

The Berean Christadelphian

A monthly magazine devoted wholly to the exposition and defense of the Faith once for all delivered to the Saints, with the object of helping to make ready a People prepared for the coming of the Lord. Opposed to the unscriptural teaching of the papal and protestant churches of the world.

Please send all Berean communications to:

Bro. David Clubb, 42 Oneida Rd., London, Ont. Canada N5V 2X1

Assisted by bro. Tim Clubb, 2078 Pennyroyal St., London, Ont., Canada N5X 0E6

*"They received the Word with all readiness of mind and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.
Therefore many believed" – Acts 17:11*

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We are anxious to send the Berean to any desiring it. Do not hesitate to request it. If you know of any who might like it, please send their names. Anything herein may be used freely by any one in any way. No credit needed.

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

WATERFORD, ON—c/o Bro. Edward Williams, 42 Sylvia Street, Waterford, Ontario, Canada N0E 1Y0; (519) 443-7458.

Dear brethren and sisters: Sis. Lorna Crone, of the Burlington Ecclesia, fell asleep in Christ April 7, 2015. Sis. Lorna was immersed in 1951 and remained faithful in the Truth for 64 years. She was first a member of the Toronto Leaside Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia and in later years, a member of the Brantford and then Waterdown Berean Christadelphian Ecclesias. For the past 24 years, sis. Lorna was in isolation in Burlington in order to be closer to her family. She now rests in the hope of eternal life at Christ's return.

On behalf of the Waterford Ecclesia, bro. Edward Williams

Esteem Them Very Highly In Love For Their Works Sake

(1 Thess. 5:13)

There are two kinds of Christadelphians: those who recognize and appreciate the value and soundness and stability afforded by the writings and labors of brethren Thomas and Roberts—and those who do not. Not much can be done to help the latter kind. They are on their way back to the old Apostasy. Resuscitations of the Gospel Truth have run this pattern over and over: a period of soundness; then a drifting of the majority back to the main orthodox stream.

Brother Thomas assembled the total Truth. Admittedly, others had disjointed parts, some this, some that. He revealed a beautiful, harmonious, living whole. His critics and scorners owe what knowledge they have of it to him, squirm as they may under this embarrassing fact.

Intelligent men will recognize their debt and dependency, and will be humbly thankful. Intelligent, mature believers will not feel they have to devise anti-brother Thomas theories, to demonstrate their independence, but will be anxious to stand with the sound Truth as he revealed it - and that includes a true conception of the book of Revelation.—G.V.G.

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Studies and Thoughts

BY BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

THE HEAVENS AND THE SIGNS THEREOF

"Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the Signs of the Heavens; for the heathen are dismayed at them." (Jer. 10:2).

That language must be symbolical which, being taken from material objects, expresses things incompatible with the acknowledged properties of those bodies; as, for example, where it is said that stars fall to the earth; for since the stars are larger than the earth, they cannot literally fall to it. In the Apocalypse, chapter 1:1, it is said that God *signified* the revelation of Jesus Christ; the word *esemanen*, meaning to express by signs or symbols.

"Symbolic language," says Bishop Hurd, "is constructed upon such principles as make it the subject of just criticism and rational interpretation. The prophetic style was constructed on the symbolic principles of the hieroglyphics, which were not vague uncertain things, but fixed and constant analogies, determinate in their own nature, or from the steady use that was made of them; and a language formed on such principles may be reasonably interpreted upon them."

In Luke 21:25, there is a key by which any symbols in Scripture may be safely explained; and that is *by interpreting the figure by the plain declaration*, and not by straining the plain declaration to make it agree with the figure. We have for an example of this rule, *signs* spoken of in this verse as to take place *in the sun, moon, and stars*: this may mean either literally those material luminaries themselves, or some other things of which they are only symbols; but when we read further, we find that there is also distress of *nations upon the earth*, with perplexity, we can have no doubt that the latter is literal, and the former figurative.

We know from the words of Balaam, Daniel, and of the Lord Jesus himself, that the stars are symbols representative of great and distinguished personages, ecclesiastical and civil, and the sun and moon, therefore, being homogeneous symbols with the stars, must represent constitutional elements of their system, ecclesiastical and secular. It is amongst these, then, that we must look for the *signs* which are here foretold, and not in the physical heavens, which is expressly forbidden in the Word. In the same manner we learn that the sea, and the waves roar-

ing, represent tumultuous assemblages of the people.

From Genesis 37:9-10, we learn that the sun, moon, and eleven stars, which made obeisance to Joseph, were immediately interpreted by Jacob to be symbolical of himself, Rachel, and his other eleven sons.

Hence, Mede is fully justified in saying that "*Heavens* means *Regnum Politicum*, a political kingdom; *Sun*, secular government; *moon*, ecclesiastical government; and *Stars*, ministers of religion;" but not these exclusively, as Jacob's interpretation of them in Joseph's dream clearly shows. "The *Heaven* of this political world," says he, "is the *sovereign part* thereof, whose hosts and stars are the powers ruling that world. In the highest place, gods or idols; next, kings, princes, magistrates, etc., and other such lights shining in that firmament. The *Earth* is the peasantry or *vulgus hominum*, together with the terrestrial creatures serving the use of man."

The following writers also all agree that "*Heavens*" is the symbol for the higher places of the political universe discoursed of: Dr. H. More, Daubuz, Lancaster, Sykes, Dr. Wall, Vitringa, Lowth, Owen, and Warburton. And Sir Isaac Newton says, "in sacred prophecy, which regards not single persons, the *sun* is put for the whole species and race of kings." Hence, to "*ascend into heaven*" must be "to obtain new power and glory;" and Daubuz says, "*to ascend into heaven*" is to obtain rule and dominion. That "*the sea and the waves roaring*," means tumultuous assemblies of the people, and the sea by itself, the mass of the people, is manifest from many passages.

In Isaiah 17:12-13, it is written—"Woe to the multitude of many *PEOPLE*, which make a noise like the noise of the *SEAS*; and to the rushing of *NATIONS*, that make a rushing like the rushing of *MANY WATERS*."

Again, in chapter 8:7—"Behold the Lord bringeth upon them *WATERS OF THE RIVER*, even the King of Assyria, and all his glory," (meaning his army).

"As the *sun* and the *moon*, the *stars* and the *sea*, are symbolical expressions, to annex a dissimilar interpretation to the word *earth*, would be to incur the charge of inconsistency."

The *earth* is generally put for that over which the *heavens* do rule; but if there be any distinction between it and the sea, as there undoubtedly is, it is that the earth represents the people in a quiet, and the sea the same in a disturbed state.

Thus, *earthquake* must mean, as Sir Isaac Newton observes, “the shaking of kingdoms so as to overthrow them;” and Jurieu says, “it is known by all who are versed in the prophets, that in the prophetic style an *earthquake* signifies a great commotion of nations.”

All commentators have been obliged to consider “*the heavens*” and their sun, moon, and stars, as symbolical from the necessity of the case. Mede quotes the Hebrew commentators to show that they understood the expressions in that way; and Daubuz in his Dictionary, gives several instances of heathen writers using the same figures. Thus, the king of Babylon under the name of Lucifer, as the type of its last ruler in the latter days, is represented in Isaiah 14:13-14, as threatening to place himself above all earthly rule, with Zion for the throne of his dominion, saying in his heart—“*I will ascend INTO THE HEAVENS, I will exalt my throne above THE STARS of God, I will sit also upon the Mount of the Congregation on the sides of the north. I will ascend above the height of THE CLOUDS.*”

This ascending of the Assyrian “into the heavens” implies some particular heavens in which he is not previously to his ascent; and that it is the Assyrian of the Latter Days is clear from the testimony that Jehovah says—

“I will break the Assyrian IN MY LAND, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off Israel, and his burden depart from off their shoulders.”

This has never happened yet to the Assyro-Babylonian power, and must therefore be in the future. This saying of Lucifer in his heart is no other than “*the evil thought*” which is to come into the mind of Gog, impelling him to the invasion of the Holy Land, and the siege of Jerusalem, which will be taken. He is now beyond the limits of the Roman earth, and consequently not *in its heavens*, which are the heavens of Daniel’s Fourth Beast (Dan. 7:7,8, 19-21, 23-25). But he says, “*I will ascend into them, and above the height of the clouds,*” or powers of those heavens; that is, he will become the Imperial Chief of the Four-Beast dominion, and exalt himself above Israel, with Zion for his throne.

In Isa. 24, it is written—“*Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign on Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem*”—Isa. 24:23.

If these words are constructed literally, the expression is

unintelligible, but interpreted as the *political heavens*," the civil and ecclesiastical rulers of their former polity—"the army of the high ones on high, and kings of the earth upon the earth"—the saying is full of propriety and force.

In Isaiah it is declared that—"*All the army of THE HEAVENS shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll; and all their armies shall FALL DOWN, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from a fig-tree*" (Isa. 34:4).

Here also, if taken literally, it is not easy to affix a definite idea to the word *heavens* as contradistinguished from the *hosts of the heavens*:" but waiving this, it is not possible that the celestial luminaries should *fall* down to this earth, which is not half their size; and yet to *fall down* can mean nothing else; whereas, if taken for rulers and the systems in which they rule, the figure is clear and beautiful.

But Isa. 60 is quite conclusive on the point: here Zion, the metropolis of the Jewish kingdom at its restoration, is said to be *the light* to which the Gentiles shall come: and in his address to her the prophet saith—"The sun shall no more be thy light by day, neither for brightness shall THE moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy Gods for thy glory: THY sun shall no more go down, neither shall THY moon withdraw itself, for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended" (Isa. 60:19,20).

These are expressions which it is impossible to construe of any thing but of that state of the Jewish kingdom when the Lord Jesus shall be both King and Priest upon its throne; particularly the pronoun *thy*, limiting the sun spoken of to be that which exclusively pertained to the land of Judea.

Zion's sun and moon shall no more suffer eclipse when Jesus reigns upon his father David's throne in her midst: but now, if one look into her land, behold darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the *heavens* thereof. These are her days of mourning, in which her glory is eclipsed by the intervention of *the orb of the nations* between her and her glorious DAY-STAR, or Sun of Righteousness, who shall soon arise upon her with healing in his wings.

The filling of a Kingdom, then, with darkness, is the consequence of its political luminaries being eclipsed; and so long as

this darkness continues, they are days of mourning for that kingdom: but let the darkness pass away, from whatever cause, and its sun, moon and stars shine forth in their glory, and its people pass into that national condition indicated in the words applied to Zion, "the days of thy mourning shall be ended" (Isa. 60:20).

Another striking illustration of the Scripture use of the heavens and their luminaries as prophetic symbols, occurs in Ezekiel 32:7-8, in a prophecy of the overthrow of Egypt's kingdom under the last of the Pharaohs.

"In extinguishing thee, saith the Lord Jehovah, I will cover the heavens, and I will eclipse their stars: with a cloud I will cover the sun, and the moon shall not give her light. All the luminaries of the brightness in the heavens shall be eclipsed over thee, and I will set darkness over thy land" (Ezek. 32:7, 8).

This passage is the only one in the entire prophecy that has not been literally fulfilled; and there exists no apparent reason for separating this verse from the whole context, and for not interpreting it as of Egypt's political heavens, and therefore as having been fulfilled equally with the remainder when Pharaoh's kingdom was absorbed into the Assyro-Babylonish empire.

Joel's prophecy is another illustration of the propheto-symbolic style. He takes his stand-point upon Jehovah's land eight hundred years before the birth of Jesus, and notes down certain striking political phenomena which he observes in the field of vision, whose horizon is bounded by "*the Great and Terrible Day of Jehovah*" (Joel 2:31). The things he observes pertain to Israel's fortunes from the invasion of Judea by "*a strong nation*," which he, Daniel, and Jeremiah, liken to "*a great lion*"—Nebuchadnezzar—to that last and approaching overflow of the Lord's land by "*the northern army*" of the Assyro-Babylonian Gog of the Latter Days.

The points of Joel's prophecy are—

1. The overthrow of the kingdom of David by Nebuchadnezzar;
2. A remoter eclipse of the luminaries of Judah's heavens;
3. A gathering of the nations against Jerusalem to battle, on the approach of the Day of the Lord;
4. The extinction of the Gentile heavens forever, and the breaking up of their world in the Day of the Lord;

5. The pouring out of the Spirit upon Israel; and,
6. The consecration of Jerusalem, and the redemption of the Holy Land and people from Gentile oppression for ever.

1. The overthrow of the kingdom and throne of David by Nebuchadnezzar is the burden of the first and second chapters to the eleventh verse inclusive. His hosts, which are also styled *the Lord's army*, bring a day of Jehovah upon Judah, which is styled "*a destruction from the Almighty*," whose operations are thus described—

"They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief. The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining: and the Lord shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth the word: for the Day of the Lord is great and very terrible, and who can abide it?" (Joel 2:9-11)

—this was literally accomplished when the Jewish polity was suppressed, and the kings, princes, priests, and nobles, were carried captive to Babylon for seventy years.

2. After this overthrow of David's kingdom, from which it never recovered, Joel predicted another breakup of Judah's Commonwealth "*before the great and terrible day of the Lord should come.*" We learn this from the way Peter, on the day of Pentecost, handled Joel's prophecy of the outpouring of the Spirit upon Israel. He shows that Jehovah contemplated an early and a latter rain of the Spirit in the words of Joel 2:23-29—a rain in the last days; and a rain in the latter days, already hundreds of years apart.

"He hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month"

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions."

"And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids will I pour out my spirit" (Joel 2:23, 28, 29).

Peter did not say that the Pentecostian outpouring was a complete fulfilment of Joel's prediction, but that it was spoken of by him in the words he quoted. This was the Spirit's own

interpretation of what he meant by Joel; and the partial application of it to the last days of the Mosaic Economy gave to that generation "*the earnest*" of an approaching day of the Lord upon it.

After seventy years' captivity, Judah's Commonwealth, but not David's throne, was re-established, under Gentile supremacy. This was its condition in Peter's day. Its sun, moon, and stars illumined its heavens, in which unrighteousness dwelt incorporate in its powers. (*To be continued, God willing*)

Voyage To Australia And New Zealand And Other Lands

(Continued)

TORONTO, BUFFALO, PHILADELPHIA, BOSTON, AND HOME ACROSS THE ATLANTIC.

Toronto is a large city of nearly 200,000 inhabitants (mostly Scotch and English), situate on Lake Ontario, not far from Niagara Falls, as American distances go; and in sea communication with all the world, by the noble river St. Lawrence, which passes Montreal and Quebec, some hundreds of miles lower down. It is a manufacturing centre in almost every line of industry for Central Canada.

* * *

Tuesday, July 21 to Thursday, July 23, 1896—Toronto was one of the places I nearly left out, along with others, from the cause before mentioned. But instead of leaving it out altogether, as it was on the line of route to the Atlantic, I merely reduced the time. I had originally purposed spending a week and lecturing, but had cut down my appointment to two days, which, however, from my railway trip taking less time than I had allowed for, were pleasantly increased to four days.

The brethren not knowing when the two days would fall had not been able to arrange for lectures, so the time was spent in fraternal intercourse.

On the next day, after my arrival, a considerable company of brethren and sisters came together at tea-time in brother Hill's house. The day was fine, and the company mustered on the lawn both before and after tea, engaging in conversation and singing hymns by moonlight. A very agreeable and profitable evening was spent—the only drawback being the promi-

nence of questions of difference with some in America, alleged to hold the truth as a matter of theory merely.

I pointed out that the employment of the term "theory" as a description of the truth would not be sufficient to warrant separation from any one if it was used in what might be called the scientific sense, without suggesting uncertainty.

The system or scheme of the truth might be called its theory without meaning that it was doubtful. It was not a happy term to employ certainly, in this age of unbelief as a description of a system of faith which was founded on indubitable facts. Still, we must not "make a man an offender for a word."

We must be quite sure that a brother meant the truth was an uncertain thing by calling it a theory before making his use of that term a matter of offence. So also, there were advanced phases of the truth which, though constituent elements of the truth, might not be apprehended by those who had just learned, "which be the first principles of the oracles of God."

There was such a thing as "adding to faith, knowledge," and "growing in the knowledge of God," and attaining to manhood in Christ as contrasted with those who were "babes in Christ," "in need of milk."

On Wednesday, at tea with brother Smallwood and brother McNeillie, I was asked officially whether I endorsed the circulation of a resolution which had been sent out inviting withdrawal on the grounds of uncertainty just referred to.

Being somewhat in ignorance of the circumstances leading to the issue of such a resolution, I was not favourably placed for giving an answer, but I had to say that as far as the facts were before me in the conversation that had taken place, it did not appear to me a wise or necessary measure. It was too nebulous in substance: it was founded on phrases on which two meanings might easily be put.

I sympathised with the desire of every true friend of the truth to keep the truth pure in fellowship, but we must not act on rumour or phrase unless we could be sure that phrases represented actual errors entertained, of which there must be proof, not surmise. We had divisions enough that were unavoidable: it would be a pity to cause a division on an issue that could not be defended.

On Thursday, I met the brethren in association with brother Hardy, from whom there had been separation for some time,

because of alleged sympathy to partial inspiration. These brethren were desirous of reunion, and asked me to meet them. I did so, in company with brother Hill, by consent, who was privy to all the facts. A conversation of two hours ensued (in brother Hardy's house), from which it certainly appeared there was no just cause for the continuance of the division—though doubtful incidents rendered it inevitable at the time.

A written request for a meeting to bring about reunion was agreed to, addressed, through brother Hill, to the brethren in association with him. It is to be hoped it will be consummated, for union, and not division, is certainly the Lord's will concerning all who are prepared to avow the truth concerning Him and His affairs, without nullifying reservations.

In Toronto, I met sister Bowes, an interesting and brave woman, who managed, in some single-handed way, not quite intelligible to me, to bring her three boys from ruin in Adelaide, Australia, and across the Pacific Ocean to Toronto, into the neighbourhood of relations willing to assist her in the work of educating them.

She is married, and her husband lives. There is a likelihood of their settling together in Victoria (B.C.), which will be a victorious consummation to a troubled episode, in which she has borne a noble part—with the assistance of brother and sister Ellis, of Adelaide. God bless and prosper. She gave me a photograph of her boys, for sister Roberts.

* * *

Friday, July 24, to Saturday, August 1, 1896—Left Toronto by the nine o'clock train for Buffalo (N.Y.), via Niagara Falls, which the train crosses on a suspension bridge. This marvel of nature has now become common with acquaintance, as all great things do, however great, e.g., the stupendous glowing sun in the heavens.

Christ would have been common if he had remained on earth. His removal, and his seclusion in glory, makes him a thrilling object of faith during the time of preparation for his manifestation to his people.

At 12.30, arrived at Buffalo (an immense American city, on Lake Erie, above Niagara Falls). The railway station—a gigantic structure, of great width—is peculiar in not having a platform. The trains come to a stand and let the passengers clamber down on to the rails, and get away as best they can. There

are four or more lines of rails with a timber levelling between. For those who are acquainted with the methods of dispersal, it is all right, but for a stranger, it is a little bewildering. I did not exactly know how to proceed. Dragging my things, I followed the crowd, or rather such portion of the crowd as seemed to take one way: for it seemed to break up and go in various directions. Outside it was wet, and there was a crowd of vehicles. I expected brother A.D. Strickler to meet me, and did not see any chance of meeting him in the disorder outside, and therefore concluded to stay inside till he should come.

I stayed in vain. I shortly found myself all alone in a wilderness of a station, and all the hubbub subsided. After a while, I considered what I must do, because I was a stranger in a strange city, and knew no one. I went out and spied Gillespie's European hotel, Seneca Street, and engaged a room there. I then came back for my things and telegraphed my whereabouts to brother Strickler's address, four miles away, and returned to the hotel to wait developments.

In about an hour, I heard a loud voice, enquiring if "Robert Roberts" was there. It was brother Strickler who had his conveyance at the door to fetch me away. It seems he had been at the station at the arrival of the train, waiting with his conveyance outside, but not seeing me come out with the stream, concluded I must have come by another route to the Toronto station, to which he proceeded, without success. All is well that ends well.

I now got "aboard" his buggy—if that is the name, and in an hour's time had a cordial reception from sister Strickler and her daughters in Buffum Street.

In the evening, there was a muster of the brethren and sisters living in the neighbourhood. There is quite a number in the same street, spoken of as "The Buffum Street Christadelphian Colony." Most of them are from Mahanoy, Pa., where I had seen some of them eight or ten years ago.

We had a season of very pleasant intercourse under brother Strickler's most hospitable roof, where also I met brother Hudson, of Plymouth, Mich., and also brother Irwin, of Detroit, at one time of Middlesborough, England, of pleasant memory to all who knew him.

On Sunday there were two public lectures in the centrally-situated meeting-room of the brethren, just off Main Street,

in the heart of Buffalo. There were good audiences both times.

Between the lectures, there was a meeting for the breaking of bread, and a good long interval after that profitable exercise, allowing of a return home before the evening lecture at eight.

There were again lectures and good audiences on Monday and Tuesday evenings. Some brethren were present at these meetings from Niagara Falls and Hamilton, including brother Habgood, formerly of Birmingham, and now cultivating land near the roaring cataract. It was a time of pleasant reunion and love-messages, some of which I am afraid I will forget. Anyone entitled to a spray, take it herewith, and I will be absolved.

I am obliged to accept all these commissions with the apparently cold reservation, "if you can remember". The Lord alone is equal to the detailed applications of the many loves growing out of his. The day of efficiency, in this respect will come to his friends also in due time.

On one of the days of my stay at Buffalo, brother and sister Strickler drove me through the city to see the great beauty on the western side.

During our passage through the city, we stopped in the main street to pay a visit to Edison's "Vitascope," which was on exhibition. This is an apparatus for throwing photographs on a screen, with the effect of showing the persons and things in actual motion. The result is a living-picture: or, at least, a moving-picture. The flags, for example, wave in the wind: the trains move: dancers dance, etc.

It is done by taking several hundred photographs in rapid succession, catching the posture at the various stages of action, and then passing them through the lantern at the same rate.

It was very interesting in a scientific sense, but the subjects were disgustingly lewd. I could not stand it beyond a certain point. We all felt ashamed and came out, feeling we had been caught in a devil's trap.

On Wednesday evening, there was a parting muster of brethren at brother Strickler's and much pleasant talk. I had, of course, to answer questions touching my travels among the brethren in divers parts. I took leave of all with unfeigned regret, intending to resume my journey next morning: which I

did, for Philadelphia, 500 miles to the south-east.

This, as a mere luxury, I had resolved, for want of time, to leave out, along with my intended visit to Dr. Welch, of Shire Oaks, in the same state, 400 miles further west. But, at the last moment, receiving earnest entreaty from brother Robertson to come, if but for one day only, I arranged to get Philadelphia in by getting one day off my Buffalo appointment and taking one rest day from Boston.

I also dropped a note to brother Welch, expressing the hope that it would be possible for him to be in Philadelphia at the same time: a hope that was not realised.

It took 12 hours' very fast travelling through beautiful scenery of lake and mountain, to get from Buffalo to Philadelphia. Brother Robertson was waiting me at the station, and conveyed me by electric streetcar through the beautiful streets of Philadelphia to his home in Walnut Street.

I found him in deep affliction from the failure of many business hopes, caused by the political unsettlements of the country. My sympathy went out strongly to him and his faithful partner in life, on whom the brunt of the struggle painfully comes. Darkness surrounds them, though they "appear not unto men to fast."

They are strong in the faith that the truth inspires, believing that the crushing loads of adversity are all permitted in love, that they may be "ready" for incorporation in the Bride in the supreme hour of her collective development so evidently near at hand.

They have a large family of growing intelligent lads, who are an anxiety, though in due time they will be a help.

When I first knew them, about 20 years ago, they were in the hey-day of prosperity. When I saw them in their joy, and youth, and beauty, and education, and their love for Christ, they were as a vision of light on the hum-drum path of probation. I then "said in mine heart," and in brother Robertson's ear also, as he remembers, "Unless there is some severe experience for the spiritual polishing of such gems, they will be an exception to the rule of development common to the house of God."

Many, heavy, and crushing have the polishing blows of adversity been since that time. The words now have their appreciated meaning: "Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and

scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”

The spirit is liable to break under such a rough process: but the Lord interposes before destruction comes. It is not destruction that he aims at, but humiliation and purification, that we may be fit for his use. Not otherwise would he bring tribulation upon those who know, and love, and rejoice in Him.

There is usually “a way of escape,” except when a prophet is “sawn asunder,” or an Apostle beheaded, as the work of God sometimes requires, and its future form will justify. The sons of God are one and all prepared to take Job’s position, “Though He slay me, I will trust in Him.”

Prepared thus for the worst, they sometimes experience a staying of the hand on the day of the rough wind. I fervently pray this may be brother and sister Robertson’s experience.

On Friday evening, the brethren and sisters, to the number of about 30, came together in the house of brother Robertson. Here I had the pleasure of meeting, for the first time, sister M. Loudon, for many years reputably known; also sister Gascoyne, Baltimore; also, to my surprise, I found brother and sister Herbert Fidler (late of Nottingham, England), who send their love to friends at home. We spent a very agreeable evening together; and next morning, I started for Boston.

I was sorry to pass through New York without seeing any of the brethren and sisters in Jersey City and Brooklyn. I had no idea I would be passing through until the arrangement for Philadelphia referred to a little way back was made, and then there was not a moment I could squeeze for a stay, for I was due by public announcement at Boston for Saturday night at the latest.

I arrived at Boston at 8.30, and was met by brother Mitchell (formerly of Halifax, U.S.) and brother Thompson, and another brother from Maine, whose name I forget.

Brother Mitchell drove me to his house in South Boston (116 “M” Street), just opposite the store in which, conjointly with brother McKellar, jun., he is endeavouring with much stress of honest labour to provide the things that are needful for this evil state. I was cordially received by sister Mitchell, who was formerly known as sister Jardine, of St. John, N.B.

* * *

Sunday, August 2, 1896—A happy meeting of the brethren and sisters in Putnam Hall. About 150 would be present, in-

cluding some from Worcester, Lowell, and other adjacent parts; also brother Dowling, from St. John, N.B., over 400 miles off.

The whole morning was devoted to exercises connected with the breaking of bread. There were four addresses, in addition to remarks by the presiding brother (brother McKellar). The occasion was thoroughly enjoyable.

The meeting lasted about three hours, after which I shook hands with, I should think every member of the assembly, but without the formality of Sydney. They came forward to where I was sitting and introduced themselves one by one. It was a proof of the different state I was in from when I left England that I was able to stand it, after an hour's address, without much fatigue.

After the meeting the brethren lunched together in an adjacent banqueting room, and spent the afternoon together. I went home to rest for the evening effort.

There was a large attendance. Subject: "Preparing for Armageddon."

The meeting was noticed in the papers next day. The notice was more accurate than usual, but still it did not lack the feature that makes you feel as if the truth were a mere show for the public, and "the public" the great God, and the reporters the priests of his jocose and silly Majesty.

We have to bear it till the time comes (as it certainly will), when this monstrous idolatry of ignorance and folly will be abolished in righteous indignation, and the enlightened worship of God established in all the earth.

(To be continued, God willing)

Could Ye Not Watch One Hour?

BY BROTHER G. V. GROWCOTT

(Continued)

Jesus had to be developed. He had to learn. Truly he was well pleasing to God in all things at all times, but he still had to be trained and taught and developed by trial and suffering.

We see in the Garden the last great lesson being learned—the last great trial being experienced. We see in this threefold plea—these "*strong crying and tears*" (Heb. 5:7)—the reality of the struggle and the bitter agony of the development.

Mark records an expression he used on this occasion that makes these pleas easier to understand—

"Father, all things are possible for Thee!"

This indeed is true. He had often said so himself. He had spoken of the irresistible power of the faith and prayer of a righteous man, and truly he was righteous. All things are possible—why cannot this cup pass? Why cannot it be done another way?

But each time he came through conflict to the peace of obedience, resignation and acceptance—

"Thy will, not mine, be done."

There is no sin in the great struggle within. There is no sin in strong desire and hope. But always, at the end, we must each come through to the same conclusion—

"Thy will, not mine, be done."

It is often very hard, but there is no other way. And truly in our hearts we would desire no other way, for we know God's way is best.

* * *

Each time he came from prayer, he found them sleeping. How vitally he needed the comfort and strength of understanding companionship! But it was not to be. He must tread the winepress completely alone. His dependence must be wholly upon God.

Luke says they were sleeping from sorrow. Truly they could not help but sorrow for his sorrow, though they understood it not. But they could not watch with him. They did not realize how much their support would have meant to him. They had always leaned and depended on him as being of inexhaustible strength.

To Peter he said especially—

"Could ye not watch with me one hour?" (v. 40)

It was a gentle warning to Peter to examine his own strength and doubt his own assurance, and seek help before it was too late. But Peter, in his blind self-confidence, did not heed.

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (v. 41).

This is the key passage of the chapter. Here the whole lesson and meaning of the chapter is focused—

"Watch—and pray."

They were not prepared, and therefore they failed. They were caught unawares.

They were brave men—Peter did not hesitate to draw his sword to take on a multitude.

They were devoted men—they were ready to die with Christ, and they truly meant it.

They were dedicated men—they had left all to follow him.

They were independently-minded men—they chose a hard and lonely path, contrary to the whole nation and its leaders.

They were spiritually-minded men—for they perceived that Christ alone had the words of eternal life.

But they were not prepared. They thought they were ready for everything. They thoughtlessly trusted their own strength. They did not realize the constant application of prayer and meditation necessary for strengthening the spirit for the ordeal which must sooner or later come to all.

* * *

“And they all forsook him and fled” (v. 56).

Christ himself was far stronger and more prepared than they, but he never relied on himself. He applied himself constantly to prayer. We read at other times that, as they slept, he continued all night in prayer to God.

Here lay his secret and his strength, built slowly through long, weary hours of vigil and supplication—the strength they thought they could duplicate so easily upon demand.

Can we, too, be so thoughtlessly foolish?—taking our own strength for granted, instead of constantly bending every effort to seek divine reinforcement against the day of temptation—

“Watch—and pray.”

We must realize now the urgency of the command. When the test comes, it is too late to prepare.

* * *

The chapter closes with Peter’s violent threefold denial of Christ. What humiliation and remorse after such boastful confidence! He truly had been ready to fight for Christ, but the command to “Put up the sword” and the warning that—

“All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword” (v. 52)—found him wholly unprepared.

If he had watched and prayed in the Garden with Christ, instead of sleeping, perhaps he would have been ready—but he had to learn a different, harder way.

Peter had to learn to listen and accept. His devotion was impulsive and thoughtless and self-confident. When Christ spoke of the necessity of his sacrifice, trying to prepare the disciples’ minds, Peter instead of listening and learning said—*“No—I know better—it must be the way I think.”*

He thought it was devotion, but it was really self-assertion and presumption. Then when Christ was about to wash his feet, and teach him something, again he said—*“No—I know better—thou shalt never wash my feet!”*

And when Christ said—

“If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me”

—it still had to be Peter’s way, not Christ’s—*“No—I know better—not my feet only, but my hands and my head.”*

He thought it was devotion, and truly it was, but it was a devotion that had to learn how to learn. Peter wanted to be spectacular in his devotion. He wanted to walk on the water, like Christ. He would have been wiser to wait in the boat with the rest.

We must learn the lesson well, if we wish to be useful in God’s purpose, and accepted by Him. We must learn to carefully listen, and to carefully obey.

Careful, thoughtful, self-examining, patient obedience is the only true devotion. There are millions filled with self-satisfied devotion, going about to establish their own righteousness by great deeds for Christ—self-confidently following their own will, and self-assuredly dictating to God the way of life, as Peter did to Christ.

But very few are prepared to submit to God’s way—to stop, and think, and study, and meditate, and learn God’s desire in every little, careful detail. These are the few alone whom God will save—

“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

Behold The Lamb Of God

(John 1:36)

By BROTHER E. FRED HIGHAM SR

“And the Light shineth in Darkness; and the Darkness comprehended it not . . . That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world . . . And 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” (Jn. 1:5-14).

For 400 years the sun had gone down over the prophets of Israel. The final prophet of the Old Testament had declared,

in a very stern and heart searching manner —

“Behold the day of the Lord cometh, that shall burn as an oven.

“But unto you that fear My Name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings.

“And ye shall grow up as calves of the stall.

“Behold I send Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.”

For 400 years darkness covered the nation. Yet the glimmer of light shone in the hearts of a few here and there, all through that long dark night. One here and one there, holding the Truth, faithfully watching for the promised coming of the Lamb of God.

At last, when the Roman power was at its peak in the land, we find that an angel came to Mary and to Joseph with instructions concerning the birth of a child, the Saviour, the One promised from the beginning. The darkness begins to break. Light is beginning to become manifest for the children of righteousness.

Other individuals at the same time respond to the early morning rays of glorious Divine Light. Zacharias and Elisabeth; certain shepherds in the field watching over their flocks; Simeon, “waiting for the consolation of Israel,” and Anna “of great age and steadfast devotion” — all looking for this promise which had been latent for so long, yet which shone brightly in their hearts.

The nation truly was looking for a Messiah, a mighty leader to exalt them, but they did not realize that they needed, most of all, a Savior to save them from their own sins. As Luke said concerning the preaching of John the Baptist —

“All the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Messiah or not.”

Thirty years before the manifestation of John the Baptist to Israel Simeon uttered his words of faith in the Temple, Luke 2:25 —

“Behold there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation (comfort) of Israel. And the Holy Spirit came upon him.”

This was the moment that Simeon had long anticipated and looked forward to with the eye of faith, even as Mary and Joseph brought the babe Jesus into the Temple to perform the requirement of the Law upon the infant.

Simeon knew this was not the fullness of the promise, but it was the earnest of the Divine Word in relation to things to come —

“Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy Word (a Divine revelation); for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation!”

He did not see a Messiah. All he saw was the babe that he had taken into his arms —

“MINE EYES HAVE SEEN THY SALVATION!”

He beheld the Lamb of God. It had been revealed to Simeon by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

And at the same instant a very old, faithful woman enters the Temple precincts and pronounces words of comfort for those who looked for redemption, “for ransom,” for a loosing from their bonds —

“She coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.”

What were the words that Simeon had in mind? The words of Isaiah the prophet (40:1-2) —

“Comfort ye, comfort ye, My people, saith your God, Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.”

And the prophet proceeds with that stirring exhortation and prediction of the work of John the Baptist (v. 3) —

“The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”

The words of John in this first chapter of his Gospel record that we have read together this morning are therefore very important. John the Baptist came as the voice of one crying in the wilderness. He came to introduce the Son of Man to the nation of Israel, to manifest that for which the nation had been looking all through its long history since Abraham's days. The whole nation was in suspense. Said John —

“I am not the Prophet . . . I am not the Messiah.”

"Who art thou, then, that we may give answer to them that sent us? What sayest thou of thyself?"

"I am the voice (Greek 'phone'; voice, sound, testimony, message, disclosure) of one crying in the wilderness."

He came to prepare the nation. They were now in expectation. We read now of his baptizing the people in the Jordan. The name Jordan means "the Descender;" that which descends from the heights of Mount Hermon down to the depths of the Dead Sea: the Descender into the Valley of Death. (Psa. 23:4)—

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." (Psa. 23:4).

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him (John 1:29). John had known Jesus as a righteous man: he had not previously known him as the Savior—

"John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith: 'Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world'."

Matthew records these incidents just before this announcement by John (Matt. 3:13-17)—

"Jesus cometh from Galilee to Jordan to John to be baptized . . . Jesus when he was baptized went up straightway out of the water, and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

John now introduces the Savior to his disciples —

"Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

This is once more uttered to those present the following day—

"And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, 'Behold the Lamb of God'" (Jn. 1:36).

John's disciples were deeply impressed. They followed Jesus, and communed with him. One by one were added; those who accepted this declaration by John. They were looking for the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world: but they were also looking for the establishment of God's Kingdom at that time.

We should note that there are two Greek words translated as "lamb" in our Common Version. In John 1 the Greek word is "amnos." It is consistently used to describe Jesus as the Lamb before and up to his crucifixion.

The other Greek word for lamb is “arnion,” and is always used in the many (28) references to Christ as the Lamb in the Book of Revelation, symbolically speaking of his glorification and manifestation to the world. Only upon one other occasion was “arnion” used, in John 21:15, when Jesus said to Peter —
“Feed my lambs.”

At this point in history the great revelation to mankind was to be made. The sacrificial “amnos” was to become the triumphant “arnion.” The wonderful declaration prophesied through the ages was now made unto all people: that unto which the whole race had been agonizing and groaning, unto this day of liberation and redemption, this beginning of the manifestation of God in flesh. All the prophets looked forward to this fundamental revelation, to be made *“When the fullness of time had come.”*

We in our day can look back to this event, as we now memorialize Jesus as the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. But what about the 4000 years before this manifestation? What does Luke say (10:21-24) —

“Jesus rejoiced in spirit and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight.

“Many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.”

What a revelation to the generation in the first century, and also to us who have been called to a knowledge of these things!

What had the righteous for 4000 years prior to the first century been looking for? The record begins in Genesis 3, with the fall of mankind from Edenic innocence and purity. The clothing by God of the nakedness of our first parents with “coats of skins,” indicative of the pouring out of the life-blood of the animal, pointed forward in the distance to him who would come as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

Read the Bible every day. This will keep you supplied with oil that will cause light. "Thy word is light": it is the light. "Thy word is Truth": it is the Truth.—R.R.

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS *(If The Lord Will)*

Hye, Texas

Monday, July 27—Sunday, August 2, 2015

God willing, another Fraternal Gathering will be held this year at the Hye grounds. The following information will be needed for those planning to attend.

Date/Time: The 7-day gathering will formally begin with the 8:00 a.m. Business Meeting on Monday, July 27, and end with the 10:00 a.m. Memorial Service on Sunday, August 2. Lunch will be served after the Memorial Meeting.

Bible Readings and Youth Study Class at 9:30 a.m.; **Exhortation** at 11:00 a.m.; **Adult Study Class** at 1:15 p.m. on Ezekiel, beginning at chapter 20; **Public Lecture** at 8:00 p.m.

Saturday Youth Program: Information for Sunday School Scholars may be obtained from the Youth Superintendent:

bro. Jason Clubb, 3425 Hwy 183 North, Early, Tx 76802

Phone: (325) 451-7451 or email: jcpmobile1@gmail.com

Accommodations: *We try to meet all accommodation preferences when possible.*

1. Cabins located on the grounds (no monetary charge).
2. Tent, camper and trailer spaces on the grounds.
3. Motel rooms (at going motel rates):
 - a. Stonewall: Approx. 5 miles from the grounds (only one motel)
 - b. Fredericksburg: Approx. 25 miles from the grounds (variety of motels).
 - c. Johnson City: Approx. 12 miles from the grounds (variety of motels)

Meals: Served 3 times daily on the Hye Grounds. Payments are voluntary; no records are kept. If you are able to pay, the contribution guidelines are—adults: \$7.00/day, and children: \$5.00/day.

Facilities: Handicap accessible showers and restrooms are located on the grounds.

We extend a sincere fraternal welcome to all.

Reply to: bro. Dan Clubb, 4015 Black Oak Drive, Carrollton, Texas, USA 75007; Phone: (972) 939-5005 or email: danclubb@verizon.net

LONDON, ON—Sat., & Sun., Oct. 10 & 11—bro. David Clubb, 42 Oneida Rd., London, Ontario, Canada N5V 2X1; Phone (519) 451-4063; Fax (519) 451-9627; Email: kdclubb@rogers.com

The more we devote our lives to constructively and actively doing the work of God, the less likely we are to sin. This is not a guarantee, for the flesh is very deceptive, but it is a great help. The more we keep God in mind, the more He will strengthen us against weakness and folly. We are much more likely to sink into sin when our guard is down, and our minds are on present things. Knowing this, we are responsible for our failures if we put ourselves in the channel of failure.—G.V.G.

Current Events Fulfilling Prophecy

In an excellent article that appears in the current issue of *National Interest* foreign policy magazine, under the cover, "COUNTDOWN TO WAR: The Coming U.S.-Russia Conflict", the writers present grim warnings to their readership that the world is a hair's-breadth away from a very dangerous escalation. The authors are no political lightweights—one is a director of the Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs and a former assistant secretary of defense for policy and plans, and the other, the *National Interest's* publisher and president who once regularly travelled with U.S. President Nixon as advisor on Russia and Europe.

The article's main theme emphasizes that the current situation in Ukraine is ominously close to conditions that led to WWI and WWII. It makes the point that economic sanctions are more likely to make Russia aggressive, not intimidated, and in fact economic constrictions such as those imposed now on Russia once provoked Japan to suddenly and without warning attack Pearl Harbor. It illustrates that Western powers can be self-deceived when it comes to underestimating Russia. It attests that Putin is holding back the belligerency of Russian hard-liners that want to convert economic warfare into military, because when it comes to outright war, Russia will have the upper hand. And it says that Russia's primary audience for its intimidation tactics is weak, undefended, Europe—all of which subjects are intensely interesting to those who watch for indications of Christ's near return—

A DANGEROUS GAME WITH RUSSIA

After the Soviet Union collapsed, Richard Nixon observed that the U.S. had won the Cold War, but had not yet won the peace. Since then, three American presidents—representing both political parties—have not yet accomplished that task. On the contrary, *peace seems increasingly out of reach* as threats to U.S. security and prosperity multiply both at the systemic level, where dissatisfied major powers are increasingly challenging the international order, and at the state and sub-state level, where dissatisfied ethnic, tribal, religious and other groups are destabilizing key countries and even entire regions.

Most dangerous are disagreements over the international system and the prerogatives of major powers in their immediate neighborhoods—*disputes of the sort that have historically produced the greatest conflicts.*

At present, the most urgent challenge is the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. There, one can hear eerie echoes of the events a century ago that produced the catastrophe known as World War I.

In the U.S. and Europe, many believe that the best way to prevent Russia's resumption of its historic imperial mission is to assure the independence of Ukraine. They insist that the West must do whatever is required to stop the Kremlin from establishing direct or indirect control over that country. Otherwise, they foresee Russia reassembling the former Soviet empire and threatening all of Europe.

Russia's establishment sentiment holds that the country can never be secure if Ukraine joins NATO or becomes a part of a hostile Euro-Atlantic community. Americans would do well to recall the sequence of events that led to Japan's attack on the U.S. at Pearl Harbor and America's entry into the WWII. In 1941, the U.S. imposed a near-total embargo on oil shipments to Japan to punish its aggression on the Asian mainland. Unfortunately, Washington drastically underestimated how Japan would respond. As one of the post-WWII "wise men," Secretary of State Dean Acheson, observed afterward, the American government's—

"misreading was not of what the Japanese government proposed to do in Asia, not of the hostility our embargo would excite, but of the incredibly high risks General Tojo would assume to accomplish his ends. No one in Washington realized that he and his regime regarded the conquest of Asia not as the accomplishment of an ambition but as the survival of a regime. It was a life-and-death matter to them."

The Japanese response to U.S. economic warfare caught the U.S. off guard, killing nearly 2,500 people and sinking much of the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

STARTING TO REALIZE THE INCONCEIVABLE COULD BE REALITY

Could a U.S. response to Russia's actions in Ukraine provoke a confrontation that leads to a U.S.-Russian war? Such a possibility seems almost inconceivable. But when judging something to be "inconceivable," we should always remind ourselves that this is a statement not about what is possible in the world, but about what we can imagine. As Iraq, Libya and Syria demonstrate, political leaders often have difficulties envisioning events they find uncomfortable, disturbing or inconvenient.

Prevailing views of the current confrontation with Russia over Ukraine fit this pattern. Since removing Slobodan Milosevic, Saddam Hussein and Muammar el-Qaddafi from power had lim-

ited direct impact on most Americans, it is perhaps not surprising that most Washington policy makers and analysts assume that challenging Russia over Ukraine and seeking to isolate Moscow internationally and cripple it economically will not come at a significant cost, much less pose real dangers to America. After all, the most common refrain in Washington when the topic of Russia comes up is that "Russia doesn't matter anymore." No one in the capital enjoys attempting to humiliate Putin more than President Barack Obama, who repeatedly includes Russia in his list of current scourges alongside the Islamic State and Ebola.

Nevertheless, Russia is very different from the other countries where the U.S. has supported regime change. First and most important, it has a nuclear arsenal capable of literally erasing the U.S. from the map. While many Americans have persuaded themselves that nuclear weapons are no longer relevant in international politics, officials and generals in Moscow feel differently. Second, regardless of how Americans view their country, Russians see it as a great power. Great powers are rarely content to serve simply as objects of other states' policies. Where they have the power to do so, they take their destiny into their own hands, for good or ill.

While most policy makers and commentators dismiss the possibility of a U.S.-Russian war, *we are more concerned about the drift of events than at any point since the end of the Cold War*. We say this having followed Soviet and Russian affairs throughout the Cold War and in the years since the Soviet Union's implosion in 1991. And we say it after one of us recently spent a week in Moscow talking candidly with individuals in and around the Putin government, including with many influential Russian officials, and the other in China listening to views from Beijing.

PUTIN HOLDING BACK RUSSIAN WARMONGERS

Given Russian politics today, Putin is personally responsible for the fact that Russia's revanchist* policies are not more aggressive. Put bluntly, Putin is not the hardest of the hard-liners in Russia. [*Revanchism—from the French word meaning 'revenge'—is a term used to describe a political manifestation of the will to reverse territorial losses—T.C.*]

While none of the "hotheads" [hardliners] criticize Putin, a growing number of military and national-security officials favor a considerably tougher approach to the U.S. and Europe in the Ukraine crisis. From their perspective, the moderates fail to comprehend the gravity of the U.S.-European challenge to Rus-

sia. They recommend shifting the game to areas of Russian strength—*by using military force to advance Russian interests* as Putin did in Crimea and to pressure the West into accepting Moscow on its own terms.

An increasingly nationalistic Russian public also supports this “challenge the main enemy” approach, which draws its language and inspiration from former Soviet leader Yuri Andropov. Ordinary Russians may have gone further in their truculent views than Putin himself.

THE RISING NUCLEAR TEMPERATURE

Added support for a more muscular assertiveness comes from an expanding group of military officers and civilians who believe that Russia can brandish its nuclear weapons to good effect. According to this group, Russia’s nuclear arsenal is not just its ultimate security blanket but also a sword it can wield to coerce others who have no nuclear weapons, as well as those who are unwilling to think the unthinkable of actually exploding a nuclear bomb. Putin appeared to endorse this view in his controversial Sochi speech last September when he said:

“Nikita Khrushchev hammered the desk with his shoe at the UN. And the whole world, primarily the U.S. and NATO, thought, ‘This Nikita is best left alone, he might just go and fire a missile. We better show some respect for them’.”

Russia’s 2014 Military Doctrine emphasizes that Russia will use nuclear weapons not only in response to nuclear attacks but also “in the case of aggression against the Russian Federation with the use of conventional weapons.” And, as a recent report of the European Leadership Network notes, *there have been almost forty incidents in the past year in which Russian forces engaged in a pattern of provocations that, if continued, “could prove catastrophic.”*

ECONOMIC SANCTIONS A PROVOCATION

Counterintuitive though it may seem, *Russia’s weakening economy is also unlikely to create public pressure for concessions.* On the contrary, the damage to an already-stagnant Russian economy suffering from low energy prices is actually reducing Putin’s foreign-policy flexibility. Russia’s president needs to show that his country’s suffering has been worth it. Retreat could severely damage Putin’s carefully cultivated image as a strong man—a style Russians have historically appreciated—and alienate his hypernationalist political base. They resent sanctions, which they see as hurting ordinary people much more than Putin’s entourage, and they want their leaders to resist, not capitulate.

For many, Russia's dignity is at stake.

The key question is this: Will Putin continue to support the relatively moderate pragmatists, or will he turn toward the "hot-heads"?

Currently, the pragmatists retain the upper hand. Foreign Minister Lavrov and others supporting his more pragmatic approach argue that Moscow can still do business with the U.S. and especially with the Europeans if Russia doesn't close the door.

The "hotheads" take the opposite view, insisting that the West would view any moderation in Russian policy as a sign of weakness. Portraying themselves as realists, they argue that NATO is determined to overthrow Putin, force Russia to its knees and perhaps even dismember the country.

RUSSIA ENTICING U.S. INTO UKRAINE: THE TRAP

Putin has yet to face a decisive moment that would require him to make a fateful choice between accommodating Western demands [or] more directly entering the conflict. And if that moment arrives, we may well not welcome his choice.

Little imagination is required to find possible triggers for a decisive change in Putin's posture. The most immediate would be a U.S. decision to arm Ukraine's military. Could some in Putin's government actually be seeking to entice the U.S. into arming Ukraine? While this seems far-fetched at first blush, another Russian interlocutor made a thoughtful case that this is indeed the plan of some around Putin, perhaps even with Putin's consent. According to this theory, this ploy has both a tactical and a strategic rationale.

Tactically, an announcement by Obama that the U.S. was sending arms to Ukraine would give Putin an easy escape from what has become an increasingly untenable denial of the obvious. To fellow Russian citizens, Putin and his government have unambiguously and repeatedly insisted that Russia is not a party to the conflict.

An announcement that Washington was arming Ukraine would, it is argued, give Putin the pretext he needs to affirm his narrative. [Americans] overtly arming Ukraine will thus unmask previously covert American activity and justify Russia responding with arms or even troops, initiating a game of escalation that plays to his strength.

Strategically, this would be what chess masters call a trap. By shifting the competition from the economic chessboard (where the U.S. and Europe have all the powerful pieces) to a military

one, he will have moved from weakness to strength.

In the military arena, Putin owns the commanding heights: there is hardly a weapon the U.S. can provide Kiev that Russia can't match or trump; logistically, he can send arms by road, rail, sea and air across a porous border, while the U.S. is a continent away; within the ranks of Ukraine's military, he has hundreds or even thousands of agents and collaborators. And, most importantly, as he has already demonstrated, the Russian military forces are prepared not only to advise separatists but also to fight alongside them—and to kill and to die. He assumes that the U.S. will never put boots on the ground in Ukraine. The more vividly he can drive this home to Europeans, so hardline thinking goes, the more respect he can command.

EUROPE AT RISK

As [hard-liners] see it, Russia's comparative advantage in relations with Europe and the U.S. is not economics. Instead, it is deploying military power. *Europeans have essentially disarmed themselves and show little will to fight.* Americans undoubtedly have the most powerful military on earth and are often prepared to fight. But even though they win all the battles, they seem incapable of winning a war, as in Vietnam or Iraq. In Ukraine, the "hotheads" hope, Russia can teach the Europeans and Americans some hard truths.

On the battlefield of war in Ukraine, Russia has what Cold War strategists named "escalation dominance": the upper hand at every step up the escalation ladder. This is a proxy war the U.S. cannot win and Russia cannot lose—unless America is willing to go to war itself.

The primary audience for this drama is, of course, Europe. The fact that neither European members of NATO nor the U.S. can save Ukraine is hoped to sink into the consciousness of postmodern Europeans. When it does, according to this logic, a skillful combination of intimidation and intimation of hope should give Russia an opening to drive a wedge between the U.S. and Europe.

Initially, Putin will attempt to exploit the expiration of EU sanctions, which are scheduled to expire in July. If that fails, however, and the European Union joins the U.S. in imposing additional economic sanctions, such as excluding Moscow from the SWIFT financial clearing system, Putin would be tempted to respond not by retreating, but by ending all cooperation with the West and *mobilizing his people against a new and "apocalyptic" threat to Mother Russia.*

As a leading Russian politician told us, "We stood all alone

against Napoleon and against Hitler. It was our victories against aggressors, not our diplomacy, that split enemy coalitions and provided us with new allies.”

At that point, Putin would likely change both his team and the thrust of his foreign policy. This would mean a significantly more belligerent Russian policy across all issues. Among other things, it would likely mean an end to cooperation on projects like the International Space Station, supplies of strategic metals like titanium, dealing with Iran’s nuclear program and stabilizing Afghanistan.

Once the U.S.-Russian relationship enters the zone of heated confrontation, senior military officers on both sides will inevitably play a greater role. As the world saw in the lead-up to World War I, when the security dilemma takes hold, what look like reasonable precautions to one side may well appear as evidence of likely aggression to the other.

Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania form the Achilles’ heel of the NATO alliance. They are protected by its Article 5 guarantee that an attack upon one will be regarded as an attack upon all. Thus, the U.S. has an unambiguous and undeniable responsibility to deter and defend attacks on the Baltic states. Given their size, proximity to Russia and substantial Russian-speaking minorities, this is a daunting requirement. *It is not difficult to imagine scenarios in which either U.S. or Russian action could set in motion a chain of events at the end of which American and Russian troops would be killing each other.*—Nat’l Interest, 5/15

To those of the Faith, allowed to perceive the hand of God working among the nations through the knowledge of the Truth of the Scriptures, all these events are *exactly what is anticipated* leading up to the revealing of Christ and the saints to all the world.

- Events are leading to WWII—*“I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle”* (Zec. 14:2); *“there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time”* (Dan. 12:1).

- Russia provoked and sudden destruction the result—*“At the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over”* (Dan. 11:40). *“When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them”* (1 Thess. 5:3).

- Western powers can be self-deceived and “in darkness”

regarding what is to come—*“The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night . . . For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night”* (1 Thess. 5:7).

● Russia will have Europe under its control—*“Son of man, set thy face against Gog, [of] the land of Magog [Germany], the chief [Rosh—Russian] prince of Meshech [Moscow] and Tubal [Tobolsk of Siberia], and prophesy against him . . . Persia [Iran], Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet: Gomer [France], and all his bands; the house of Togarmah [Turkey] of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee”* (Eze. 38:2–6).

● Russia will rise militarily for a final conflict—*“I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour . . . And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD”* (Eze 38:4, 21).

Surely the time is at hand. “Behold I come quickly!” is the warning. Let us therefore remember the example of Noah while there is still time—

“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.”—T.D.C.

Being for the Truth, it will place us in the minority, and identify us with those who suffer for the Truth’s sake. He that runs with the hare, but holds with the hounds, will never save the fugitive from being worried to death. There were men in the days of Jesus who would preach his doctrine and not speak lightly of him, but would also carefully avoid identification with his unsavoury name. This is referable to the pride of life, love of popularity, or to some other equally unworthy thing.—J.T.

One Hundred & Thirty Five Years Ago *(Continued from page 180)*

must have a large purse, or be introduced to public attention by some influential religious party. The latter alternative is an impossibility; for there is no party in that great city of any weight on the side of the Truth.

“Could I have hired Exeter Hall at a hundred and twenty-five dollars a night, and have placarded the town in all its thoroughfares . . . I might have obtained a crowd. But the expense would have been equal to the purchase of a small Virginia farm; and though by charging something for admission, as the custom is, the cost might have been reduced, perhaps covered, still I did not feel justified in encountering the alternative of suc-

cess, or the incarceration in the Bench prison for debt. This would have been too gratifying to the enemy; for he would then have got the advantage over us; being seized of one's body, wind and limb."

As the article continued, bro. Thomas mentioned that one alternative for preaching the Truth would be to go to the "Peace Conference" being held in London—

"The Peace-Society people seemed to be the only available medium of access to the public on a large scale. They were trying to convert the world to the "peace and safety cry" which precedes the sudden destruction from the Lord . . .

"This Society is treading upon Gospel-ground; and by its emissaries hardening the hearts of the people against the Kingdom of God, which is to "grind to powder and bring to an end" all the dominions of the world.

"I felt called upon, therefore, though but one feeble voice in the vast wilderness of the people, to protest against their utopian and unscriptural conceit."

Next, bro. Thomas' remarks were in relation to his writing to the chairman of the Peace Society for permission to attend and to present his thoughts why a peace proposal was wrong. When he arrived he noted—

"Arrived at the place of meeting I found an audience assembled of about 2,000 men, principally of the working class . . . I was then suffered to proceed in quietness for a few moments. I invoked their patience while I made a few remarks introductory to the amendment I held in my hand."

His remarks were unacceptable to the assembly as he reported—

"The reader is not to suppose that while these ideas are being expressed, the peace meeting was in a very peaceable state. Peace was in the petition, but war in the people's hearts, and on their lips. The audience proved to be nothing more than a mob of anti-tax fanatics."

Bro. Thomas' attempt was quite remarkable. To get up in front of thousands in public forum to show that the peace conference was against the Scriptures; that God had said otherwise in His Word; and that there is no peace, said God, to the wicked. All this was done in his effort to present the Truth of God by whatever means he could.

* * *

IN "The Ways of Providence, No. 20," bro. Roberts next looked at several other incidents in the history of Israel. He wrote—

Pursuing the history of the Ten Tribes in so far as it affords illustration of the Ways of Providence, notice must be taken of the message delivered by Elijah to Ahab in Naboth's vineyard, as interpreted by the events in which it was afterwards fulfilled. Ahab had taken possession of another man's vineyard after effecting the owner's destruction, or concurring in his wife Jezebel's measures to bring that destruction about.

Elijah, by divine command, met Ahab in the vineyard and in the very act of taking possession of it, and addressed the following words to him: "Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou killed and also taken possession? . . . In the place where the dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood" . . . Here

was an intimation of a divine work of retribution—a retribution which God would cause, and which should comprise the apparently trifling detail, that Ahab's blood should be licked by dogs on the very spot where the murdered man's blood was shed. This is one of those details that could not be humanly arranged for, and yet which though divinely caused, came about in a perfectly natural way.

An incident of the same description pertains to Jezebel. She also, as the leading spirit in the plot to murder Naboth, was included in the message of retribution: "The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel" (I Kgs. 21:23).

Thus had been fulfilled "the Word of the Lord, which He spake by His servant Elijah, the Tisbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel." It had come about in a perfectly natural way, yet it was a divinely-caused occurrence.

Bro. Roberts then wrote on the Incidents of Samaria when it was besieged by the Syrians, the reign of Joash at the time of Elisha's last illness, and the Ways of Providence when the Ten Tribes were removed from the Land.

Bro. Robert's excellent book on the *Ways of Providence* is an essential book that all true believers of the truth should read.

* * *

BRO. Roberts' exhortation No. 110, was based on "*The Wicked are Like the Troubled Sea.*" He wrote —

During the past week, there has been much casting up of mire and dirt from the bottom of the ocean. It is the Scriptures that say. "The wicked are like a troubled sea, casting up mire and dirt."

We have seen the saying illustrated in the popular up-heavings consequent on the general election that has been going on. As the brethren of Christ, we should have no interest in these motions of the turbid sea around us were it not for their relation to another ocean movement described by the prophet Isaiah, when he speaks of a "multitude of many people making a noise like the noise of the seas, and a rushing of nations like the rushing of mighty waters." This belongs to the latter days, as the context shows, and is part of the crisis that witnesses Christ's return to the earth.

It is a different movement of the waters from what we have seen during the past week. It is a rush of a different sort—a military rush—a rush of armed nations to fight against the Lamb when manifested on Mt. Zion at the head of the 144,000.

* * *

IN "*Extracts from Correspondents,*" there is an interesting comment on the suggestion about the Judgment Seat—

Several ask what is to be thought of the suggestion of a recent correspondent, that the judgment of the house of Christ may be in progress in the recesses of Teman. We share the doubts entertained by most as to this.

All the New Testament allusions to the solemn matter seem to assume a collective and simultaneous assembly. True, Paul

speaks of the dead as first dealt with, but he also speaks of the living "we" as taken "together with them" (1 Thess. 4:17), which would be inconsistent with the idea of a part being taken first and the rest afterwards. The shame of rejection and the honour of acceptance seems to require the presence of the whole House.

It is said that the judgment must take time. True, but perhaps not so long as we are liable to imagine. We are apt to overlook the resources of the Spirit of God. There is such a thing as simultaneous individual dealing, that is, where many are dealt with at the same time, and yet each treated individually.

The Lord is now the High Priest over his own house, and in this capacity, he must often have to deal with hundreds of prayers offered at the same moment. Though inconceivable to mortal faculty, such an accomplishment is not above the reach of reason.

* * *

BIBLE Lectures (135 Years Ago)—

"The Birth of Christ in the Days of Augustus Caesar"

"Ought the Friends of Christ to Vote?"

"Christ During the First Thirty Years of His Life"

"Various Neglected Truths"

"The Importance of the Truth"

"Infant Sprinkling"

"The Contrast Between the Teaching of the First Century and that of the Present"

"The Mind: Carnal and Spiritual"

"The Keys of Knowledge"

"Signs in Our Day that the End of this Path is Near—Distress Coming on the Nations—Escape of the Righteous and Their Eternal Reward"

April Answers—"Sicknesses and Injuries"

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Blind—Bartimeus | 21. Brake his skull—Abimelech |
| 2. Lame—Mephibosheth | 22. Died by plague—Ten spies |
| 3. Smite me—A prophet | 23. Bowels fell out—Jehoram (J) |
| 4. Neck brake—Eli | 24. Evil spirit from Lord—Saul |
| 5. Boil healed—Hezekiah | 25. Shall I recover?—Benhadad |
| 6. Sick of love—Shulamite | 26. Fell thru lattice—Ahaziah |
| 7. Gat no heat—David | 27. Diseased in feet—Asa |
| 8. Bloody flux—Publius' father | 28. Eaten of worms—Herod |
| 9. Seven devils—Magdalene | 29. Leprosy forever—Gehazi |
| 10. Sick, and died—Dorcas | 30. Sick at Miletum—Trophimus |
| 11. Arm broken—Pharaoh | 31. Devils long time—Legion |
| 12. Full of sores—Lazarus | 32. Leprous white as snow—Miriam |
| 13. Son fell sick—Jeroboam's son | 33. Healed in Jezreel—Jehoram (I) |
| 14. Fever left—Peter's wife's mother | 34. Sick certain days—Daniel |
| 15. Weak and sickly—Corinthians | 35. Thy father is sick—Jacob |
| 16. Leprous hand—Moses | 36. Leprous forehead—Uzziah |
| 17. Hand dried up—Jeroboam | 37. Boils head to foot—Job |
| 18. Thorn in flesh—Paul | 38. Became as stone—Nabal |
| 19. He thou lovest—Lazarus | 39. Halted upon thigh—Jacob |
| 20. Eyes were dim—Isaac | 40. Sick nigh to death—Epaphroditus |

One Hundred & Thirty-Five Years Ago

The Christadelphian, May, 1880

THE opening article contained remarks made by bro. Thomas during his earlier labours in the Truth. Bro. Roberts prefaced the article entitled, "A Still Earlier Appearance of Dr. Thomas in London," by stating—

Last month, we concluded an interesting series of reports of Dr. Thomas' addresses in London ten years ago. These reports have been much appreciated, and several have expressed the desire that other addresses delivered in other places during the same visit should be epitomized in a similar way.

We have no materials for the execution of such a project at present; in the place of them meanwhile, we subjoin the Doctor's own account of his appearance in London thirty years ago, viz., in 1849. He remarks in the *Herald* of 1852—

"For the Truth to create a sensation in London its advocates

(Continued on page 176)

BIBLE PUZZLE—"Who Said To Christ

1. I see men
2. Rabboni!
3. Come down
4. The dogs eat
5. Hail, Master!
6. Bid me come
7. Good Master
8. I have no man
9. No man, Lord
10. Master, say on
11. Remember me
12. I restore four-fold
13. Lord, who is it?

14. Art thou a king?
15. Why do we fast?
16. Who is he, Lord?
17. Save thyself and us
18. Cast thyself down
19. There is a lad here
20. My little daughter
21. Whose wife is she?
22. Give me this water
23. They have no wine
24. My name is Legion
25. By what authority
26. Save us, we perish!

27. Grant that my sons
28. Help mine unbelief
29. Show us the Father
30. My Lord and my God
31. Art thou a stranger?
32. Dost thou not care?
33. Comest thou to me?
34. Thy martyr Stephen
35. Speak the word only
36. Hail, king of the Jews!
37. Come ere my child die
38. Devils are subject to us
39. Lawful to give tribute?
40. If thou hadst been here

Andrew
Bethesda impotent
Bethsaida blind
Blind from birth
Centurion
Chief priests and elders
Cleopas
Epileptic's father
Gadarene madman
Herodians
His disciples
His mother
Jairus

John (disciple)
John Baptist
John's disciples
Judas Iscariot
Magdalene
Martha
Mary (Bethany)
Nobleman
Other malefactor
Paul
Penitent thief
Peter
Philip

Pilate
Rich young man
Sadducees
Salome
Samaritan woman
Simon (Pharisee)
Soldiers
Syrophenician
Tempter
The Seventy
They that passed by
Thomas
Woman in adultery
Zaccheus

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