

The Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial News

A monthly magazine devoted wholly to the Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial welfare, with the object of providing Ecclesial news, exhortations, articles and information of fraternal interest to the Brotherhood. Defending the original, foundation principles upon which the Truth was uncovered from darkness and upon which the Christadelphian movement was developed. Opposed to the dogmas of papal and protestant christendom. Upholding the Truth as
The Berean Christadelphians since 1923

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God Willing, The Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial News will be published monthly as an avenue of providing information of Ecclesial interest to the special activities and upbuilding exhortations are encouraged. This is an effort to upbuild and prepare us in heart and mind for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

DETROIT, Michigan

Dear brothers and sisters,
Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ,

We bring these sad notes to the Brotherhood that the frailties of life have set upon us at this time.

We had hoped to be able to continue the magazine as we have, but serious illness has beset myself and in order to continue the magazine to the Brotherhood, our Bro. Jim Phillips has consented to assist in the printing and organization of *The Berean Ecclesial News*.

In order to save my knee and leg I am subjected to painful, lengthy, skin graft therapy which will be long enduring. After this, my other knee has failed and needs replacement. These are the frailties of life we cannot control and are no longer in our hands. My other knee is failing as well and needs replacement.

We thank our Bro. Jim and Sis. Kay Phillips for their kind visit and assistance in making our home more friendly to move around in during our rehabilitation.

Much love in Elpis Israel,
Bro. Fred Higham

GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

GOLDTHWAITE Fraternal GatheringNov 23-25 2018

Bro. Len Naglieri Email: len@naglieri.me (Details to follow)

“Think on These Things by Bro George Gibson”

BEREAN CHRISTADELPHIAN YOUTH GATHERING KENYA..... 12-16

December, 2018

Place: Mumias, Bungoma County, Kenya. Theme: 2 Corinthians. For info email

Bob Bent or Epa Wekati.

RICHARD FRATERNAL GATHERING.....June 28-July 1, 2019

Sis. Linda Jones, PO Box 48 Richard, SK, Canada S0M 2P0, gljon@yourlink.ca 1-306-441-2248 or 1-306-246-4628

Yahweh...Hath Redeemed My Soul Out Of All

Adversity (2 Sam. 4:9)

The more things collapse around us, and in our affairs, the more important closeness to God is, and the more important it is realized to be, if we are of the right mind. This is the blessing of adversity. This is why Paul "rejoiced in tribulation," and James "counted it all joy when he fell into divers temptations." --GVG

“I Do Rejoice, Yea, and Will Rejoice!”

“*Rejoice in the Lord ALWAYS: and AGAIN I say, Rejoice!*” —Phil. 4:4.

This is the most intimate and personal of Paul's ecclesial epistles. The ecclesia at Philippi was the first established by Paul in Europe—in response to the vision of the Man of Macedonia. It was there that Paul went on the sabbath day to the place of prayer by the riverside, and found Lydia, whose heart the Lord touched. This was the beginning of the Philippian ecclesia, which held such a prominent place in the apostle's affections.

The spirit of the epistle to the Philippians is joy, contentment, fraternal affection, and holiness. Its background is loneliness, imprisonment, and the hovering shadow of condemnation and a cruel death, but its keynote is peace and rejoicing. “*I do rejoice, and WILL rejoice!*” the apostle triumphantly exclaims (1:18); and to them he writes—

“Rejoice in the Lord **always**: and **again** I say, REJOICE!” (4:4).

Our minds turn again to that unforgettable scene at midnight in this same city of Philippi years before (Acts 16:23-25)—

“And when they had laid **many stripes** upon them, they **cast** them into prison . . . **thrust** them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks . . . And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and SANG PRAISES UNTO GOD.”

What glorious secret was it that these men had? Surely no circumstance could be more physically and mentally miserable and depressing—cast roughly into an inner dungeon to be reserved for more abuse on the morrow—distressingly fastened by the feet in stocks, and racked with the pain of the “many stripes” they had unjustly received.

But they “sang praises unto God.” *WHAT for?* This epistle gives the answer—

“Be careful for nothing”—let nothing depress you— “but in everything by prayer and supplication **with thanksgiving** let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, SHALL keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (4:6-7).

Nothing could dim or obscure for Paul the ever-present and overwhelming ecstasy of the love of Christ. He gloried in tribulation (Rom. 5:3), for the bitterest of tribulation only impressed him more intensely with the all-sufficiency of the consolation of Christ—

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? **Nay!** In all these things we are **more than conquerors** through him that loved us!” (Rom. 8:35-37).

All these things were everyday experiences with Paul, and he gloried when they flooded down upon him, for each visitation but thrillingly revealed anew their utter powerlessness to pierce the all-protecting armor of the love of Christ in his heart.

“*I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,*” he tells them as he begins his letter (1:3). That must be *our* feeling concerning all our brethren and sisters who are striving toward the mark of the perfection of Christ. Our minds, like Paul’s, must be constantly filled with loving thoughts and thankful prayers concerning them.

V. 4— “Always making request **with joy.**”

This is an unusual and striking expression— “making request *with joy*” —but it well illustrates the spirit of the epistle. Paul was in prison, writing to dear friends far away whom he longed achingly to see, but still there is not even a hint of any restraint upon his buoyant rejoicing. These are the circumstances in which the wisdom of the Spirit has placed him; these then are the circumstances in which God sees that he can do the most good, or receive the most benefit.

Therefore, though he earnestly desires the freedom and opportunity to enjoy their company and fellowship, he does not let the enforced separation lessen his present joy. He and they rejoice in mutual, understanding love, knowing that “*ALL THINGS work together for good to those that love God,*” content to wait out the sorrows of the brief present in the cheerful confidence of the eternal, cloudless future.

He was confident, he said (v. 6), that God, Who had begun a good work in them, would perform it until the day of Christ. If we are watching for them, we shall find many thrilling references to this glorious Divine mystery which is expressed so boldly later in the epistle—

“It is **God which worketh in you**, both to will and to do of HIS good pleasure.”

It is God which worketh in us—if we will let Him—if we will yield and submit, putting aside our own desires, our own plans and hopes and ambitions, and seeking to follow the guiding light of Scripture and Providence from day to day.

“The things which have happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel” (v. 12).

Paul's life was wrapped up in the furtherance of the Gospel of his beloved Master. What did bonds and imprisonment mean to him if they contributed to that end? He turned it all into a powerful and glorious advertisement for Christ (v. 13)—

“My bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places.”

And the result went further still (v. 14)—

“**Many** of the brethren, waxing confident in my bonds, are much more”—note the emphasis—“**much more** bold to speak the Word without fear.”

Thus he turned a crippling handicap into a stirring inspiration. Such is the power of a fearless example—not only of courage, but more—of *inextinguishable rejoicing*. He not only endured with patience, but in his very enduring he radiated a confidence and peace that inspired others to fearlessness and joy.

“And I therein do rejoice, yea, and WILL rejoice!” (v. 18).

Why?—

“For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ” (v. 19).

See how he binds up *his* salvation with the power of *their* prayers and Christ's indwelling Spirit. There was no self-sufficiency about Paul. “No man liveth unto himself.” Again and again we are impressed with the mutual interdependence of the body of Christ, for so it is ordained in the love and wisdom of God. “*The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee.*”

Paul was humbly conscious that, in the strange and marvellous working of the Divine purpose, the prayer of the least of God's saints

could have a bearing upon the issues of his salvation. What a wonderful bond of unity a perception of this truth creates!

V. 21—“To me, to live is Christ.”

Here again Paul briefly and beautifully expresses our walk in the world—“*To me, to live is Christ.*” All his life was bound up in Christ—all his activities centered in him.

Outside of Christ *there is no life*—he is the Way of Life—all else is death. How dimly we seem to perceive what was so living and vivid to Paul! “*To me, to live is Christ.*”

V. 27—“Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel.”

This epistle contains no criticism or rebuke. But if there was one thing in which Paul thought it advisable to exhort them, this would be it. The thought appears again at the beginning of ch. 2, and again beginning ch. 3. “*With one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel.*”

The brotherhood today is going through a crucial period of purging and tribulation. It *must* drive those that are left closer together—there could be no greater tragedy than to suffer the tribulation without reaping the joys and benefits that the tribulation is Divinely designed to effect. To the apostle, this was the deciding index of success or failure—of sorrow or joy. He pleads (and who could ignore such pleading)—

“If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort in love, if any fellowship in the Spirit—if you have any affection and sympathy—fulfil ye my joy by being of one mind, united in mutual love” (2:1-2).

What relationship is more tender and beautiful than the fellowship of the Truth? Jesus said, “*Behold, my mother and my brethren!*” But it requires much patience and gentle understanding—

“Let each esteem other better than themselves” (v. 3).

Paul advances this as the basis of mutual love and communion and forbearance. The worth of any individual in the sight of God depends upon his *degree of overcoming*. “Where much is given, much is expected.” We cannot judge. Our own record may prove to be the poorest when abilities and opportunities are in the last Great

Day weighed against accomplishments. How can we evaluate the efforts and struggles of others? Only God can gauge the bitterness and stress of each heart's secret conflicts.

Paul, in his pleading, but expresses the mind of Christ. "*Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God*" is still the most touching and powerful of entreaties. The future of the Berean fellowship may well hinge upon the degree to which we are moved by this entreaty to *enlarge our hearts one to another in the bonds of a love that suffers long and is kind*—hoping all things, bearing all things, and enduring all things.

Paul emphasizes his entreaty by the example of Christ—

"Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus—he humbled himself, and made himself of no reputation" (vs. 5-8).

Christ, the Great Example, was big enough to yield lovingly and cheerfully in everything that concerned his own desires and honor and self-gratification—always seeking peace and putting the pleasure and welfare of others before his own—realizing the utter unimportance of the present, and the immensity of the eternal issues—*the great work of God in him*.

This leads the apostle to that glorious paradox (vs. 12-13)—

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is **God which worketh in you**, both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

"*Work . . . for God worketh in you.*" The mighty, rushing wind of the Spirit is upon you—set your sails to catch every ounce of it, for this is your day of opportunity.

V. 14— "Do all things without murmurings and disputings . . . that ye may be the children of God."

"Without murmurings and disputings." "*Forbearing one another in love*" is the thought—recognizing in others a fellowship of effort, a unity of objective—and overlooking in love the weaknesses and shortcomings which they are perhaps more conscious of, and secretly grieved by, that we are.

BUT—*there must be a sincere unity of objective*, and it can only be the objective the Scriptures hold forth—*the perfection of Christ*. Without this basic agreement there can be no hope of the fellowship of the Spirit. *That* is the real issue today.

V. 15— “Among whom ye shine as lights in the world.”

Here indeed our walk in the world is brought into sharp focus. Jesus said likewise, “*Ye are the light of the world.*” The picture we are given by these words is one of a spectacular radiance in the midst of a boundless darkness. Our walk in the world must be such that men will be impressed that we are motivated by a strange, unearthly power. Jesus said (John 13:35)—

“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples—**if ye have love one to another.**”

To what extent do we conform to this *essential requirement of discipleship*? Love does not plead the excuse of unloveliness in others—rather in such it finds an opportunity to demonstrate its own unselfishness and power. Paul desired this heavenly fruit in his converts that (v. 16) he might rejoice in the day of Christ that he had not run in vain, for truly unless their spiritual growth in Christ reaches the full ripeness of unselfish, uncomplaining love, his efforts on them had been completely wasted, as on a barren tree.

* * *

He planned (v. 19) to send Timothy to them soon, as his messenger of consolation, he said. And then comes a revealing note which, though infinitely tragic, has an aspect of comfort for us in this dark day (vs. 20-21)—

“I have no one else to send—for all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.”

All were wrapped up in their own quite legitimate, but quite temporal, interests. How meaningless it will all seem in retrospect when the day of golden opportunity is passed, and the only reality left is the judgment seat of Christ! Can we measure our own lives and activities by this unsparing yardstick, and be content?

The comfort of the picture lies in the fact that even the apostolic times were “a day of small things.” It was a very restricted and family affair. “My son Timothy . . . *I have no one else to send . . .*”

But still the apostle is not discouraged or cast down—

“Finally, my brethren (3:1), rejoice in the Lord.”

Again he returns to his basic theme of rejoicing, which nothing can quench. The aged and forsaken prisoner is encouraging those who are younger, at liberty, and have the advantage of ecclesial

companionship. But it was fitting, for he possessed in much fuller measure than they the one real, never-failing source of joy—the vivid awareness of the power of the love of Christ.

The word translated “*Finally*” literally means “*remainder*,” and the sense is, “This, then, remains . . .” He uses the same word again in ch. 4, “*Finally*, whatsoever things are true, etc.” This word is translated “Henceforth” in the expression, “*Henceforth* there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.” *This remains*, in spite of all passing sorrow—“*Rejoice in the Lord.*”

V. 3—“We worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.”

“*Worship God, and rejoice in Christ.*” The closer we come to that as our fixed and habitual frame of mind, the closer we are to the mind of the Spirit, which is life and peace.

“*Have no confidence in the flesh.*” This is infinitely far-reaching. Jesus said: “He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.” Paul had done just that, as he goes on to say, and he had done it gladly—even eagerly.

All that had made up his former life of satisfaction and pride, he had cast aside. He saw the emptiness and falseness and unsoundness of it all. The mind of the flesh seeks self-expression and self-gratification in a 1000 different, subtle ways—many of them apparently righteous, noble and good, but *pride* is at the bottom of them all. We *must* see through it. We must abhor every ugly impulse of self-assertion and self-esteem. We must empty ourselves of self, and be overwhelmed with our utter insignificance.

“*What is man, that Thou, O God, art mindful of him?*”—pitiful specks of briefly animated dust in the immeasurable vastness of eternity. Who are we to even think we have a thought worth thinking? “*Worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh.*”

“I count all things but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him; that I may **know** him, and the **power** of his resurrection, and the **fellowship** of his sufferings—if by **any means** I might attain!”

Surely we can but sadly smile when some speak disparagingly of “*extremists*” in the race for life. How pale the most extreme would

appear before the intensity of the apostle's fervent strivings and desire!

“In stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft . . . beaten with rods, stoned, scourged with whips . . . weariness, painfulness, watchings, hunger, thirst, cold, nakedness...”

And yet he says (vs. 13-17)—

“I count not myself to have attained . . . I strive that if by any means I **might** attain . . . I **press** toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus . . . Brethren, **be followers of me.**”

And then he goes on in sadness (vs. 18-19) to speak of those who walked as the enemies of the cross of Christ . . . whose end is destruction . . . whose glory is their shame. . . *who mind earthly things.*

Is it so terrible to “mind earthly things”? Does it call for such extreme condemnation? Houses, lawns, furniture, automobiles, business, what shall we eat? what shall we wear?—all must be attended to in their time and season—but *where is our heart?* What fills our interests? Where does our mind naturally love to turn?—patterns, recipes, needlework, hobbies, workshops, gardens, photographs, recreation, sport? . . . or the *eternal things of God?*

“Set your affections on things above, not on things on earth.”

“I count all things but loss . . . I press—I strive—I strain toward the mark . . . if by any means I might attain to the transcendent, eternal glory of oneness with Christ.

* * *

“Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed-for, my joy and my crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved” (4:1).

Does this overflowing manifestation of affection seem to us extreme and overdone? Are we, like the Corinthians, afraid to open our hearts to one another? Are we cold, and reserved, and self-contained? Peter exhorts (1:4:8)—

“**ABOVE ALL THINGS,** have fervent love among yourselves.”

That will solve most problems.

There is nothing ordinary or commonplace about the glorious Gospel of Christ. It means a complete and revolutionary transformation of the heart. It is *all or nothing*.

Then once more (v. 4) comes that exultant refrain—

“Rejoice in the Lord always: and **again** I say, **Rejoice!**”

How eager and anxious he was that they should enjoy the full glory and power of their holy calling—that they should share with him the transporting joy and peace of life in Christ!

V. 5— “Let your moderation”—the word really means 'gentleness' and is so translated in other places—“Let your **gentleness** be known unto all men.”

Christ's true brethren will be universally known for their unfailing gentleness in all relationships and circumstances. Gentleness is the manifestation of a calm and spiritual mind—“*Be careful for nothing*” (v. 6)—let nothing make you anxious or upset—take every problem to God in thanksgiving and prayer.

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding (v. 7), **SHALL** keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

He speaks in terms of unshakable assurance. He has no doubts of the unfailing efficacy of his Divine prescription.

“Finally, my brethren, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report—**think on these things.**”

The practical wisdom of this counsel, even from a natural point of view, is surely obvious. The folly of the opposite course is surely manifest. To keep the mind occupied with thoughts of things that are lovely and pure is not only beneficial and spiritually upbuilding—it is also self-evidently the course of peace and happiness. But, above all, the crowning promise of this way is (v. 9):

“The God of peace shall be with you.”

He finds occasion, in conclusion, to rejoice in them again (v. 10)—that their care of him in his affliction had flourished. In the intimacy of his special affection for them, he reminds them (v. 15) that when he was establishing the ecclesias, they alone of all the churches had been concerned to contribute to his daily needs. Philippi was in Macedonia. To the rich Corinthians he said—

“The deep poverty of the ecclesias of Macedonia abounded unto the riches of their liberality...beyond their power they were willing . . . praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift.”

And later, in ch. 11, he tells the Corinthians that he had accepted nothing from *them*, relying rather on the hard-earned assistance of the Macedonian brethren. He refused the help of the rich, and accepted that of the struggling poor. He refused the help of the Corinthians, he said (2 Cor. 11:12), that he might cut off occasion from them that desired occasion—that he might not give them cause to glory that they had supported him.

How much this tells us of the confidence of his intimacy with the brethren and sisters of Philippi—that he did not hesitate to share the meager resources of their poverty with them! There were no puffing-up, pride-gratifying riches here—no danger that the well-to-do would glory over him that of their abundance they had patronizingly supported this indigent wanderer, among their various charitable hobbies. *Rich Philippians*—powerful in their poverty! *Poor Corinthians*—impotent in their opulence!

Arising out of this consideration, he beautifully reveals to them the secret of his divine peace of mind (vs. 11-13)—

“I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and suffer need.”

“*I have learned . . . I am instructed.*” It was a state of mind that had to come by a process of learning. Jesus said: “*Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.*” And of the Son of God himself it is recorded, “He *learned* obedience by the things that he suffered.”

This word “instructed” in v. 12 means *to be initiated into divine mysteries*. It is the only place it occurs in the Scriptures.

“I can do **all things** through Christ who strengtheneth me” (v. 13).

That was the glorious secret into which he had been initiated, and it must be ours. “When I am weak, then am I strong.” When I most fully realize and am impressed with my utter helplessness, then am I most strong through the transforming power of Christ.

V. 20— “Unto God be glory for ever and ever.”

This dare not be just a form of words, or an occasional remembrance. “*Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are, and were created*” (Rev. 4:11). Let us keep that before us as a continual perspective of the purpose of our life and walk in the world. Our part in the glorious, unbounded future depends upon whether our lives and characters contribute to the glory and pleasure of God.

* * *

V. 21—“Salute every saint in Christ Jesus.”

Not just “*all saints,*” but “*every saint*”—each one separately and individually. A beautiful concluding thought—“Salute *every saint in Christ.*” Consider them all, over and over, one by one, in loving and prayerful remembrance, after the wonderful example of the aged apostle, that the whole body, fitly joined together according to the effectual working of every part, may grow up in Christ unto the edifying of itself in love.

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”

—*Bro.*

G.V.Growcott

Laborers Together With God (1 Cor. 3:9)

Be thankful that God has guaranteed you a job. For an able-bodied, able-minded person, there is no affliction worse than unemployment. There is never unemployment for the true children of God. They always have full time employment: plenty to do. They are spiritually-minded, and they perceive the vast amount of spiritual labor crying to be done, and the laborers few. And they lovingly rejoice at the God-provided opportunity to be “laborers together with Him.” And they cheerfully set to work at the huge pile, from dawn to dusk, in total, exhilarating satisfaction and enjoyment. They retire at night to sweet repose, serene in the consciousness of a good day’s work done for the eternal, triumphant, ever-advancing divine purpose. Very little result can be seen with the natural eye, but the mighty edifice progresses steadily, stone by stone. What a wonderful blessing that God’s spiritually-minded, spiritually-aware children have an abundance of wholesome, useful, enjoyable work. What a tragedy is slothfulness and unemployment. How sad the poor blind earthly creatures who “don’t know what to do with their time”!—GVG

Signs – Licentiousness in the Tarshish Powers explains their Destiny—and what we can learn from it!

—*Bro. Jim Phillips*

We wrote recently about the current changes taking place in the USA government, back to a position closer to its constitutional founding. The nomination of a “constitutionalist” (Bret Kavanaugh) to the Supreme Court of the United States was apt to, at least temporarily, stop the slide of the USA to European Socialism, and an alliance with the unclean spirits coming out of the mouths of the Beast (Vienna/Brussels) the False Prophet (Rome) and the Dragon (Russia.) Of its founding, bro. Thomas had written that the USA Constitution was an attack against the Roman Beast and her daughters, a part of the rebirth of the woman and her protest against the Harlot Church. He wrote in *Elpis Israel* about the formation of the USA:

From *Elpis Israel*, by bro. John Thomas: “The struggle was between might against right. An arbitrary government [England--jp] demanded tribute, and an ignorant clergy, tithes; and the democracy, religious and secular, [Continental citizens--jp] gave them lead and steel. This was the old fashion in which they had been accustomed to "devour their enemies" during their 1260 years contest with the beast. But the conflict was unequal; and but for the suicidal policy of one of its horns [France--jp], the witnesses would have again been overcome. The liberty-hating, and the heretic slaying, Bourbons [French aristocracy--jp], sent a fleet and army to enable ‘liberty, equality, and fraternity’ to triumph in America! Not that they hated sectarianism and democracy less than formerly, but that they hated England more. La Fayette and his companions, though scions of nobility, became the sons of freedom. Britain was check-mated; and the model republic founded, and acknowledged by all the horns of the beast. There then, beyond the broad waters of the mighty deep, the tree of liberty, planted by the two prophets of human rights, spreads its ample and expanding branches, affording shade and shelter for the persecuted and oppressed of all nations, who may be fortunate enough to escape the ‘great iron teeth,’ and ‘brazen claws,’ of the all devouring monster of the sea.” [End Quote]

The planting of the tree of liberty by the woman of the model republic, as she was then called, and as bro. Thomas was sarcastically referring to her, created the hostility in the earth between the woman and the Church

which will lead the world to Armageddon. Without this hostility, there would be no cause for the great war of which Daniel 11 is a prophesy, between the Catholic/Socialist powers of the North, and the Libertarian/Capitalist woman of the South.

But the destiny of the “model republic” and her associates is not a positive one. While it is crucial to the prophesy that she is in position to resist the great King of the North, at some point, she will betray her divinely appointed role as Israel’s protectorate, just as ancient Tyre did, and she will suffer the terrible and devastating defeat prophesied so frequently in the Scriptures.

Psa 48:7-8 Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind. As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever. Selah.

The Tarshish powers will not be broken for no reason, or as a reward for their protection of Israel. The prosperity of the Tarshish powers today is a reward for their protection of Israel. No, the Tarshish powers will suffer the judgments prophesied at the hand of God first, and then at the hand of the Northern Power, because like Tyre of old, they will betray their appointed role of Israel’s protector, and rejoice at the overthrow of Israel. The type of the Tarshish power was Tyre of old, to whom it was prophesied:

Eze 28:13-15 Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone *was* thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou *art* the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee *so*: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou *wast* perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

The current action of the Tarshish powers in the protection of Israel gives her this elevated position, as the anointed cherub that covereth. The Tarshish powers today cover Israel, from Cyprus, to the Mediterranean, to the Indian Ocean and the “rivers beyond Kush,” or Afghanistan. The protection of Israel has afforded the Tarshish powers the covering of every precious stone. But it won’t last. Iniquity will be found in her. That is, at some point, Tarshish will rejoice with the rest of the world at the downfall of Israel.

It is not hard to see these events on the horizon. Anti-Semitism has been growing worldwide, including in the Tarshish states. The resistance to the constitutionalist appointment to the US Supreme Court which took place over the last few months, testifies to the fact that many in the US are willing to throw off her relationship as the Witness, and join in with the anti-liberty Beast. Unsubstantiated charges were brought forth, and the divine principle of “in the mouths of two or three witnesses, let every word be established, were discarded in an effort to thwart one whose life work has been to uphold the US constitution.

The enemies of the constitution prefer men to sit on the Supreme Court, who are willing to invent new laws for the powerful, and thereby negate the witness’s Constitution, rather than support the rule of law already in place. And while they failed for the moment, the violence of their rebellion, and their refusal to accept the conclusions of the democratically elected representatives, belies the modern Tarshish powers’ future—the same future as once foretold against Tyre.

Other modern day Tarshish powers are even further along in their reassociation to the Beast than the US. In a last dying effort to disassociate the US from Israel, as he was leaving office, former US President Barack Obama colluded with Israel’s enemies to have legislation passed in the United Nations, which in effect made all Israeli officials war criminals, due to the Israeli “occupation” of the Jordan River’s west bank. Egypt, which had fallen out of favor with President Obama due to the Egyptian Army under the direction of Field Marshal Abdel El Sisi, overthrowing the Muslim Brotherhood, agreed to sponsor the desired legislation. But following the election of President Donald Trump, and under pressure from him, El Sisi reneged, and withdrew the petition. But that petition was picked up by Tarshish power New Zealand, and ultimately passed with favorable votes from New Zealand, and permanent Security Council member Great Britain, while President Obama had the US abstain. Thus, terrible legislation was passed against Israel, and while it is currently of little merit while the US so firmly is backing Israel, the foundation is set down for a terrible future when that support evaporates, as it most surely will.

In the United States, as the witness barely hung on to her power, the opponents to the model republic’s constitution rioted in the streets of US cities, and in the Capital Buildings screaming out “this is what democracy looks like.” No, its not what democracy looks like. Democracy is yielding to the will of the majority, not violently rising up

against it. Rather, that is what the rule of the all powerful Beast looks like. This is what “liberty, equality, and fraternity,” all divine principles under a just government, looks like when these frog spirits are turned unclean in the hands of the Beast, the False Prophet, and the Dragon. And the Tarshish powers are only a vote away from such a relationship.

The Spirit of Licentiousness

This mob rule; this “every man doing what is right in his own eyes,” is the spirit of our age. Like all spirits of the ages, it cannot help but effect ecclesial life. When I was still in the Central group, some 40 years ago, I was greatly influenced to leave the Central group by a speaker from Australia named John Ullman who made a very powerful point about this very thing. This talk was given somewhere around 1972, but is still quite valid today. He said:

Bro. John Ullman, circa 1972: “The way of the truth, operating upon those who believe it and accept it, confines men and women within severely restricted limits, and that is the beginning of the doctrine of fellowship. The truth confines us within severely restricted limits, and it is because of that that the Lord Jesus Christ in crystal clear terms set out his teachings. Straight is the gait, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life. But on the other hand, the way to destruction is wide and broad.

“And among professing Christadelphians, there has always been those who would to like to reverse the application of those two ways. To rephrase the Lord's words and make them read wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth unto life. But it is not that way at all. The Lord has spoken. The Lord has set down the terms. And we alter those terms at our own eternal peril.

“The way that leadeth unto life is the Truth. The Truth. Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free. Nothing else will do that. It would be facetious in the extreme to imagine the Lord saying, ye shall know error, and error shall make you free. Thus it is that the way to life is straight and narrow. Or as Rotherham translates that verse, from Matt. 7 ‘Narrow is the gate and confined the way, the way that leadeth unto life’. And in that brief phrasing are the fundamental evidence of the saving power of God at work. We have the main reason why the world today is not filled with Christadelphians. The world today is not filled with Christadelphians because men and women of Adamic nature are not

willing to be confined and restricted in what they may believe, or in what they may do.

“And we all know that since the days of Adam, man has claimed above all else his right to absolute freedom. But if he wants to inherit the kingdom of God, that is a freedom he can never have. But in the brotherhood today as in the past, brethren are claiming for themselves and others, a freedom which it is not legitimate for them to demand. And that which is at stake is the doctrine of fellowship.” [End Quote]

The doctrine of fellowship can be reduced to its most common denominator in the following terms. We **MUST** walk with those who are walking in the light, and we **MUST NOT** walk with those who are walking in error. These two principles are not suggestions, but are divine commands which we ignore at our own eternal peril. To ignore either aspect of these principles is to put self, or our own independent will, above divine principle. To refuse to walk with those walking in the light, demonstrates an opinion of self and an idea of freedom that defies the love we must have for each other. And to walk with those who are walking in error, is to claim for ourselves a freedom from divine restraints which we do not have.

In his final address to his disciples, following Passover supper immediately before he was taken by the forces of this world to be crucified, Jesus told his disciples:

John 13:33-35 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

It is by love that men should know that we are the disciples of our absent Lord. There is no doctrine which causes unrest around the principle of love like the doctrine of fellowship. There is no doctrine which requires us to evaluate our love for our brethren, like the doctrine of fellowship. There is no doctrine that causes such conflict within us, such sincere inner reflection, as the doctrine of fellowship. Jesus warned us of this:

Luke 12:51-53 Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father

shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

Have we all found this to be true? Yes, very much so. Without doubt a faithful adherence to the doctrine of fellowship--the doctrine of association--has created, as Jesus prophesied, much division. It creates conflict within ourselves, for it often causes us to appear in a very unfavorable light. Bro. Roberts commented on this:

From the Chdn. 1891, pg. 149 by bro. Roberts “God has been pleased to subject those who desire to conform to His Word to what sometimes amounts to painful embarrassment, by having required of them things that at first sight are incompatible with one another. They are to do good to all men, and yet not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. They are to be ‘in the world,’ and yet to ‘come out from among them and be separate.’ They are to love their enemies, and yet to love not the world. They are to be patient with the erring, and yet to abhor that which is evil and not to bear with men that are evil. They are to think no evil, and yet to try professors. They are to submit to wrong, and yet to refuse even to eat with men that are called brethren who espouse wrong doing or error. They are to show hospitality, and yet to receive not into their houses those who bring not the doctrine of Christ.” [End Quote]

We are required in obedience to Christ to abide in the first principles of truth regardless of cost, or outward appearance, This is the first principle of true love. Jesus said: “If ye love me keep my commandments...”

Yet when it comes to our association among members who believe the truth, we are often called upon to submit in love to the desires and preferences, and decision of the body, even when we think we might know better. (And the flesh is always convinced it knows better!) This has been a divine first principle from the beginning of the establishment of the ecclesias. Where no first principle is involved, we must submit to one another in love.

Writing on the condition of life in the first formation of the ecclesia, bro. Thomas wrote about this conflict. About the need to abide in the truth, and yet also the willingness to lose some of our individuality for the benefit of the body, in submitting to one another in love.:

Bro. John Thomas, "Man in Society," Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come, January 1854: "MAN, in the history of his race, presents himself to our notice in two states—the social and the savage. The social is his original condition; the savage, that into which he has sunk as a consequence of licentiousness. At his formation, Man, who was made male and female, was pronounced 'very good;' and appointed to live in society, because it was 'not good for him to be alone.' The primeval society of Eden was constituted of divine and human elements—of God, the Elohim, man and woman: of God, 'whom no man hath seen;' of the Elohim, whom he hath often seen; and of man and woman, the perfection of flesh and blood.

"This social state was free and devoid of evil; yet was its liberty not absolute, but restrained and regulated by law. Though 'very good' and undefiled by sin, man was not permitted to do as he pleased without restriction. A law was given to him by his Creator, expressive of the divine sovereignty over society, and his position in the social state. Hence, society is a divine institution, originally characterized by intelligence, goodness, law and liberty. Woman belonged to man, because she was his own flesh and bone, and given to him of God; and they both belonged to God, because He had formed them for himself.

Society, therefore, belongs to God; so that whosoever hath the honor of membership therein is free to do whatever he pleases that is not contrary to the letter and spirit of His law. This is the liberty God permits in society, which is his. Beyond this man must not go if he would continue in the divine favor. Law is the boundary line between liberty and licentiousness. He that crosses it diabolizes, and takes the first step in the descent, which terminates in the anarchy of the savage state.

"From the constitution of society, then, at the foundation of the world, we see that law was an essential element of the social state; and that social liberty is freedom restrained by law. Absolute liberty, or freedom unrestrained by law which defines 'order' and 'decency,' has no place in the divine plan. Man aimed at this. He virtually asserted, that he had a right to do what he pleased with the Tree of Knowledge as with all other trees; but experience at length proved to him that he had no unconditional rights; but a right only to do according to the law. He did as he pleased, and in consequence lost the favor of God, as will all others who pursue a similar course.

"The existence of society depending upon the maintenance of law, it behooves all intelligent and wise people to cooperate to that end. If flesh

were not sinful, or if all men were wise and good, the knowledge of the requirements of the divine law would be sufficient. They would know and do. But flesh is sinful, very sinful; and all men in society have not intelligence, nor faith sufficient to walk by, nor wisdom, nor a love of order, nor a sense of decency; therefore, a simple knowledge of what God requires in society, or a simple reference to what the law says, is not enough to answer the necessities of the case. Law cannot apply itself, it must, therefore, be placed in the hands of an administration, that lawlessness may be restrained, and decency and order maintained in society.”

“The practices tolerated in the ecclesiastical organizations of the world, cannot be permitted in a society constituted of God. Variance, jealousies, strifes, envyings, and so forth, must be abstained from. No member of such a society is at liberty to indulge in these, or in any thing tending to them. The law of love that proceeds forth of Zion positively and absolutely forbids them. The savage, the barbarian, the Papist, the Protestant, are free to serve sin; but not so the Christian; he is free only to serve righteousness, as a humble and faithful servant to God, who esteems that man most highly who is the least subservient to the lusts, passions, and instincts of the flesh. Therefore it is written: ‘Mortify [or put to death] your members which are upon the earth;’ ‘present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.’ ‘Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another.’ ‘Walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.’ ‘Be ready to every good work; speak evil of no man; be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness with all men;’ and ‘Let all things be done unto edifying.’

“Absolute liberty, which is licentiousness, does not belong to God's society. The members of it surrender some of their individuality for the benefit of the whole, of which each person is a very small part. This is a first principle, and there can be no society without it. Now, that portion of individuality which each foregoes, he transfers from himself to the functionaries of society in assenting to their appointment, or in applying for admission, and in being received, into a community where they exist; so that he consents that he has no right to do individually what pertains to them officially. Functionaries, then, are the acting members of the body, administering to its social requirements—its eyes, ears, mouth, hands, and feet; while the body in which they are placed itself is constituted of the generality of its constituents. These things being understood, there will

be no difficulty in comprehending those which more especially pertain to what is commonly termed 'a church.' [End Quote]

The spirit of our age, and the emphasis from the frog spirits of our individual rights, makes it difficult for the modern man to remember his responsibility to his brethren, and that such responsibility is paramount. It is the testimony that we are Christ's disciples, that we submit one to the other, in love. It is a first principle, as bro. Thomas said, that we surrender a part of our individuality for the benefit of the whole..

Our Common Constitution has this as its fifth clause;

5. -- That we mutually engage to submit to the order and arrangements preferred by the greater number.

It will be noticed that bro. Growcott, in making an effort to define which aspects of the Common Constitution are first principle, by emboldening those which he felt were, did embolden this clause. The society is harmed when this clause is ignored, or worse, opposed. Rather, when the ecclesia elects to do things we might think are useless, or even counterproductive, we should put our full efforts behind it, knowing that what is done at the behest of the ecclesia, must be done in love.

We have a basis of fellowship which defines our first principle beliefs, or those things which are most assuredly believed among us. These are the things that we cannot compromise on, and helps us to know what must be insisted upon, and what points can be yielded to in love, as not fundamental to divine truth. That basis has now stood the test of time since 1898. Practically speaking, it has been changed very little since the Declaration of the Truth was written in 1867. And while no society can tie its hands in advance and say no further defining of first principles can ever be done, bro. Growcott gave wise council in this regard:

Bro. Growcott's Introduction to our Basis of Fellowship: "It is true there are other matters that can affect fellowship. This body of material is not, and could not be, absolutely exhaustive, and include every point, negative and positive, that could affect fellowship. It would be unreal to say, "As long as you accept and believe and defend in your fellowship stand everything contained herein, then you can believe and teach *anything* else with impunity, and it cannot be made a matter of fellowship."

“The Body cannot so tie its own hands beforehand with what amounts to a blank check for speculation. The brethren who formulated this material could not foresee all error for all time, or all truths that might be called in question.

“But, on the other hand, any addition to what has been adequate for sound fellowship for 100 years should be taken very, very slowly and cautiously; and only under the irresistible pressure of positive necessity. Every year that passes adds the value of increased stability to this overall statement of our Faith. And that stability is largely the fruit of its unchanged, untampered-with, un-added-to continuity.” [End Quote]

When place is given to every man doing what is right in his own eyes, the ecclesia become fractious, and will not be able to abide such a tragedy. When opinion takes the place of sound doctrine, and points of emphasis, or perhaps methods of expression become a source of conflict, then unscriptural division is sure to follow.

We are all so badly flawed, and say things we shouldn't at times. We need to remember this, so that when others do the same to us, we are tolerant and loving, trying to understand their perspective rather than look for a reason to take great offense, which ultimately sows discord in the ecclesia.

Meditations— Deity's Ways No. 110

WHEN Christ was cruelly and unrighteously treated, he suffered it and threatened not (1 Pet. 2:23). This submissive, unretaliating attitude has been divinely enjoined on all who would be his disciples—“Resist not evil” (Matt. 5:39); “Love your enemies” (Matt. 5:44); “Recompense to no man evil for evil” (Rom. 12:17; 1 Pet. 3:9); “Avenge not your selves” (Rom. 12:19). It is not for us to argue about the reasonableness or practicability of the command, but to obey. The test of discipleship is obedience. The test is severe, and few are equal to it. The clergy have given way on this point, but not without qualms of conscience, as is evident from Dr. Ingram's pronouncement—“I confess,” says he, “I do not find it easy to meet their (the Quakers') arguments based on the example of our Master; and yet the consequences of non-resistance in the present deplorably low state of international morality would be so ruinous to the aggressor, as well as materially ruinous to his defenceless victim, that I cannot regard it as a practicable policy.” It is the same old tale—fear to obey, through lack of confidence in God.

When the employment of the sword is requisite to avenge evil, and keep things right, God can, if he choose, arrange for a Nebuchadnezzar to do it without calling upon a Daniel or a Jeremiah (Rom. 13:1–5).

The Kingdom of God, say the Quakers, is a moral kingdom, and can only come by moral means. This is not a Christadelphian contention, nor are Christadelphians able to regard it as a scriptural argument for refusing to bear arms. The duty, as to non-resistance, begins and ends with simple and plain commandments, coupled with the example set in regard to them by Christ and his apostles. God’s kingdom will come irrespective of man’s behaviour. And when the time, already fixed, shall arrive for its establishment, it will come, not by peaceful means, but by war—by force, by coercion—by cruel and dire judgments. The terms employed by the Spirit to describe the preliminary stage in the proceedings are “break,” “dash,” “smite” (Dan. 2:44; Psa. 2:9; Rev. 19:15). “When God’s judgments are in the earth (and not before), the inhabitants of the earth will learn righteousness” (Isa. 26:9; Rev. 14:7). If the earth had to wait for the kingdom till the nations were “christianised” by love and good example, it would never come. Providence has been preaching and pleading for two millenniums, and the world is as far off as ever from the ideal state pictured in the angels’ song (Luke 2:14). “For nearly two thousand years an army of priests and their proselytes have been preaching peace on earth, good will towards men. And yet, if we revert to the far off days of Pagan Greece and Rome, we can find no greater breaches of these benevolent, sublime, humane sentiments than obtain to-day” (*Court Journal*).

In the yearly letter from the Society of Friends the following passages appear: “We appeal to men and women everywhere to put their trust in the Lord God omnipotent, and to tread the way of Christ whatever it may involve.” “It has been an encouragement to us at this meeting to know that the bulk of our young men are prepared to refuse military service of any kind.” The first of these statements is noble and opportune, and will strike a chord of sympathy in the breast of every Christadelphian. The second, however, is not noble—it sounds more like a confession of unfaithfulness. If trust in God and a Christ-like walk demand separateness from military service, then the fact that only “the bulk,” and not all, are loyal to their profession, can hardly be described as an encouragement. One would have thought that the Friends would have said, “It is a matter of grief and discouragement to hear that many of our young men are not prepared to refuse military service.” Let Christadelphians hope and pray that the day may never dawn when it can be said that their young men have so far forgotten their duty to God as to become soldiers in this present evil world. There will be no such thing so long as they continue to give greater heed to the testimony of Christ and the apostles than to the speeches of men who ignore the Scriptures, or who shamefully pervert them.

“Behold, I come as a thief.” When does this occur? The context of the statement shows—when the sixth angel pours out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof is dried up (Rev. 16:12–15). For years the brethren have been watching the decline of the Turkish Empire, and now they are

face to face with its downfall. “The hour has struck,” says Mr. Lloyd George, “on the great clock of destiny.” “The Ottoman Government has rung the death knell of the Empire,” is Mr. Asquith’s way of expressing the same idea. Mr. Winston Churchill is equally positive: “The army of Sir Ian Hamilton, and the fleet of Admiral de Robeck,” says he, “are only separated by a few miles from a victory such as the war has not yet seen”—“the fall of a hostile empire”—“the fall of a world-famous capital.” Yes, brethren, we are living in thrilling, ominous times—such times as have no parallel in the history of the brotherhood. Christ is near! How near we do not know. He is to come quickly—suddenly. And then what? The judgment for both quick and dead. Are we ready for that event? If so, unspeakable joy awaits us. Should we not be ready for it, then unspeakable sadness will be our lot. Let us see to it that we are ready.

To hold the truth in unrighteousness is to nurse a deadly and time-fused bomb (Jno. 12:48; Rom. 1:18; Gal. 6:8). Paul speaks of a man treasuring up wrath (Rom. 2:5). The figure is telling. It conjures up the idea of accumulating, storing, piling up. This is exactly how matters stand in relation to the unlawful and unforgiven deeds of all who are accountable to the judgment seat of Christ. Oh! how easy it is to be engaged in this “treasuring up,” and not to realise either the gravity of the fact itself, or the sad end to which it leads. The very patience of God—His tardiness to requite wrongdoing—helps to harden the thoughtless in their crime. They lie, they cheat, they live immorally, they fraternise with the enemies of God, they betray the truth in a hundred ways, but as they suffer no immediate consequences they go on. Alas! the day will come when they will open their eyes to the “heaped treasure” and weep, like foolish Esau. Let it not be so with us. Let us see to it that our divinely-given freedom to obey or disobey prove not our downfall. For our benefit are the words written—“Though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him” (Ecc. 8:12).

The comfort of the Scriptures is for sinners, but not for all sinners. It is intended for those only who sin through weakness, not for those who do so willingly, wantonly, deliberately. It is wise, therefore, to engage in a little self-examination as we appropriate to ourselves the good promises of God—His assurances as to help, protection, forgiveness, salvation. All is well if we are really striving to please and obey Him—if we know that our ability to cope with the temptations of our probation is growing more and more strong. But all is not well if, on reflection, our consciences tell us that we are apostatising—that our love for the Scriptures and the meetings is cooling—that bad habits, once removed, are again taking hold upon us—that we are less particular about the company we keep and the books we read—that we are more pleasure-seeking, more selfish, more quarrelsome. By all means let us revel in the comfort of the word, but let us be quite sure, in doing this, that we are fulfilling the conditions on which God has offered the comfort. Let us not live in a fool’s paradise. It is never too late to mend (Ezek. 18:21–22).

Miracle was not, either in the first century or at any other time, arranged for the insincere or wilfully perverse. This is a class which God does not consider. From miracle, as from the Scriptures, good only came where the person was

honest, candid, and prepared to weigh and bend to evidence. The hypocritical, won't - have - the - truth - at - any - price Pharisees witnessed miracles and read the Scriptures, but remained unbelieving and unconvinced (Jno. 3:19; 9:39, 40; 12:37-40). The genuine, humble-minded disciples, on the other hand, profited both by miracle and the Scriptures. The lesson, so far as we are concerned, is obvious. Let us be careful to have the right mind. Let us be diligent to cultivate those mental qualities which constitute the only channel through which the blessing of divine assurance and revelation are allowed to flow (Jno. 7:17; 8:31, 32). The Parable of Dives and Lazarus emphasises these thoughts (Luke 16:31). This parable also teaches us not to overestimate the value of miracle, or underestimate the value of the Scriptures. To the straightforward lover of truth, they are, in their respective places, equally effective and precious.

“The terrible happenings of this dreadful war make me wish to fall asleep until the Lord appear.” In the sentiments thus expressed by a brother, most of us doubtless share. The times, truly, are appalling. The world is tasting of the judgments to come. Terrible though the experience is, much worse is to follow. The judgments that are to end the present dispensation, and usher in the Millennium, will be more prolonged, more widespread, more awful. Habakkuk tells us that, as he contemplated in vision the final trouble, his “belly trembled” (chap. 3:16). And well it might in view of divine revelation upon the subject. But still, the present evil is, we repeat, appalling. How can poor humanity, enlightened though it may be in Bible truth, look on such “frightfulness” as now characterises the continent, without feeling pained and distressed? But the saints have much comfort in the midst of it all—they know that present events augur the early advent of Christ, and the realisation of all their hopes. They know, too, that before the world’s trouble shall have reached its zenith they will have been taken under the all-protecting and loving arms of their dear Lord (Isa. 26:20; Rev. 17:14). Meanwhile, we join in the prayer of Old and New Testament worthies—”Thy kingdom come” (Matt. 6:10; Psa. 7:9; 104:35; Rev. 22:20). —

Bro. A.T. Jannaway 1915

Take Heed That Ye Be Not Deceived (Luke 21:8)

We must fervently pray God to free us from our illusions and delusions. He sometimes does it roughly, but it is wholesome and beneficial. How we tend to make special rules and exceptions for ourselves, and give new, excusing definitions to sin and folly! But God's holy laws are impartial for all, and wisdom will not seek to bend them for personal gratification or self-justification. We must seek the divine blessing of the ability of searching impartiality and honesty in our necessary, constant self-examination. It is grimly interesting and amusing to see how deceptive our minds can be, and how contrary to our true and larger well-being.--GVG

Temptation and the Ability to Withstand it

It might be supposed that when the subject of temptation is broached the memorable pronouncement of James (James, I., 13-15), being both lucid and comprehensive, would for ever silence all controversy and make further exposition unnecessary. This would be true if the subject had never been beclouded by the sophistry of false teachers; now the case is different. The words of Paul in 1. Cor., x., 13, further instruct us concerning the merciful manner in which God supervises our temptations.

The temptation is ever proportionate to the ability of the individual to combat it: the ability possessed by our Saviour being far in excess of our own, being the "branch made strong," he was subjected to a severer temptation. Bro. Roberts says in Nazareth Revisited, pp. 53, 54, "Jesus, endowed with a special measure of the Father's favour, was sent forth to be put to a proof equal to the new greatness conferred upon him. He had been during a thirty years' private life at Nazareth subjected to the temptations common to men. Anointed now with the Holy Spirit and with power, it was meet he should be subjected to a correspondingly increased test of faithfulness before going forth in the plenitude of this power to bear the Father's name before Israel." He also quotes Heb., iv., 15, to show he was tempted in all points "like as we are," which he defines to be by "the incitements of the flesh."

We have great respect for those who reverence the Lord Jesus to the extent they hesitate to admit he felt drawn away by the impulses of the flesh nature. Far be it from us to attempt to define the subtle penetration of the mind of him who spake as never man spake (John, vii., 46). We wish, however, to contend strenuously for the free play of will power, without which he would be either Deity himself, or an automaton, having no volition which needed to be restrained and corrected.

This could not be the case in view of the expressed declaration that he possessed a will which differed from, but which he subjected to, the Divine will (Luke, xxii., 42). The admission that Jesus was

made in all points like unto his brethren can be so vitiated by contending that " his mind being Divine, he could not be drawn toward sin," that it practically amounts to a denial of his being so made. It is almost presumption to attempt to penetrate the working of the mind of Christ; we only know the mentality and will must have been connected, and we must admit the human will of Jesus. Coming then to the process of weighing and rejecting the incitement to do evil, we can be safely guided by the account of the temptation given in Matt., iv., and however much we stress the "outside" phase, we must all admit the incitement was produced "within/" else there was no temptation. Some hesitate to admit the thought that Jesus could be drawn away, yet the Apostle plainly describes and defines temptation as a process which is incomplete until there be a drawing away however slight. To deny this drawing or incitement is to rob Jesus of free volition, and take us back to the doctrine of the impeccability of Christ's nature. As Bro. Roberts says, " If he was not capable of sinning he was not capable of being tempted." Hence impeccability is not to be considered.

Why should we revert to the untenable ground occupied by Dr. Thomas in infancy, viz., that Jesus was tempted in a different manner than his brethren? Why hark back to 1852, when we have his mature judgment to the contrary? Did he not open all our understanding to the fuller comprehension of the subject of the nature of the Diabolos in man? Hear the great expositor in *Elpis Israel*, p. 115. "Appearing in the nature of the seed of Abraham, he was subject to all the emotions which we are troubled; so that he was enabled to sympathize with our infirmities, being made in all things like unto his brethren." Let us be fully assured the Doctor then understood

Jesus was tempted like as we are," and, as he said, " was subject to all the emotions by which we are troubled." If this condition did not exist while he was being tempted, it would avail us but little. It ve realise it did obtain at the time, then let us ponder the meaning of " emotions," and realise we stand with Dr. Thomas when we believe Jesus was drawn by the propensities within. Sin was not produced because the process described by James had been arrested by the corrective words of the Lord, even while he felt the pangs of hunger and restrained the emotions which fain would

have satisfied it by producing bread. His will was to produce food, yet he subjected his will to his Father's.

In view of this being the teaching of the Spirit through James, Paul and others divinely inspired, it is comforting to know that our beloved pioneers, brethren Thomas and Roberts, also taught the same doctrine concerning temptation and the ability to withstand it. The flesh is weak—prayer is needed (Mark, xiv., 38; Luke xxii. 46).

Lake Ariel, Pa. H. A. SOMERVILLE (1936)

Afghanistan in Prophecy

We are often asked about Afghanistan's role in prophecy at the last day, Readers of bro. Thomas are aware that he lists Afghanistan as in association with the Tarshish powers at the time of the end. In the book of the Prophecy of Daniel, he notes:

The Exposition of Daniel by bro. John Thomas: “But the Lion-power of Britain has not yet attained the full extent marked out for it by the finger of God. The annexation of Persia and Khush, or Khushistan, to the Gogian empire, will doubtless cause England to strengthen herself in Afghanistan and Dedan, by treaty or otherwise, that she may command the entrance to the Persian Gulf, so as to prevent the King of the North from carrying war into the heart of India by land or sea.”

The following is an interpretation by bro. Thomas of Isa. 18:1-2, which helps to explain his convictions for Afghanistan. He begins with the question of what nation will “shadow with wings” the land of Israel, which he refers to as “the tenth,” a reference to Isa. 6:13, and the tenth of the people bro. Thomas felt would return to Israel before the return of Christ, at the behest of the Tarshish powers. (This happened as bro. Thomas projected, though no doubt a more complete fulfillment of these prophecies lie in the future.)

He answers his own question, telling us that the answer to what power stretches wings over Israel, is in Isa. 18:1, 2 and 7, and he gives us a translation which essentially concludes that it is Hindustan. Which is true. A line drawn Jerusalem through Kushistan, particularly the southern border of ancient Cushistan, could have ended in Hindustan. But the river of Cush, was the Gihon of Genesis 2:13, called by Herodotus the Gyndes, and in modern terms the Dayala River. This is shown by an 1880 book called “Ethnology—Or the History and Geneology of the Human Race, by John Painer. He writes:

From Ethnology: “Gihon encompasses the whole land of Ethiopia, which in the original is Cush, but translated Ethiopia. This Cush is the original land of Cush (the son of Ham), now Cushistan, which was also called Susiana, east of Babylonia. The name Gihon, or Geon, as some wrote it, is retained in Gyndes, a river rising in Media, near Ecbatana, and running south-west into the Tigris near Ctesiphon and Seleucia. From Gihon the name would be altered by the addition of the Greek termination, thus — Gihon-es, Gihond-es, Gynd-es. It is evident Cushistan anciently extended to this river, which formed the boundary between it and Assyria, and so encompassed the whole land of Cush ; though Cushistan was afterwards contracted in size, as a proof of which we find the Cossoei mentioned as a people near the borders of Media.” [End Quote]

A line drawn from Jerusalem to the region beyond the Dayala, lands one directly in Afghanistan. So the fact that all the leaders of the Tarshish powers, whether we consider the US, Britain, Canada, or Australia, have wanted to wash their hands of the problems of Afghanistan, but haven’t been able to, should come as no surprise to us. Bro. Thomas wrote:

Eureka “But what country doth the Scripture indicate will extend the shadow of its political protection over the tenth, in the midst of the land of Israel? Whatever land is therein indicated will, I conceive, obtain supremacy in the Abyssinian Ethiopian or Cush; Seba, or Nubia; and Mitzraim, or Egypt; whereby it will find it to be promotive of its commercial and political interests to obtain the resettlement of the central tenth of the Holy Land under the

guarantee, perhaps, by the great powers, of neutrality. This would be in the sense of the text, receiving Egypt, Cush, and Seba, in return for the resettlement of the tenth.

The answer to the question proposed is revealed in Isa. 18:1, 2, 7, which I translate thus: “Ho! land of widely o’er shadowing wings extending from beyond to rivers of Cush; which sendeth by sea whirling things even upon vessels of fleetness on the surface of waters! Go swiftly, ye fleet messengers, to a nation carried away and oppressed; to a people terrible from this and onward; a nation prostrate and trodden down, whose land rivers have spoiled ... to the dwelling-place of the Name of Yahweh T’zvaoth, Mount Zion”—*Herald, Vol. III., p. 103.*

A land of widely o’er shadowing wings is representative of a government of widely extended colonial dominion. It is hailed in the prophecy, which was delivered in Jerusalem, as a power located east of the rivers of Cush, or “*extending from beyond;*” and in its amplest Asiatic development, extending “*to the rivers of Cush*”. The reader must bear in mind, that there are two separate and distinct regions known in Scripture by the name of Cush; the one, in Asia and now called Cushistan: the other, in Africa, styled Abyssinia and Ethiopia. The latter is at the southwest extremity of the Red Sea; while the Cush of our text is at the north end of the Persian Gulf, where it is watered by the Tigris and Euphrates, and now lying partly in Persia, and partly in Turkey.

The overshadowing power is “from beyond” these rivers. By sea, the communication is direct from Hindostan to Cush, where there is well known to be a power, of widely extended dominion, whose navy is largely composed of fleet, or swift vessels propelled by “whirling things”. Ezekiel styles this power “Sheba, Dedan, the Merchants of Tarshish, and all the young lions thereof” (ch. 38:13). This is the power to which Egypt, Cush, and Seba, the country of the Sabæans, “men of stature” (Isa. 45:14) are given as the price for the resettlement of the tenth in the midst of the land. It is the British Indian Lion of Tarshish, which even now commands the Persian Gulf and Red Sea, and is prepared for any advance northwestward towards Syria or Egypt, deemed necessary by the home government for the satisfying of its interests. [End Quote]

Hints For Bible Markers

The Psalms

Psalm 9:7, 8

But the LORD shall endure forever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment. (8) And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

The judgment that comes upon the world shall be a righteous judgment. But we learn from Paul the deeper meaning of these verses of this Psalm. Paul in his soliloquy to the Athenians on Mars Hill quotes from this Psalm. Acts 17: 30-31 “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: (31) Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.” We see the apostle Paul explaining to those on Mars Hill, that because the judgment is coming men need to repent. The opening verses of this Psalm are bringing out the death blow is coming for the wicked. Punishment is on its way. And these verses are reminding those who know the name of Yahweh and his plan and purpose for the Earth, *A RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT* is coming! There is no escape.

Psalm 9:9, 10

The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. (10) And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.

If we truly believe this Psalm to be the mind of Christ we can find much comfort in these two verses. These would be the comforting thoughts during his many times of trial. Here we have a solemn promise of the all-powerful, self-existent God, that He will be refuge for His people, “*they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee*”. We may not remember, or dwell on the fact that our Heavenly Father is ever watchful, but His wondrous care and supervision is always making provision for the well-being of those beloved of Him, who seek after Him with their whole heart and mind.

Continued next month should the Lord will
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