

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.

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"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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CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

EARLY, TEXAS—Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia—Sunday School: 10:00 AM; Memorial: 11:00 AM; Lecture every 3rd Sunday—bro. Jason Clubb, 3425 Hwy 183 N., Early, Texas, USA 76802; phone 1-325-451-7451.

BELOVED brethren and sisters in the Master's Vineyard, loving greetings in Christ Jesus.

Some time has passed since our last correspondence. Since that time we have seen many events in the Signs that indicate the return of our Lord and Master is drawing nigh. The world scene is in constant turmoil, but we have the comfort of knowing that events are ever working toward God's purpose in the earth that will soon see Christ established in Jerusalem.

The international economic flux has shown just how unstable governments are as nations all compete for dominance on the world scene. We see the rising power of Russia as it continually tests its military boundaries with surrounding nations, probing, and calculating. Just recently it has increased its presence in Syria. Let us therefore watch and be sober, knowing that the bridegroom draweth nigh.

The lamps of our minds must be filled with the pure oil of God's Word. We are but leaky vessels, and must stay close to God through constant study, meditation and prayer. To this end we recently were blessed with partaking of our annual Hye, Texas, Fraternal Gathering. Though few in number, we were greatly uplifted with the 'feast of fat things' as we studied and meditated upon the Divine Word of God throughout the week, in the company and fellowship of our brethren and sisters. We are grateful to all who came, and especially to those who put in the effort to edify and speak to us on God's beautiful plan and purpose revealed in the Word.

Our new man of the Spirit was greatly refreshed and we hope all who attended were able to benefit from the Gathering as a calm oasis from the turmoil of daily life, being reinvigorated and strengthened in the One Hope we share. We would also like to thank our fellow Texas brethren and sisters who worked so hard in putting on such a wonderful Gathering.

Our ecclesia in Early has gone through some change since we

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Studies and Thoughts

BY BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

THE SIGN OF THE SON OF MAN INDICATIVE OF HIS
APPEARING IN POWER AND GREAT GLORY (*Continued*)

Of the intermediate condition of Jerusalem, between the setting of her sun, and the withdrawal of her moon—the commencement of her days of mourning—and her shining forth prosperously, “because her light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon her,” Matthew does not testify in this place. Luke, however, supplies his deficiency, in saying that “*Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled;*” that is, when their times are accomplished, or the times allotted to them during which they are permitted to rule the world in wickedness shall have an end, Jerusalem, which is now as a captive woman sitting on the ground in poverty and wretchedness, shall arise and stand upon her feet; a position that will be terrible to her oppressors.

This standing up is synchronical with the appearance of her King; so that *the sign of that appearance is the sign of her deliverance*. Hence, Matthew tells us, in effect, that the sign of her approaching redemption will appear in the heaven, because, he says, “*In the heaven shall appear the sign of the Son of Man.*”

The sign of the one is, and can only be, the sign of the other. The recognition of this truth will help us to understand the nature of the sign, and to discern it when it exists. *It must therefore be a sign in which things concerning Jerusalem must find a place*. Matthew sheds no light upon the sign; but simply affirms that a sign will appear. Luke, however, goes further, and intimates that the sign does not consist of a single event, but is constituted of elements, or a combination of significant circumstances to obtain in the political world, or heaven and earth.

Having brought us down to the end of Gentile times, he proceeds to speak of things pertaining to the nations, when, as Haggai had foretold, Jehovah would “shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land;” or, according to the Lord’s interpretation of his own words—

“I will shake all nations—I will overthrow the throne of

kingdoms, (an imperial throne therefore,) and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations—and things desired of all the nations shall come;* and I will take Zerubbabel, my servant, and I will make him as a signet; and I will fill this house with glory; saith the I SHALL BE OF ARMIES.”

Luke’s specification is in these words—“*There shall be signs in the sun and moon, and stars, and upon the earth distress of nations in perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring. Men’s hearts failing them for fear and anticipation of the things coming upon the habitable; for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And afterwards they shall see the Son of Man coming on a cloud with power and much glory*” (Luke 21:25-27).

Matthew, then, tells us in general terms, that the sign should be in the heaven, but leaves us to infer what heaven he means; as if he should say, “I have just informed you that immediately after the tribulation of those days, in which the Eagles devour the dead body politic of Judah, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light; and the stars shall fall from the heaven, as Daniel had foretold; it must, therefore be evident to you that I do not refer to Israel’s heaven; for you cannot see signs in a heaven so totally eclipsed; you may consequently very accurately infer what heaven I allude to in which the sign of the Son of Man shall appear, indicating his approaching visibility on the clouds in power and much glory.”

Luke, however, does not leave us to inference. He tells us, that *the aggregate signs should be in sun, moon, and stars pertaining to the habitable, occupied by nations in perplexity*; that is, in the heavens of Daniel’s Fourth Beast, the symbol which represents the Powers having dominion over the territory inhabited by the Greek Papal nations.

While the sun, moon, and stars of the Gentile world are

*(*Urau khemdoth kol-haggoim*, is rendered in the common version, “*the desire of all nations shall come*,” which the commentators apply to Messiah at his appearing in the days of Augustus, though no nation desired him but Judah. But *shall come* in the text is plural, and requires a plural nominative; *khemdth*, “desire of,” has lost the letter o, which, when restored, removes the error, and makes it *khemdoth*, “things desired of” the nations, such as liberty, fraternity, equality, peace, prosperity, and good government. In their blindness the coming of Christ is not desired).

shining, and contemporary with a time of perplexity and distress, and when the times of the nations are verging upon their close, signs would be observable in those politico-celestial orbs, importing to the *mashkillim*, or instructed, that the Son of Man was on his journey from the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens to his beloved Jerusalem.

Matthew says nothing about the condition of the nations of the habitable at the time of the appearing of the Son of Man's sign in the heaven; but Luke testifies that there shall be distress, perplexity, tumult, panic, and terrible apprehension of coming evil. Beyond this he does not go. He leaves us to find out from other testimonies what the signs in the sun, moon and stars of the Gentile heavens would be; and concludes by telling his contemporaries, that when they might see these things begin to come to pass, they might look up, and lift up their heads, because their redemption approaches; or, as he expresses it in another verse—*"When ye may see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is nigh"*

But some may say, "If Luke's contemporaries were to see these things, how can the signs in the heavens belong to our future?" This is a very pertinent inquiry, and appears to me answerable after this manner:

The knowledge of "the times and the seasons" was unknown to all other intelligences, than the Father. These he kept concealed within himself. Therefore said Jesus, *"Of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels which are in heaven, NEITHER THE SON, but the Father only"* (Matt. 24:36).

For anything, therefore, that was then known, the "these things" might all come to pass in rapid succession, and the Son of Man be enthroned in Jerusalem in the lifetime of the apostles. So they thought; for before the day of Pentecost arrived, they asked the risen Jesus if he would not at that time restore again the kingdom to Israel? But he told them that the times were still a secret. They might, or they might not, witness the accomplishment of all things. All he was able to tell them was, that some of them should be put to death; that their generation should not pass away till all spoken against it should be fulfilled; and that he would be absent for *"a long time."*

If therefore *"ye may see (idete, subj.) these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh."*

See what things? The things last mentioned—the signs in

the Gentile heavens, etc. But they were not permitted to see them. It pleased the Father that the return of His Son should not be till remoter times; so that not seeing the signs, (for they had not then been revealed), they died without the earnest that the redemption in the Kingdom was at hand.

But since the dissolution of the Mosaic heavens, and the melting away of the earth over which they ruled, the times, and seasons, and signs, have been revealed by the Father to the Son, that he might communicate them to his servants.

This communication was made, according to Eusebius, who figured in the court of Constantine, about the year A.D. 96, at the close of the reign of Domitian, emperor of Rome. It was sent to the apostle John while he was an exile in Patmos, on account of the word of God and his testimony for Jesus Christ, about 61 years after the crucifixion. The book containing it is styled "*The Apocalypse*," from *apocalypsis*, the first word thereof, and signifying a Revelation.

It is not, as termed in the English version, "The Revelation of St. John, the Divine;" but "A Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him, that he might exhibit things to his servants which must come to pass shortly."

God gave it to him, that is, the things called "times and seasons," which he had hitherto withheld from the Son, he now made known to him: so that being revealed, it could no longer be said, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels that are in heaven, *neither the Son*, but the Father."

The day and hour of the judgment upon Judah had become a matter of history 24 years before; and any one that understands the plan upon which the Apocalypse is constructed, will know that the "times and seasons" are therein exhibited, or presented to the sight; and that consequently what is styled "*the day and hour*" of the coming of the Son of Man in power, is revealed.

When the Lord Jesus received the revelation from God, he did not communicate to John the things revealed in the form of a simple discourse; but by exhibiting to his sight representative objects with accompanying descriptions, which, as a whole, constituted a symbolical prophecy; for the descriptions and signs foreshadowed events that would come to pass on the arena of the Fourth Beast dominion, on its own development,

its conflict with the Saints, its judgment, and the establishment of the kingdom of God at the appearing of the Son of Man in power and much glory.

“And having sent by his messenger, he gave it in sign to his servant John.” The words *esemane*, the first aorist of *semaino*, to give a sign, from *sema*, a sign or mark. The common version is, “he signified it.” Thus, in chapter 12 John says, “There appeared a great sign in the heaven,”—a sign in the sun, moon, and stars of the Fourth Beast heaven. The “great red dragon,” also, he terms “a sign in the heaven.” The “*seven angels having the seven last plagues*,” he likewise styles “a sign in the heaven.” It is in this heaven, and in the sun, moon, and stars thereof, that we must look for the sign of the Son of Man; for till he come, no other heaven is given for the development of signs.

The question, then, “*What is the Apocalypse?*” might be answered mainly in the words of Jesus recorded by Luke, saying that: It is a revelation of the signs in sun, moon and stars; and concerning the roaring of the sea and waves of the distressed nations; and the shaking of the powers of their heavens, as significant of the coming of the Son of Man in power and much glory.

The sea and the waves roaring is expressive of the nations in a state of tumult, and admirably described by Isaiah as “a multitude of many peoples making a noise as the noise of the sea; the rushing of nations making a rushing like the rushing of many waters.” He saw them in vision, sweeping onwards like a roaring flood under Israel’s spoiler, to battle in the latter days. Therefore he says:

“The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters; but He shall rebuke him, and he shall flee afar off, and He shall chase him as the chaff of the mountains before the wind; and like thistle-down before the whirlwind. And behold, at eventide sudden destruction; and before the morning he (Gog) is not. This is the portion of them that spoil us, (Israelites,) and the lot of them that scatter us” (17:12, 14).

Thus, he that said to the winds and the roaring waves of Gennesaret, “Peace, be still!” and they obeyed him, shall speak peace to a stormy world, and reduce it to a calm. His power is not only great but invincible. “I have,” says he in prophecy—*“I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them; neither did I turn again till they were consumed. I have wounded them that*

they were not able to rise; they are fallen under my feet. For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle; thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me."

"Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me. They cried, but there was none to save them; even unto Jehovah, but he answered them not. Then did I beat them small as the dust before the wind, (THIS IS MAKING THE IMAGE METALS AS THE CHAFF OF THE SUMMER THRESHING FLOORS.) I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets"

"Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people; THOU HAST MADE ME THE HEAD OF THE NATIONS: a people I have not known shall serve me. As soon as they hear of me they shall obey me: sons of the foreigner shall submit themselves to me. Sons of the foreigner shall fail and tremble out of their strongholds. (MEN'S HEARTS FAILING THEM FOR FEAR). God avengeth me, and subdueth the peoples under me. He delivereth me from mine enemies; yea thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me; thou hast delivered me from the man of violence, (Gog)."

"Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O Jehovah, among the nations, and sing praises unto thy name. Great deliverance giveth he to his King, and showeth mercy to his Messiah; to David; and his seed, unto the age" (Psalm 18).

In the Apocalypse, these testimonies from Luke, Isaiah, and David, are represented as occurring under the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet. The enthronement of Jehovah's Messiah as "the Head of the Nations," is there expressed by the saying of the voices in the heaven—"The kingdoms of the world are become our Lord's and his Christ's; and he shall reign for the ages of the ages" (Rev. 11:15).

The rebuke, or repulse, of the rushing and roaring nations, and the beating their powers small as dust before the wind, is apocalyptically styled, "taking thy great power, and reigning;" while the nations in their tumultuousness are said to be "angry," or enraged, and their rebuke is expressed by the phrase, "Thy wrath is come," "The powers of the heavens are shaken," as significant of Messiah's advent, when the Ten Horns find it necessary to agree and "give their kingdom for the one hour to the beast" (Rev. 17), which occurs at a time when, for some cause not revealed, "they hate the harlot, and make her deso-

late and naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.”

They do this in their rage, while “the sea and the waves” of the world political are “roaring;” so that the trouble which has already begun will not be confined to the Turkish Question; but will extend itself to Papal affairs in all the Star-kingsdoms pertaining to “*the tail*” of the great red-dragon, which are answerable to the Ten Toes of the Image feet: and this anti-papal war, or present war in its second stage, apocalyptically precedes the coming of divine wrath, and the resurrection of the dead; and must therefore be taken as part of the working of the signs in sun, moon, and stars, the signs in their operation being significant of the appearing of the Son of Man; for the dead in their graves do not rise until, as in the case of Lazarus, they hear the voice of his presence.

(To be continued, God willing)

As A Thief In The Night

By BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

(Continued)

Paul’s words teach us that “*peace and safety*” will be the cry to the last, and that the actual arrival of the day of the Lord will find the people with these words in their mouth. This is also very useful to know. It helps us to endure the placid indifference and absolute stolidity with which the whole subject of the purpose of God is regarded in the earth.

The signs indicative of the approach of the day of the Lord are abroad. Yet the people say, “Oh, there have always been wars.” You point to the Eastern Question and its terrible complications; and they say, “Oh, it will be settled by and by. This Eastern Question: this Roman question: all these questions will be arranged in due course of politics—without war perhaps—after war, certainly. They are mere matters of difference between nations, such as there have always been, which will be settled somehow, as time rolls on, without interfering greatly with the general stability of human affairs. Peace and safety are the rule: war the exception: and war only affects a few after all.”

To have the Word of God smothered under bushels of easy-going unbelieving talk of this sort is trying in more ways than one; but it will be less trying if we remember that it is revealed that “*peace and safety*” is to be the pleasant speech which men

will ring in each other's ears up to the very crisis of that appointed "*sudden destruction*" which will change the face of the world.

This "*sudden destruction*" comprehends a great deal. It comprises all the details of the terrible convulsion by which the present system of things is to be overthrown in judgment, and a new heaven and new earth established wherein dwelleth righteousness. These details will be terrible beyond all human experience. The languid interest with which people regard the sure word of prophecy will undergo a wonderful change when they come to pass.

There will be a fearful anxiety to understand when the judgments of God begin to reverberate throughout the world. The cry of "*peace and safety*" will cease when destruction walks at noon-day, and myriads perish by the wrath of David's Son, which, kindled but a little, will be terrible to those who, with the Bible in their hands, know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We must remember that it is not war merely that will press home upon the world the fact that "*the hour of His judgment is come.*" War is an element, but it is the war of the great day of God Almighty, who brings into play means and agencies of destruction unknown to what we may call merely providential wars—wars in which God makes use of one nation against another nation, in a perfectly natural war.

The power put forth in the deliverance of Israel from Egypt illustrates the nature of the judgments by which, in addition to war, the inhabitants of the earth will be taught righteousness. Egypt, destroyed by a succession of supernatural visitations, may be taken to represent the world in the crisis when it is to be "*dashed to pieces like a potter's vessel.*" We are justified in entertaining this view from the fact testified, that when the Lord goes forth to fight against those nations, He is to fight against them "*as when he fought in the day of battle*" (Zech. 14:3). This historic allusion is identified with the Egyptian deliverance in the words of Micah—

"According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him (Israel) marvellous things. The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might."

When we refer to the account of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, what do we find? We find that not only did Israel fight

as an instrumental means in the case, but that God wrought visibly and powerfully with them, "*The Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them (the Amorites) unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword*" (Josh. 10:11).

Can we forget, also, the dividing of the Red Sea to let Israel through, in which same divided sea, returning to her strength, the Egyptians found their grave? Can we forget the earth opening her mouth and engulfing the rebellious company of Korah? the flashing forth of fire in the consumption of their sympathisers in the congregation? or the attack on the camp by fiery serpents—the messengers of Yahweh's anger?

Can we forget the dividing of the Jordan, or the downfall of the walls of Jericho before the innocent blast of rams' horns? No marvel that the nations of Canaan fainted in their hearts at the report of the onward march of this terribly formidable foe.

These wonderful works are to be repeated in the earth on a larger scale. Israel is Yahweh's battle-axe and weapons of war with which He will break in pieces the nations and destroy kingdoms in the day of His anger (Jer. 51:20).

Their leader is Emmanuel—the child born, the son given, the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father—because of which, the war waged by Israel against the nations, will be distinguished from all ordinary wars. So it is written—

"Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood: but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire. For unto us a child is born," etc. (Isa. 9:5).

The angels, inferior to Jesus, were able to overwhelm Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone out of heaven. He is to be "*revealed from heaven . . . in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come,*" etc. (2 Thess. 1:7-9). The very first blow is marked by the employment of supernatural atmospheric means of destruction—

"I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain,

and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone” (Eze. 38:22).

See also Zech. 14:12—

“Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongues shall consume away in their mouth.”

These statements refer to the first great act of judgment by which the land of Israel will be cleared of the enemy. We learn, however, that the same destructive manifestation of power is to be extended afterwards to the earth generally, for the purpose of making the fear of God universal.

“I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles; and they shall know that I am the Lord” (Ezek. 39:6).

“He will plead with all flesh: he will give them that are wicked to the sword . . . The slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried: they shall be dung upon the ground” (Jer. 25:31-33).

“When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.”

The cry of “peace and safety”—the universal persistence in the habit of interpreting public events on purely natural principles, to the exclusion of the purpose of God from all recognition, will not delay for a single hour the advent of the terrible destruction from the Almighty; it will come whether men sleep or wake; neglect or consider. In relation to the world it will come suddenly. To the sons of God, it will come as a welcome and long-looked-for deliverance. Ye are not in darkness, that that day should come upon you as a thief. Be strong, be vigilant.

Our neighbours may laugh at our confidence and pity the fanaticism, as they regard it, that looks for these things; but, in truth, they themselves are the objects of true pity. They are blind to what God has purposed and what God has revealed, and will be the victims of a helpless terror when the long-sleeping but approaching tempest of divine vengeance breaks forth upon the world, and sweeps away for ever the whole system of godless comfort in which men repose.

Our single anxiety, while the vision yet tarries, ought to be to keep ourselves apart from the universal un wisdom, not sleep-

ing as do others, but keeping our eyes open to the solemn though invisible facts of the situation; that when they are no longer invisible, but the patent, terror-striking events of the hour, we may have a refuge in the haven of protection from which, after the storm, the saints will issue forth to bless the world with peace.—*Seasons of Comfort, Vol. 1*

The Household Of Faith In The Latter Days

By BROTHER G. V. GROWCOTT

(Continued)

The Scriptures say much of the '*Glory of God*', and all true glory must be related to, and part of, that. The Glory of God is His fundamental character and nature: pure, holy, righteous, wise, loving, incorruptible, imperishable. It is to this Glory we are called, and to which we are to yearn and strive.

The first reference to the '*Glory of Yahweh*' is in Ex. 16, in connection with the giving of the Manna, the heavenly bread.

The second is in Ex. 24: the giving of the Law at Sinai.

The third is the promise in Ex. 29 that the Tabernacle—God's dwelling-place—should be sanctified by God's Glory. We perceive the type and significance—"Ye are the Temple of the living God."

Then we come to the 4th: a key passage concerning the Glory of Yahweh. Moses asked—"I beseech Thee: show me Thy Glory" (Ex. 33:18).

God answered (next vs.)—"I will make all My goodness pass before thee."

And in the subsequent gracious revelation in chapter 34, God identifies His Glory with His goodness and mercy and love (verse 6)—

"And the Lord passed before him, and proclaimed: Yahweh, Yahweh Elohim, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth."

This was God's response to Moses' request, and this is the true '*Glory of Yahweh*', of which the light and splendour and brilliance are but the outward manifestation: "God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 Jn. 1)—and this clearly refers to moral rather than physical aspects, because it is spoken of in relation to righteousness and sin.

Psalm 19 announces that—"The heavens declare the Glory of God."

Here is wisdom and power, truly, but it is more than that. The vast, majestic, orderly beauty of the heavens declares goodness and benevolence and trustworthiness and purpose, though it is silent as to what the goodness may have in mind, or what the purpose may be.

Psalm 45 says—*“The King’s daughter is all glorious WITHIN.”* Modern versions and most commentaries make the meaning much more shallow by arbitrarily adding words, as R.V.: ‘within the palace’. But we believe this is a reference to the true glory the Bridegroom sees in the Bride—the inner glory of character and substance. This is the natural meaning of the Hebrew as it stands, without tampering.

In harmony with this are several beautiful references to glory in the New Testament. John says (1:14)—*“We beheld his glory . . .”*—that was the ‘Word made flesh dwelling among them’—*“ . . . the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

‘Grace’ was his character. ‘Truth’ was his foundation. ‘Full’ was the degree of his Godlikeness—*“I do always those things that please the Father.”*

That was the glory they beheld. If we desire the eternal spiritual glory of perfect oneness with God in mind and in nature, this is the glory—portrayed by Christ—that we must strive with all our efforts to develop and manifest. Let us be sure we are not like Israel: seeking a showy, external, flesh-pleasing glory, and never realising that the true glory must be developed within us by the power of the Word, and that now is the time it must be done, if ever.

It is a joyful endeavour: life’s greatest possible pleasure and adventure. But it requires complete dedication, constant attention, and continual constructive self-examination. How much closer are we today than yesterday? How far did we fail of God’s glory today, and what can we learn from it to reduce failure in the future?

There must be a continuous self-purifying confessional of prayer in Jesus’ Name. Prayer is not a periodic thing, but continuous: a state of the heart; a condition of the mind. We must pray in everything: large and small—for God’s guidance in it, and for His acceptance of it. Nothing is too small to be prayed about, for all is equally part of the one single fabric of our life. What cannot be prayed about must not be done.

It will always seem like failure, for the more we learn and overcome, the more we will realise how little we have *really* overcome. Let us remember that when we have 'done all'—that is, when we have spent a lifetime trying our hardest—we are *still*, as Jesus says, 'unprofitable servants'. But God in His mercy is going to accept those 'unprofitable servants', if they truly have 'done all'—that is, all they could: their best. He has assured us that our pitiful little unprofitable best is enough, if it truly is our best.

His mercy through Christ *will* make up the difference, and He will accept us as 'perfect and blameless in His sight'.

We know that many will succeed in this glorious race. Though 'narrow is the way, and few there be that find it', still in the end, that relative few is described as a 'multitude no man can number'. *They can do it: so can we.* The prize of glory is well within our ability, IF we will drop everything else and give it every ounce of effort that we have.

If we truly value the prize, and appreciate and rejoice continually in the infinite love and goodness of God, we cannot possibly be content with giving anything less than our best and most.

Paul says—

"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

Clearly here the 'Glory of God' is His perfection of beauty and holiness, and the perfection He requires of those who would be one with Him.

Paul is explaining in this chapter why the perfect God-manifesting glory of Christ was necessary, that a foundation of perfection might be laid, sin repudiated and condemned, and God forever honoured; that God might then be merciful to all weak but loving creatures who seek Him with all their heart.

Paul speaks often of this divine Glory that God is, that Christ manifested, and that man must strive for. The term appears over 100 times in his writings: but perhaps he nowhere expresses it more searchingly and beautifully than in writing to the ecclesia at Corinth. In 2 Cor. 3 he is led to speak of the Old and New Covenants. He speaks of the tremendous, overawing Glory of God as manifested in the Old Covenant, the 'ministration of death', the dispensation of condemnation.

We have seen that the inauguration of this Old Covenant is

where reference to the *Glory of Yahweh* first appears in the scriptural record. The Law, and its services and standards and requirements, indeed was glorious: 'holy, just and good', as Paul describes it (Rom. 7:12).

What a wonderful, joyful, beautiful people Israel *could* have been: IF they had lived up to their glorious Law to the best of their ability. That was all God asked. He did not demand impossible perfection. He made merciful provision for constant honest failure, and ever-renewed effort. Let us ponder that thought (for it has very important significance for us today): *What a wonderful, joyful, beautiful people Israel COULD have been*—what an unearthly manifestation of God's glory to the world—*IF they had lived up to their holy, divine Law to the best of their ability!*

But glorious as the Old Covenant was, the New is far more glorious. That is Paul's point. We know the sad conditions in the Corinthian ecclesia: conditions that Paul warned must lead to disfellowship if not corrected (1 Cor. 4:21; 2 Cor. 13:2,10). Paul is trying to inspire them to the beauty that could be, the glory that could be—

"If the ministration of death was glorious . . . how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be more glorious?" (vs. 8-9).

Is it glory we seek? This is what Paul is offering and exhorting to—

"We all, with open (correctly: unveiled) face, beholding as in a glass (mirror) the Glory of the Lord, are CHANGED into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (v. 18).

So we see clearly what this Glory is, and when it must be achieved. It is the likeness of Christ who is the Glory of God, and NOW is the only time for its development. It will not come wafting down upon us at the last day. There must be a 'change' *now*, and it is the steady beholding that does the changing—*"We beheld his glory, full of grace and truth."*

The urgent question then is—*"Are we, while we still have fleeting opportunity, by steadily keeping our eyes on Christ the Glory of God, being changed 'from glory to glory'—that is, changed continuously from one degree of divine glory to a fuller degree?"*

This is the sole purpose and reason for our present life: anything else is tragic waste of precious time and golden opportunity. This progressive change should—*must*—be *discernible*: in knowledge, and in character, and in godly action—a continu-

ously closer likeness to the 'Lord the Spirit.' Only God can determine the acceptability of the accomplishment in each case, for He alone knows all the abilities and opportunities, all the weaknesses and limitations.

But, certainly, the change—the glorifying process—*must be very substantial*. We are not here to play games, or to just go through hypocritical, meaningless motions. God is not mocked. He has no patience with half-service or pretence. It must be our best and our all, even though in our limited ability our sacrifice appear relatively but a turtledove, or even just a handful of meal. God knows what our best is: and it is as good in His sight as anyone else's best. The poor widow gave more than they all. None can despair, and none can be over-confident.

We are reminded of what a wonderful people—what a tremendous witness to the Glory of God—Israel could have been in the earth, IF they had fulfilled to the limit of their ability the requirements of their glorious Law. *What about us: who have a far more glorious law?*

If we are looking for 'glory', it is right at our hand: and this is how it is acquired—by long, hard, but joyful, labour and study and effort—not by living today in relaxed self-service, on our 'beds of ivory' in our 'ceiled houses'—and then expecting all the glory to come suddenly pouring on us at the final day. *Our 'glory' is, and will be, just what we are making of ourselves right now: day by day, and effort by effort.*

Glorious miracle there will yet indeed be: from weak, erring, human flesh—of such pitifully limited knowledge and power and accomplishment—to glorious divine strength and wisdom: but only for those who have been yearningly straining in that direction through their mortal lives.

Truly there is an aspect of the glory that still awaits us, if we are *worthy*: the final purifying and perfecting, the physical transformation, the divine nature, eternal oneness with God, the open manifestation in the fullness of life and power: every moment ineffable joy.

Paul says, a few verses further on—

"For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the GLORY OF GOD in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6).

The "light of the *knowledge* of the *Glory* of God." God has given us this light, this knowledge, this Glory; and He has offered us the ability to look steadfastly upon it—not like Israel, who drew fearfully back—but in love, without fear: and to be transformed into glory by it, if true, eternal glory is what we desire *above all else*.

Moses, standing before Israel, had to cover his face, and veil the Divine glory. Israel's fleshly sight was too weak, their fleshly heart too gross. The glory of the Old Covenant was freely offered to them, that they should be a holy nation of priests, to carry the joy of God's Glory to the world. How wonderful they could have been! But they failed.

We have been called to a greater Covenant, a better ministry, a more glorious call to glory. Israel failed. They did not realise they were failing. They were quite satisfied with what they ignorantly *thought* was their success. But the attraction and distraction of the present, and of the heathen world around them, took their time, and effort, and interest—and they failed. They never realised the unique wonderfulness and magnitude of the Divine call that had come to them, and had chosen them for God's Glory, out of a perishing animal world.

It would be a tragedy if the same must at last be said of us.

Glory is oneness of heart and mind and character with God. *There is no other glory*. At the judgment seat of Christ, we shall be given *exactly that which we have set our heart on, and dedicated our life and energies to*. That is pre-eminently fair and just.

If it has been the Glory of God, then it will be the Glory of God: oneness with God in mind and substance, in eternal joyfulness. If not, then it will not. *Now*, we have the choice: *then*, it will be too late.—*Berean, 1977*

TO rectify a man's actions you must affect the springs from which they come. Sorrow will be useful to him if it set him on the right way to do this. There is but one right way. It is indicated in those well-known words of the 119th Psalm: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word". The whole Psalm seems devoted to the purpose of holding up and extolling the Word of God as the means of enlightenment and sanctification. In this it agrees with the sentiment of the Scriptures generally, and with reason and experience.—Seasons of Comfort

Jehovah-Nissi

“He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love” (Song 2:4).

In our first reading (Ex. 17) we are again following the journey of Moses and the Children of Israel through the wilderness to the Land of Promise.

Each year we follow this large company, and from the record given are able to derive many thoughts in regard to the Lord Jesus, and many lessons and examples for our walk to the Kingdom.

It is the consideration of these things in relation to Christ and ourselves that will help US in OUR wilderness journey. These beautiful things are innumerable, and are very plain to us upon close examination, and—most important—are meant for our learning.

This morning we would like to base our thoughts on vs. 9-16, particularly v. 15 and the term JEHOVAH-NISSI—“Yahweh (He Who Shall Be) my Banner, Ensign or Standard”—

“And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi.”

In these verses we find Moses, Aaron and Hur on the top of a hill, overlooking the battle with the Amalekites. In vs. 11 we see that the direction of the battle went according to Moses’ hands. As long as his hands were held upright, Israel prevailed. With Aaron and Hur’s help, Moses’ hands were stayed up till the going down of the sun, and victory was Israel’s.

What is the type here? Just as Moses interceded for Israel with uplifted hands to God, so the Lord Jesus, now exalted to God’s right hand, intercedes for us.

It is a vital necessity, then, that we join our prayers with the intercessions of the Lord Jesus to our Heavenly Father.

We read in Rom. 8:26-27—

“The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

“And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God.”

And reading on in v. 28—

“And we know that ALL things work together for good to

them that love God, to them who are called according to His Purpose.”

Moses' hands were heavy. He needed the help of Aaron and Hur. He needed the companionship and assistance of his brethren.

Here is Moses as a type of us. We can do nothing alone. We need the help and love of one another as we strive together in our prayers. This should be our purpose and motive in meeting and being with one another. We must assist and encourage, as the Scripture saith—

“Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”

The flesh, in opposition to things spiritual, likes to tear down, to criticize and condemn others. But this only weakens the whole Body, and weakens ourselves.

How much better to follow the example of HELPING one another, that together we may overcome our common enemy—Sin. All help, ALL things, in reality come from God. We are provided with one another to be fellow-helpers to the Kingdom.

We, like the Israelites of old, are fighting a battle—though not a physical battle but a spiritual one. It is therefore necessary that we fight the flesh TOGETHER: first in ourselves, by examination according to the Word; and then by encouraging and praying for each other that they too may overcome.

We notice (v. 9) that Moses went up to the top of the hill with the “ROD OF GOD” in his hand. This Rod was the Ensign or Banner of victory over the Amalekites—

“And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek:

“Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the Rod of God in mine hand.”

It was this same Rod that Moses used in Egypt to show the power of God by turning it into a serpent (Ex. 4:2-5).

“And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he (Moses) said, A rod. And He said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent . . .

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand—

“That they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers,

the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee."

It was this Rod, too, with which the miracles were brought upon Egypt.

This was the Rod that smote the Rock and brought forth the life-giving waters.

This was the Rod that budded, and that was laid up as a memorial in the Ark.

This Rod or Ensign of victory over the Amalekites (the "first" or typical enemy of Israel), for which Moses built an altar (v. 15) calling it JEHOVAH-NISSI, was the Serpent-Rod. This is a type of Christ—"He Who Shall Be My Ensign."

In Numbers 21:6-9 we read of another Serpent-Rod which was also lifted up as an Ensign of salvation and victory—

"And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, and much of the people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses and said,

"We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee: pray unto the Lord that He take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass that everyone that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

"And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole: and it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

Here was a victory over death, for whosoever looked upon it LIVED. This Ensign, then, is a type of Christ, as Christ himself points out—

"As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (Jn. 3:14).

The Serpent, we know, represents Sin, being the one who was instrumental in bringing sin into the world.

Although Christ was perfectly sinless in character, and therefore the spotless and acceptable sacrifice for sin, still he had the same nature as we, which was also an essential aspect of his sacrifice. He voluntarily submitted to the public condemnation and repudiation of the serpent-cursed body of sin, the body of which Paul said—

"In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18).

In this, God was justified and His holiness was honoured,

while a foundation or basis of salvation and mercy was opened up to all mankind.

If we really know the Truth and value Christ's mortal warfare with Sin, we see, in his complete victory over sin, the devil (diabolos) defeated and condemned and crucified on the hill of Calvary—the Brazen Serpent—the Serpent Rod—the Banner and Ensign (Nissi) of the greatest victory man ever won.

Christ then is our Banner of victory over Sin. Through him we can be cured of our sin-stricken nature, and changed to glorious immortality. Paul says (Rom. 8:1-4)—

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

“For what the Law (of Moses) could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His Own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”

Christ as our Banner has laid down his life for us; but we must not take his victory for granted, or fail to do OUR part. While Moses interceded for the Children of Israel, and Joshua (also a type of Christ) led them to victory, the Israelites themselves had to fight together with their Captain.

So it is with us. Jesus came in Sin's flesh and won the battle over Sin. He now intercedes for us, being “touched with the feeling of our infirmities.”

But we must each individually fight the same battle against Sin within ourselves. Paul tells us this in Rom. 8:13—

“If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”

It is necessary for each one of us individually to “mortify,” or put to death, the body of sin. Each of us must be “crucified with him”—nailed up to die. It is a painful process, the cutting out of the Old Man of Sin; but it is only by constantly putting down and killing all our sinful desires that we will be able, through Jesus our Lord, to attain to life eternal.

We are reminded of this each Sunday morning as we partake of the memorials of Christ's death and resurrection—his victory over sin (1 Cor. 11:27-31)—

“Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this

cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, But let a man EXAMINE himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup.

“For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.

“For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.”

And Paul says similarly in Heb. 10:26-31—

“For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries.

“He that despised Moses’ Law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much SORER punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the spirit of grace?

“For we know Him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto Me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge His people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God.”

As we meet here each Sunday to remember our absent Lord, we must review our past week, examine ourselves to be sure we are not taking the sacrifice of Christ for granted. We are promised mercy and forgiveness only if we constantly and continually examine ourselves, and keep fighting sin within us. Jesus said—

“If thou canst BELIEVE, ALL things are possible to him that believeth” (Mk. 9:23).

Yes, we CAN overcome this terrible enemy of Sin within us through faith—belief. John says (1 Jn. 5:4)—*“This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”*

(To be continued, God willing)

“It (the first death) laid its victims low “in the dust”, where it retains them “invisible” for centuries. But the apostle addressing the Saints, says to them, “death is yours” (1 Cor. 3:22). They do not belong to death, but on the contrary, death belongs to them.—J.T.

Current Events Fulfilling Prophecy

BRINGING NATIONS TO ARMAGEDDON

“War has always a method. Nations do not invade a country without an object. In all illustrations of antiquity, God bringing one nation against another, did so by operating through *secondary causes*, and the nations so operated on were unconscious of His providence in the case, being incited by some object which they proposed to themselves. (For illustration, see Isaiah 10:6-7.) So, though it is declared that in the latter-day conflict, God brings the nations into the Holy Land, we must look for some political cause leading them there. What then brings the hosts of Europe into ancient battle-ground on the Syrian plains at the termination of the times of the Gentiles previous to the re-appearance of the Jewish power in the political heavens? The question is answered in Ezekiel 38. The nations are there shown to be confederated under a power having locality in “the north parts,” and styled “Gog, Prince of Rosh, Mesech, and Tubal,” whom there is little difficulty in identifying with the Muscovite” (Robert Roberts: *The Christadelphian*: 1875, p. 344).

The principle that “the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt” has created conditions of war since the beginning of man’s attempts at self-governance. But as the times move closer to the *denouement* of God’s plan, *secondary causes* are actively leading the nations into specific positions long prophesied in the Scriptures.

RUSSIA NOW FIRMLY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Two such secondary causes have created circumstances that are radically changing the picture in the Middle East—the Syrian civil war, and the rise of ISIL. Both of these developments, which have flummoxed the Western powers’ ability to resolve, have given Russia a reason to advance into Syria—

More than a dozen military flights from Russia to Syria reportedly delivered six T-90 tanks, 15 howitzers, 35 armored personnel carriers, 200 marines, and housing for as many as 2,000 military personnel. Moscow has also reportedly delivered surveillance drones, attack helicopters, armored carriers, over two dozen fighter aircraft, surface-to-air missiles (including an SA-22 air defense system), and four Su-30 aircraft. Russia also established a new base south of Latakia, Syria’s northern port city, and is continuing the expansion of its naval

base in Tartus, about 50 miles south of Latakia.

—*For. Policy*, 9/15

U.S. officials are expressing growing concern about Russia's military build-up in Assad-controlled Syria, calling it "unprecedented" — with one [indicating] it compares in scope to Vladimir Putin's incursion into Crimea.

Two U.S. officials who have reviewed the latest intelligence [said] that satellite imagery reveals more flights of massive Russian An-124 "condor" military cargo planes landing in Syria. They are offloading troops, including just under 50 Russian marines, and armored vehicles.—*Fox News*, 9/15

This encroachment directly into the Middle East is a powerful indication that Russia now feels it has a cause and a right to be there as power-broker and arbiter of MidEast regional conflicts. The suddenness of its presence as a military force has left western pundits and politicians openmouthed as they realize the significance of a resurgent Russia—

Russia's recent deployment of troops, helicopters and battle tanks to western Syria is a "Middle East game changer," says the Washington-based Institute for the Study of War.

The ISW notes that "military exercises inside Russia with the stated mission of training for long-range deployments of airborne troops suggest that Russia may intend to deploy additional forces, possibly further inside Syria."

While the Russian move will help protect the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, the ISW said, it also "will alter the nature of international negotiations, compromise and weaken the cohesion and efforts of the U.S.-led anti-ISIS coalition ... and *initiate direct Russo-Iranian military operations for the first time.*"—*Globe&Mail*, 9/15

U.S. Sen. John McCain, said the war has "now created a platform for a Russian autocrat to join with an Iranian theocrat to prop up a Syrian dictator."—*FoxNews*, 9/15

This is not only the Kremlin's biggest military expedition outside the old Soviet Union since 1989, but the first Russian campaign in the Middle East since Moscow allied with Britain to invade Iran in 1941. —*Telegraph*, 9/15

The Assad regime has been Moscow's closest ally in the Arab world for over 40 years because Syria had been key to the Soviet Union's influence in the Middle East. During the Cold War, tens of thousands of Russians moved to Syria while Syrian elites studied at top Russian schools. Inter-marriage was

common, and, at the time of the Syrian uprising, an estimated 100,000 Russian citizens were living there. —*For. Policy, 9/15*
POLITICAL AND MILITARY MANIPULATION

Russia is ostensibly moving armaments into Syria for anti-terrorist operations; but what has seemingly escaped the western political establishment's notice is that Russia considers not just ISIL, but also the *Syrian rebels* to be terrorists—rebels which the West has backed, placing the U.S. and Britain on opposite sides from Russia. From first reports, driving Syria's rebels into a position alongside ISIL appears to be exactly Russia's strategy, allowing them to call them an enemy and defend al-Assad's government—

As with all of Vladimir Putin's adventures, his foray in Syria contains an element of mystery. What targets are his jets bombing? The emphatic answer from the Russian defence ministry is that the terrorists of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) are the sole target.

By early afternoon, however, a multitude of reports from the ground suggested otherwise. All of the targets were non-ISIL rebel groups, *including those supported by the Western powers*. The SU-24s were in action not in ISIL's stronghold in eastern Syria or against Raqqa—the movement's de facto capital—but in areas where Assad's forces have been under severe pressure from the insurgents.

The suspicion immediately arose that saving Assad—not destroying ISIL—was Russia's main objective.

Khaled Khoja, head of the Syrian opposition group National Coalition has told AFP the Russian strike in Homs killed 36 civilians and said that Russia aims to prolong Assad's regime, not strike ISIL. All of the casualties were civilians. No one from military forces.

Ash Carter, the US Defence Secretary, has accused Russia of "pouring gasoline on the fire". He said the Russian strikes were in areas where there were probably no ISIL forces.

—*Telegraph, 9/15*

[British Secretary of State Philip Hammond] reiterated Britain's belief that President Bashar al-Assad has no future as the Syrian president—and that the Russians could face legal consequences for their "open and ostentatious" support of Mr Assad, who had committed "war crimes on a spectacular scale".

"We are just trying to establish now exactly what the Rus-

sians have done,” he told The Telegraph, on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly.

“We are clear that if Russia wants to join with the coalition in air strikes against ISIL then we would welcome that. If what Russia is doing is carrying out airstrikes in defence of the regime then that is a very different issue.

“Trying to prop up Assad as part of a counter ISIL strategy simply will not work. Because all you will do is *drive the entire opposition to Assad into a single camp, led by ISIL.*”

YAHWEH'S PLAN THE PRIMARY CAUSE OF NATIONAL MOVEMENTS

Russia and the world nations believe the reason for Russia's re-entry into Syria is just to prop up the regime of al-Assad and to fight ISIL. But these are just the secondary causes at work. Yahweh has decreed His purpose to eventually bring Russia fully into the Middle East, and at last to the mountains of Israel (Eze. 38). This is the primary cause that will bring all nations into conflict at the east end of the Mediterranean. And so we are seeing developments march inexorably forward—

Syria is Russia's most important foothold in the region, bordering the *Mediterranean, Israel, Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, and Iraq*. Putin has made expansion of Russian sea power a pillar of his third presidential term, and Assad's fall would mean losing Russia's only military base outside the post-Soviet space. Keeping the base at Tartus will project the country's power into the Mediterranean.—*For. Policy, 9/15*

Putin's objectives in Syria are blindingly obvious:

1. To assert Russia's influence in the Middle East and make it the dominant outside power.

2. To sustain Russia's major and long-standing Arab ally. Ever since Anwar Sadat kicked the Soviets out of Egypt in 1972 (“**at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him . . .**”—**Dan. 11:40**), Syria's Assads have been Russia's principal asset in the Middle East.

3. To expand the reach of Russia's own military. It has a naval base at Tartus, its only such outside of Russia. It has an airfield near Latakia, now being expanded with an infusion of battle tanks, armoured personnel carriers, howitzers and housing for 1,500 — *strongly suggesting ground forces to follow* (. . . “**and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships**”).

4. *To push out the Americans.* For Putin, geopolitics is a zero-sum game: Russia up, America down. He is demonstrating whom you can rely on in this very tough neighborhood.

5. To re-legitimize post-Crimea Russia by making it indispensable in Syria. What Putin is proposing is that Russia, Iran and Hezbollah spearhead the anti-jihadist fight.

You almost have to admire the cynicism. After all, what's driving the [Syrian] refugees is the war and what's driving the war is Iran and Russia. They provide the materiel, the funds and now, increasingly, the troops that fuel the fighting. The arsonist plays fireman.—*Nat'l Post*, 9/15

GOG . . . AND MANY PEOPLE WITH HIM

Now it is critical to note that Russia is not the sole nation involved in moving against the West (though its autocratic president has obviously taken the lead).

Dr. Thomas pointed out, "The nations' hosts are to be gathered to battle against Jerusalem and to take it. This is the *Syrian confederation* of the Latter Days against the city, represented by *Nebuchadnezzar's image*" (*The Christadelphian*: 1873, p. 10).

It is the Autocrat of Russia's role to assemble to himself the multitude of peoples, nations and tongues portrayed in Ezekiel 38. In doing this, he will pull together all the territories portrayed in the Image—the Babylonian (Gold), the Medo-Persian (Silver), the Greek (Brass), the Roman (Iron), and many nations beside (the Clay).

Whether Putin is the final conquering Autocrat we do not know. But he has already begun the groundwork of constructing an alliance resembling the Image, and it is one that contains the Babylonian (Iraqi), Persian (Iran), and a portion of the Greek (Syria—once the possession of the Selucidæ, after the death of Alexander)—

When Iran's president, Hassan Rouhani, met with journalists in New York, he took pains to note that Iran and Russia were not joining together in a "coalition" in Syria. They were sharing intelligence. They were discussing strategy. They were in constant communication. But a coalition? No.

Two days later, the Iraqi government announced it too was sharing intelligence with Russia, Iran, and Syria. So perhaps Rouhani was being literal in a different way when he disavowed being in a coalition with *Russia* — because what he was actually involved in was a coalition with *Russia, Iraq, and Syria*.

During his discussion of the non-coalition coalition, Rouhani did not hesitate to emphasize how closely aligned his country's

views regarding the situation in Syria are with those of the Russians. He described them as “a mirror” of one another.

—*For. Policy*, 9/15

Russian, Syrian and Iranian military commanders have set up a coordination cell in *Baghdad [Iraq]* in recent days to try to begin working with *Iranian-backed* Shia militias fighting the Islamic State.

Describing *the arrival of Russian military personnel in Baghdad*, one senior U.S. official said, “*They are popping up everywhere.*”

Moscow has fostered ties with the governments in both Syria and Iraq. In May, Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi flew to Moscow for an official visit to discuss potential Russian arms transfers and shared intelligence capability, as well as the enhancement of security and military capabilities.

Meanwhile, a U.S. official described how, over the weekend, the Russians were able to move 24 attack jets into Syria *undetected*.

The Russian military flew 12 Sukhoi Su-25 “Frogfoot” and a dozen Sukhoi Su-24 “Fencer” attack aircraft in “tight formations” under the “steady stream” of the large Russian An-124 cargo planes that have been ferrying supplies from bases in Russia through Iran before traveling on to Syria, the official said.

The large cargo planes appeared as “a big blip” on radar, but flying beneath them were “tight formations” of the smaller Russian fighter jets that used jamming pods and switched off their IFF, which would identify the aircraft to radar.

According to the Aviationist, the Russian cargo planes and fighter jets landed at an airbase in Hamadan, Iran, roughly halfway between Baghdad and Tehran on Sept 18-19.

The Russians have begun flying some of the Sukhoi fighter and attack jets from Bassel al-Assad airport, in Latakia, now a Russian forward operating base along the Mediterranean.

The official also confirmed that *Russian destroyers are in position off the Mediterranean coast.*—*Fox News*, 9/15

This development of Russia aligned with Iraq (Assyria) is a SIGNAL EVENT in the progression of Signs indicating Christ’s return.

RUSSIA AND ASSYRIA IN THE LATTER DAYS

Dr. Thomas wrote—

“As to the “Assyrian” and the Russian being the same, this conclusion arises from the fact that the latter-day

achievements of the Assyrian, as described in the prophets, are identical with those which we know from Ezekiel and Daniel, are assigned to the Russian. Thus, the Assyrian is the power to be broken in the land of Israel, preparatory to the appearance of the rod out of the stem of Jesse . . . Politically, the power will be Russian: geographically and morally, in its relation to events in Palestine at the moment, it will be Assyrian, approaching the Holy Land through Assyria, and bearing the same hostile relation to God's land and people as that observed by the Assyrian of old" (*The Christadelphian*: 1867, p. 104).

For our education, Dr. Thomas points out how the *Fourth Beast* takes on all the names and aspects of the former empires unto itself, so that while in the final stage the Northern Power is undeniably Russian, it also bears in one body the collective enmity of the Gentiles against the Holy Land from the time of Assyria and Babylon on down, and so becomes obnoxious to the great destroying power that will soon be manifested from heaven—

"The Greco-Assyrian Horn Power . . . was in its origin the Kingdom of Babylon incorporated with the Alexandrian Empire, afterwards acquired by the Seleucidæ, and by this dynasty surrendered to the Romans about sixty-five years before Christ. Till A.D. 324, Rome was exclusively the throne of the Greco-Assyrian Kingdom of Babylon; but from that date until the fall of the Western Empire about A.D. 476, the Power was enthroned in Rome and Constantinople . . .

"This blending of the Romano-Greek power with the Assyrian is the reason why the Little Horn of the Goat is represented as coming out of one of its four horns. They occupy one and the same territory; that is, where the Seleucidian dynasty once ruled [including Syria—T.D.C.], the Little Horn's dynasties afterwards ruled; and where the Little Horn's present dynasty now rules [the Ottomans, now Turkey, in Constantinople—T.D.C.], a Russian dynasty from the north will probably be enthroned; so that when this form of things obtains, the northern horn and the Little Horn will be blended into one power, still Constantinopolitan, but with a Russian instead of an Ottoman for its chief" (*JT: Exposition of Daniel*: p. 78).

As Yahweh said to Moses, "Is the LORD'S hand waxed short? Thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not!"—*T.D.C.*

Tribulation Worketh Patience

“Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered” (Heb. 5:8).

It is God’s method of perfecting character and laying the foundation of lasting joy.

We may be quite sure there is no mistake about it.

We may be quite sure that God’s way is the best.

We may be quite sure that goodness will be all the sweeter and salvation all the more precious, and glory to God all the more fervent, for the prelude of suffering and weariness and waiting that goes before.

We know from experience that no one is ripe till he has known trouble. He may be good, but he is unsympathetic. He may be interesting, but he is not entirely disinterested.

There is always a degree of refined selfishness (and sometimes not very refined) about those who have only known of pleasure. Trouble, if there be the right stuff to work on, removes the dross of the character, subdues and purifies and refines and ennobles, and makes fit for the kingdom of God.

Therefore it is that the community of the glorified saints, as a whole, are described in the Apocalypse as “those who have come out of great tribulation.”—*R.R.*

Ecclesial News *(Continued from page 326)*

last wrote. In June, bro. Jim and sis. Donna Crownover moved to Lansdale, Pennsylvania. Their presence is greatly missed. Sis. Donna returned and joined us around the table of our absent Lord on July 26th before going to the Hye Gathering with us.

We are also saddened to announce the passing of our beloved sis. Alice Herrel, from Shawnee, Kansas, who died March 28th, 2015, at the age of 90. We had the pleasure of our sister’s company in July and Aug. 2014, when she attended the Hye, Texas, Fraternal Gathering.

Sis. Alice came to know the Truth through association with our late sis. Jean Brant. Sis. Alice faithfully kept obedient in breaking bread the first day of the week these last years on her own. She would listen to exhortations on tape, and enjoyed studying and meditating on *Eureka* and the pioneer writings. She was a joy to be around. Her attitude was always positive, so though we miss her, we will keep a positive attitude as well,

and look forward to the glorious day of Christ's return when he will judge the quick and the dead and select those who will make up his jewels in his Father's Kingdom. It is our hope and prayer that she (and we) may be found acceptable in that day.

What a great and glorious day that will be, when the Man of One shall be developed upon the mountains of Sinai, and proceed forth toward Jerusalem to set up God's Kingdom. In that day when the Law shall go forth from Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem, then "*shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces*" (Isa. 25:6-8).

Let us ever be mindful of the wonderful and blessed opportunity we have been granted as we reside in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and "*press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God, in Christ Jesus*" (Phil. 3:14), so in that day we may say, "*Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation*" (Isa 25:9).

On behalf of the bre. and sis. of the Early Texas, Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia, your brother in Christ, Jason Clubb

One Hundred & Thirty Five Years Ago *(Continued from page 360)*

The former class were very numerous; for "Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, were baptized of John in Jordan, confessing their sins." Referring to the completion of this work, Luke says, "Now when all the people were baptized, and it came to pass that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven opened."

The other class being composed of the "upper ten thousand," were "respectable" and few. They were "the righteous," who, in their own estimation, needed no physician, having no occasion for repentance. As a class, they despised the people as cursed, knowing not the law. They regarded a baptism of repentance for remission of sins as quite unsuited to them; so that "they rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of John;" while the people, on the contrary, who thought more humbly of themselves, "justified God, being baptized with His baptism"—(Luke 7:29,30).—*Herald, 1852*

* * *

THE second article concerned "*The Glory of Christ at His Coming*"—

For the Son of Man to come in his kingdom with the angels, is for him to appear in the glory which he receives of his Father;

and to appear in his glory, or majesty, is to come in his kingdom—this coming and appearing are concomitant and inseparable events. They are the manifestation of what Ezekiel saw in vision when standing, as it were, at the gate of that temple hereafter to be erected in Jerusalem by “the man whose name is the Branch” (Zech. 6:12, 13); even by that man whom he describes as of a bright and glowing, amber-like appearance, sitting upon a sapphire throne—(Eze. 2:26–28 ; 40:3). From this similitude of Jesus in his glory a voice proceeded, revealing to him the things of the invisible future pertaining to the kingdom.—*Herald, 1852*

* * *

THE third article was entitled “Elijah in Heaven.” Bro. Thomas explained what particular heaven it was—

Concerning Elijah, though in heaven, he is not in the heaven indicated by him. Jesus really said, “No one hath ascended into the heaven, except he from the heaven having descended, the Son of Man he being in the heaven.” When he spoke these words he had not ascended (Jn. 20:17); but when John wrote them he was in the heaven where he hath remained ever since. “Being in the heaven” he will yet descend from it at his second appearing; and being descended he will then be the only one on earth who hath ascended to the heaven, and descended from it.

But you will perhaps inquire, where is this particular heaven? I reply, where the Father is *en tois ouranois tois hyspeelois* in the highest heavens—the region of light “which no man can approach unto” (1 Tim. 6:16). It is there the Uncreated Majesty of the Universe resides, sitting upon His throne. Neither Enoch, Moses, Elijah, nor any other terrestrial, hath gone there.—*Herald, 1852*

* * *

THE next article was on “The Sufferings of Jesus.” Again, bro. Thomas covered this subject, as with all subjects, from a Scriptural perspective—

Jesus, the holy and the just one, suffered “for or in behalf” of persons, who were in an unjustified state at the time of his sufferings, which were sacrificially consummated in his death and resurrection. It was *peri*, “for or on account of,” their sins that he suffered *hyper*, in their behalf; that being justified from their past sins “through his name,” they might be the rest of their time in this evil world, in a state of reconciliation with God.

Christ did not suffer in their stead, that is, that they should not suffer, as their being made “partakers of his sufferings” by a “fiery trial,” proves. Had he not died and risen again, they would have perished as the beasts; but by his stripes applied, or inflicted, so to speak, upon the old man of sin within them, by faith in the Gospel of the Kingdom in his name presented, they are healed in conscience; and will hereafter be healed also of that “loathsome disease” that imprisons them in the dust.

—*Herald, 1852*

THE last article was about "*Spirits in Prison.*" Bro. Thomas clearly stated—
The dead are well termed spirits as contrasted with organized flesh and blood; for they are without form, image, likeness, or substance. They have evaporated into divers spirits or gases; and nothing of them remains but "dust and ashes;" and their characters written in the book of God's remembrance.

That the "prison" is the tomb, or the place where dead bodies are laid, must be apparent to everyone. They are fettered there by the necessity that binds them, and they cannot come forth. The grave is their prison-house, and they the captives or prisoners of death, which has taken them captive.

"My flesh shall rest in hope; because Thou wilt not leave my soul in the grave (*nepheshi lesheol*); neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption." Here "flesh," "soul," and "Holy One" are all regarded by the prophet as confined in the grave (*sheol*); the lowest dungeon of which is "the pit," called also "the lowest hell," indicative of the state of invisibility as the result of corruption being complete. Hence the Holy One's resurrection, or release from prison, is again referred to by David in these words, "Thou hast brought up my soul from the grave (*min-sheol nepheshi*); Thou hast kept me alive (preserved me from decomposition) that I should not go down to the pit."—*Herald, 1852*

* * *

IN his Sunday Morning exhortation number 124, bro. Roberts' continued his remarks on *Romans 9*—

Having on the last occasion left unfinished the consideration of the ninth chapter of Romans, we cannot perhaps do better than return to it before dealing with a fresh subject.

It is a chapter full of important instruction in the ways of God—ways which, as Jehovah Himself tells us by Isaiah, are as much higher than our ways as heaven is higher than the earth: ways therefore which fail to engage the sympathies of the purely natural mind, but which, nevertheless, are more beautiful and ennobling and ultimately beneficial than all the best ways of man.

* * *

THERE is an item on "*In What Prophetic Epoch Do We Live?*," by a bro. H. S. Here are a few of the comments that were made—

There are three ways in which we can do this. First, by cultivating that disposition without which it is unlikely that we shall be allowed to comprehend the mysteries of the Spirit. This disposition was in the prophet Daniel and the things recorded of him help us to realise what manner of men we ought to be . . . Secondly, a course of action calculated to conduce to our enlightenment is indicated in the words of Jesus, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you" (Matt. 7:7) . . .

Thirdly, another way of promoting knowledge in the prophetic oracles is by a review from time to time of concurrent fulfillment of prophecy in regard to things the comprehension of

which is already in our grasp . . . that our hearts may be “set upon them.”

* * *

IN his “Notes” section, bro Roberts responded to a number of subjects. Here are a few of them.—

1) T. N.—True; “head without heart” is not only of no use in the Truth; it is an abomination. Do not be too much downcast at the prevalence of this state of things, make up your mind to the bitterness. It has always been so, and always will, till the day when the Lord gathers the flowers and makes a garden for the desert.

2) F.—The obligation of saints to have to do only with those things that are “lovely and of good report,” would of itself deter enlightened brethren from embracing, still more promulgating the unnatural doctrines of *Fruits of Philosophy*. There is an opposite extreme against which the same obligation would equally guard. Wisdom is profitable to direct in all matters,

* * *

BIBLE Lectures (135 Years Ago)—

“Satan’s Kingdom”

“Christ as Melchisedek”

“The Law of Moses a Shadow of Good Things to Come, in the Way of World-Wide Legislation”

“Christ Set for the Fall and Rising Again of Many in Israel”

“The Great Day of God Almighty”

“The Unscriptural Claims and Assumptions of the Clergy”

“The Faith of Christendom and the Faith of the Bible—a Contrast”

“The demonology of the New Testament”

“The Biography of Beelzebub”

“Behold He Cometh with Clouds”

“Gospel Politics”

September Answers—“Connect Item With Name”

1. Hat—Shadrach

2. Sop—Judas

3. Mail—Goliath

4. Flea—David

5. Diet—Jehoiachin

6. Mite—Widow

7. Loft—Eutyclus

8. Lace—Aaron

9. Skull—Jezebel

10. Latin—Pilate

11. Paper—John

12. Rope—Delilah

13. Helm—James

14. Sores—Lazarus

15. Organ—Jubal

16. Barrel—Elijah

17. Gourd—Jonah

18. Butler—Pharaoh

19. Towel—Jesus

20. Censer—Korah

21. Chapel—Amos

22. School—Tyrannus

23. Jupiter—Barnabas

24. Ladder—Jacob

25. Bolster—Saul

26. Firkins—Cana

27. Shrines—Diana

28. Earring—Rebekah

29. Receipt—Matthew

30. Harness—Ahab

31. Oration—Herod

32. Latchet—John Baptist

33. Engines—Uzziah

34. Pitchers—Gideon

35. Treatise—Theophilus

36. Inkhorn—Ezekiel

37. Bramble—Jason

38. Security—Jotham

39. Fig Tree—Nathanael

40. Scaffold—Solomon

One Hundred & Thirty-Five Years Ago

The Christadelphian, October, 1880

For the October *Christadelphian*, bro. Roberts printed six different articles from the writings of bro. Thomas. Each one of them is quite an interesting study as his expositions were flawless. Such in-depth writings should always be studied with Bible in hand, and are wonderfully set up for Bible marking as well.

The first article was on the subject of "Who Baptized the Apostles?" Bro. Thomas stated—

The answer to this question is emphatically, John the baptizer. The apostle Andrew is styled by the apostle John, one of John's disciples (Jn. 1:35, 37, 40). This testimony is decisive as to him; but how are we to get at the certainty that the twelve were all baptized of John? We reply, that John's baptism divided the Jews into two classes—the first class comprised "all the people that heard, and the publicans;" the other, "the Pharisees and lawyers."

(Continued on page 356)

BIBLE PUZZLE—"Angelic Visitations and Statements: To Whom"

1. Bochim	14. This is God's host	27. Bind on thy sandals	
2. Arise and eat	15. Take it and eat it up	28. Three men stood by him	
3. He is not here	16. Angel smote camp	29. Thou shalt be dumb	
4. Lift up the lad	17. Spectacle to angels	30. Gaza which is desert	
5. Arise, and take	18. As face of an angel	31. Carried by the angels	
6. See all the rams	19. Go down with him	32. Draw not nigh hither	
7. Four men loose	20. Pour out the broth	33. Holy angels with him	
8. This is an ephah	21. Hew down the tree	34. Why stand ye gazing?	
9. Fear not to take	22. Lay not thine hand	35. Ascended in the flame	
10. Thou didst laugh	23. Twelve legions of angels	36. Thou hast found favor	
11. Go with the men	24. Why weepst thou?	37. Return to thy mistress	
12. Angel smote him	25. Send men to Joppa	38. Stood by me this night	
13. Unto you is born	26. Captain of the host	39. Shook for fear of angel	
Abraham	Elijah	Joseph	Nebuchadnezzar
Abraham	Gideon	Joseph	Paul
All Israel	Hagar	Joshua	Peter
Apostles	Hagar	Keepers	Phillip
Apostles	Herod	Lazarus	Sarah
Apostles	Jacob	Magdalene	Shepherds
Assyrians	Jacob	Manoah	Stephen
Balaam	Jesus	Mary	The Women
Cornelius	Jesus	Moses	Zacharias
Elijah	John	Nebuchadnezzar	Zechariah

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