preaching the Truth. They had set up a Committee for this purpose, and now asked if I would act as honorary member on it though living in Australia. To this I readily consented. I did suggest, however, that the effective preaching of the Word demands efficiency of a special nature — namely, in the understanding of the Scriptures and the ability to expound them. This will come only by the study of the former, and strict discipline of ourselves in regard to the latter. I therefore suggested that the first step in the direction of preaching is personal study, and to that end the writings of Brethren Thomas and Roberts are the finest aids extant. May the blessings of Yahweh rest upon this enthusiasm and guide it into profitable channels to the glory of His name.

It was late when we arrived back at our motel, and later still when we had completed packing for our departure on the morrow. In fact, it was something like 2.00 a.m. before we were able to rest, and 5.30 a.m. when we were up again preparing a pot of tea which provided us with our breakfast before boarding the plane. A little while later, and we were looking down upon the city of Vancouver from the plane above. Among its teeming population there was a little salt in the shape of our brethren and sisters. Time had brought us together for a moment, and now had separated us, perhaps until the great union at the Judgment Seat. But now our plane headed south deep into America. We landed at Seattle for a little over an hour, resisting a ride into the city by means of the helicopter taxi, and were soon again in the air for San Francisco. It was a little cloudy, but ever and anon a tall mountain

would poke its snow-clad top above the clouds which surrounded it like a halo. Whether on land, sea, or in the air there are found scenes of beauty reflecting to the glory of the Creator.

But now, below us, we could see a large city stretched out over a peninsula. As we came lower and lower, little toy motor cars, like ants creeping up and down a track, could be seen flowing along the long, straight highways. Across the eight-mile stretch of water, a remarkably long bridge could be seen from the sky above, stretched across the bay like a tight piece of rope. Elsewhere I could see the Golden Gate Bridge, a very elegant structure from the air. We came lower and lower, sweeping over the San Francisco Bay, the city now rushing towards us at great speed, and revealing all its detail of skyscrapers, buildings, houses, and streets. At last the wheels touched the ground, the plane taxied to a stop and we had landed at fabulous San Francisco.

— H.P.M.

The True Spirit in Singing



In 1847, Brother Thomas was asked:—

“Please let us know your opinion of singing in worship. What did the early Christians sing? Did they use the Psalms of David? or did they compose psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs for themselves? If so, how is it that these compositions are unknown to us today?

“As to these ‘hymns’ we have, they are the mere effusion of intellectual darkness, and theologically absurdity. Your ideas on these things would be appreciated. May truth prevail, and error perish.”

to which Brother Thomas replied:—

“As to singing, when the matter is scriptural, the music good, and heart attuned to Praise, it is a most delightful, soul-inspiring, and reviving exercise -- a spiritual sacrifice of fragrant odour to the Lord. The psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs of the early believers, were the Psalms of David, and impromptu melodies by the Spirit. The Psalms remain, but the hymns and spiritual songs vanished when the ecclesia’s lamps expired.

“The ‘Sephir Tehillim’ (Book of Praises) doubtless contains the only psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs that the Spirit would condescend to present before the throne of Deity. We know of no other collection extant (in 1847) worth a pinch of snuff. **What cannot be presented with understanding, ought neither be said or sung.** If anyone be cheerful, let him sing Psalms; and we have never yet met with any equal to the Divine composition of the sweet singer of Israel.”

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