

1 through 7

THERE IS ONE THING which is attested by many infallible proofs, viz., the resurrection of Christ (Acts 1:3); and there is one thing which is needful above all others, viz, to act out the diligent part exemplified in the wisdom and undisguised earnestness of Mary who sat at Jesus' feet.

THERE ARE TWO THINGS which are immutable, viz, the covenant which God made to Abraham, and the oath of confirmation. – (Heb. 6:18)

THERE ARE THREE THINGS which are impossible, viz., it is impossible for God to lie, and it is impossible to serve both God and Mammon, and it is impossible without faith to please God.

THERE ARE FOUR KINDS of people who receive the truth, viz, some who don't understand it, some who have no root in themselves, some in whom it is afterwards choked with worldly anxieties; and just a few whom nothing can move away from the hope and patient labour of the Gospel: these are the only section that bring forth any fruit to perfection. – (Matt. 13)

THERE ARE FIVE THINGS which are true if there be no resurrection of the dead, viz., that then Christ is not risen, the apostolic preaching was a vain thing, the faith of the disciples was also vain, the baptized believers were yet in their sins, and those who had fallen asleep in Christ had perished. – (1 Cor. 15)

THERE ARE SIX THINGS which are hateful to Yahweh, viz., a lofty eye, a lying tongue, an evil heart, bloodthirsty hands, and feet that run swiftly after mischief. – (Prov. 7:16-18)

THERE ARE SEVEN QUALIFICATIONS necessary to inheritance in the Kingdom, viz., humility of spirit, purity of heart, a merciful disposition, a hungry appetite after righteousness, a meek and submissive deportment, a mourning frame of mind, and a peace-making walk and conversation. – (Matt. 5)

"Spray From the Water of Life", F.R. Shuttleworth, The Christadelphian, 1878, pp. 455,456

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THE SANCTUARY-KEEPER

*A Magazine for the Exposition and Defense
of The Holy Scriptures*



THE YAHWEH ELOHIM OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC & JACOB

ALSO

**DR. THOMAS'S VIEWS ON
RESURRECTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

CIRCUMCISION

**SPIRITUAL SANCTIFICATION AND
DEFILEMENT**

MESSIAH THE PRINCE

EDITORIAL FLYLEAF

ISRAEL'S RESTORATION

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CONTENTS

- 1 Dr. Thomas's Views on Resurrectional Responsibility
- 7 Circumcision
- 14 Spiritual Sanctification and Defilement
- 21 Messiah The Prince
- 34 God Manifestation: The Yahweh Elohim of Abraham, Isaac & Jacob
- 41 Editorial Flyleaf
- 47 Thomas Williams on Israel's Restoration
- Back Cover – “1 through 7”

“The KING OF THE JEWS will first manifest his presence, not to the world at large; which will not know of his being there, or, if told the fact, would not believe it; but to those, whom the blood of the covenant brings before his tribunal.”

“All who have made a covenant with Yahweh by sacrifice, and in any way related to “the Covenants of Promise,” will be gathered (Psa. 50:5) and stand before this; but it will only be the chosen few, “the called, and chosen, and faithful,” who will be admitted to share in the honor, dignities, and glory of the name of Yahweh in Jerusalem enthroned” (Jer. 3:17).

– John Thomas, *Eureka*, Vol. 5, p. 234

“The reader will remember that before the Judgment Seat of Christ in the wilderness of Teman, there were two classes of saints in Christ Jesus constitutionally...the constitution and destiny of these two classes, though originally built upon the same foundation, is widely divergent...the judicial inspection of his household, having separated the refuse and the vile from those “accounted worthy to obtain of the *aion*, and the resurrection;” the rejected, by virtue of the sentence pronounced upon them by Christ, saying, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into the *aionian* fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels,” forthwith enter upon their journey to the place of exile or torment; or, in the words of Jesus, “they go away into *aionian* punishment;” while the righteous, by their being quickened, enter into *aionian* life.”

– John Thomas, *Eureka*, Vol. 5, pp. 315,316

THE ORIGIN AND EXTENT OF THE KINGDOM OF MEN

In taking a general survey of the contents of the Book of Daniel, it may be seen that two great powers are the principal subjects of its predictions. The one is styled the KINGDOM OF MEN (Dan. 4:17) and the other the KINGDOM OF GOD (Dan. 2:44; 4:3; 7:27)...It will be seen that the Kingdom of men has been diversified in its constitution, extent and throne since its foundation by Nimrod to the present time. It has nevertheless been the same Nimroudian kingdom with Babylon and Assyria for its characteristics. (Exposition of Daniel, pp. 7,8)

THE FEET OF THE IMAGE

While the head, breast, arms, belly, thighs, legs and toes have all existed, the feet have not yet been formed; so that it has hitherto been impossible for the colossal image to stand erect as Nebuchadnezzar saw it in his dream...It is therefore, the mission of the Autocrat (of Russia) to form the feet and set up the image before the world in all its excellent brightness and terribleness of form; that all men subject to the kingdom of Babylon may worship the work of its creator's power. (Exposition of Daniel, p. 87)

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE IMAGE

The Russian Autocracy in its plenitude and on the verge of dissolution is the image of Nebuchadnezzar standing upon the mountains of Israel, ready to be smitten by the Stone. When Russia makes its grand move for the building up of its Image-empire, then let the reader know that the end of all things as present constituted, is at hand. (Elpis Israel, preface)



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“Ye shall keep the charge of the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar”

Num. 18:5

“Ye are...an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices.”

I Peter 2:5

“Thou hast kept My Word and hast not denied My Name” - Rev. 3:8

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DR. THOMAS'S VIEWS ON RESURRECTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

T HERE are at least two areas of consideration to survey in order to make a fair appraisal of this subject. First, at what point in the life of Dr. Thomas are we concerned? Second, is the view of Dr. Thomas or any other writer incontrovertible? Looking at the second area, are we constrained to answer in the negative; regardless of what Dr. Thomas or any other writer said on a scripturally-related subject, we must be in agreement with the Scriptures. This is not always easy; it requires applied study over extended periods of time. We value the writings of Dr. Thomas and many pioneer writers who studied to show themselves approved, rightly dividing the word of truth. If we believe something just because Dr. Thomas asserted it,

then we are no more than robots or mimics. We may accidentally be right in following the views of someone, but to acquire belief takes more than blind assent. If we can discern by comparing Scripture with Scripture that what Dr. Thomas wrote on a subject concurs with the principles of the one faith, then we can readily say, Amen. I know of nobody who is so committed to Dr. Thomas on every point he ever wrote upon that their whole system of belief is totally governed by him. In fairness to the man, we must remember that he started from total ignorance on Biblical subjects and had nobody to turn to for correct information. Few of us have had that handicap. He was in the orthodox church whose system of faith was not the hope of Israel. He had to study incessantly and gradually arrive at a conviction that was based upon Scripture. The convictions generally opposed the fables of Christendom and they were not attained overnight.

One argument advanced is that, depending upon the point in time at which we are reviewing the views of Dr. Thomas, if we refuse to waver from anything he ever said, then we are obliged to believe in immortal emergence, acceptability of marrying out of the Truth, the resurrection of the dead in a state similar to that of Adam before he sinned, and prophetic development of the 2300 years of Daniel 8:14 being 2400 years and terminating in the 19th century. He anticipated the coming of Christ in the 1866-70 period with the outside date of the start of the millennium at 1908. It is asinine to expect anyone to concur with Dr. Thomas on everything he ever wrote. He did not believe in immortal emergence all his days, but there are some who like to find fault with him or others by citing something he wrote in his early days. He wrote for the interest of his readers from about 1833 to the date of his death, 1871. Nobody should dispute the logic that his understanding was greater at the end of his days than it was in the 1830's and 1840's.

As to the views of Dr. Thomas on resurrectional responsibility, it is readily provable that he did teach the resurrection of a third class, those not in covenant relationship with God, who were enlightened by the Truth, and who refused to obey it by entering the covenant. This position is taken in *Elpis Israel*, *Anastasis*, *The Revealed Mystery*, and probably other works of his. If this is the extent of the inquiry, and all we are interested in is to satisfy ourselves that he ever believed this, then we can close the subject by saying that Dr. Thomas did teach the resurrection of the enlightened rejecter. On page 39 of *Anastasis* (Third Edition) he says,

“His [Deity’s] purpose is to evolve a righteous and immortal world out of the world of mortal sinners, and to lay the foundation of this great work in their scriptural intelligence and the obedience of faith. This being his purpose, knowledge, belief, and obedience are made the basis of accountability and responsibility. By the former is meant liability to give account, and to receive reward or punishment for the same, and, by the latter, the state of being answerable for something entrusted to one’s care. Now, Christ Jesus says in

John 3:19, ‘this is the *krisis* or ground of judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the light, because their deeds were evil.’ The light shining into the darkness and divinely attested, makes sinners accountable and saints responsible; but into that region of the shadow of death where the light has not shone with divine attestation, the inhabitants of that region, who do not attain to the comprehension of the light, are not accountable to the resurrection and judgment it reveals.”

This is his writing in *Anastasis* in 1866. I don’t believe Dr. Thomas ever taught that the enlightened rejector would appear before the judgment seat of Christ along with the saints. He did teach that the enlightened rejector would be the subject of a resurrection. He writes further on page 40 of *Anastasis*,

“He that understands the truth, but declines the obedience it commands, will be held accountable for its rejection; for ‘he that believeth not shall be condemned’ ‘in a day of judgment,’ ‘when the Deity shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to the gospel Paul preached’ (Rom. 2:16; Mark 16:16).”

We can readily see that the reasoning presented in these two quotes is not consistent. If knowledge makes a sinner accountable, as he says, and this accountability is defined as “liability to give account, and to receive reward or punishment for the same,” what is there to account for? And what reward could possibly be received? Also, when the twelve apostles were commissioned to go into all the world and preach the gospel, are we convinced that those who “believed not” will be subjects of a resurrection to condemnation? I don’t see anything in the verse that says so; the condemnation could be, and I believe that it is, a consigning to the death state.

We do not present this next quotation from *Anastasis* as total proof that Dr. Thomas felt differently on this subject; we have shown above that he did believe in the resurrection of the enlightened rejector. But we ask that you examine this statement for the purpose of determining to what extent he believed the rejector theory. It comes from page 23:

“The dead are historical characters, who lived and moved and had being in Deity (Acts 17:28). Hence, all their thoughts and actions, constituting their characters, are recorded in Him as in ‘a book of remembrance’ (Mal. 3:16). Therein is written their history; and, with the exception of their incorporeal dust in *sheol*, their characters inscribed upon the divine page, are the all that remains of them in the universe. This scroll of record is the broad sheet of spirit, styled by the philosophers, ether and electricity, which, filling the universe, enwraps the world. All thoughts and actions are vibrations excited in this spirit of the Creator, by corporeal agents. These subtle vibratory impressions are never obliterated, unless He wills never to revive them. Many such impressions He has willed to blot out; as in the case of those who are consigned to ‘a perpetual sleep;’ and of sins that have been forgiven. But

there are impressions, at present latent, that are to be intensified and made manifest; and ‘whatsoever doth make manifest is light’ (Eph. 5:13). The electrical, and electrically recorded, thoughts and actions to be manifested are ‘the hidden things of darkness, and the counsels of the hearts’ of the just, who have accepted, and of the unjust, who have rejected or extinguished, the light. These two classes evolved from the dust of sheol, in the first stage of their raising, are ‘earthward and speechless.’”

This part of his treatise is dealing with the re-forming of the body from the state of the dead. Why do you think he referred to only two classes, the just and the unjust? Do you think he believed that the ungodly, the sinners outside covenant, the rejectors, the “in Adam” community have their thoughts and actions written in the book of remembrance of Malachi 3:16? Consider the logic and consider the scriptural teaching on Adamic Condemnation or the Constitution of Sin.

Some have felt that *Anastasis* was the last work of Dr. Thomas, and that it reflected his views on this subject in his last days. Not so. *Anastasis* was written in 1866, as the preface will attest, December 8 being the date of the preface. Reference is made in the treatise of the first two volumes of Eureka. The third volume of Eureka was written in 1868, one to two years later, depending on which month is counted in the respective years. From volume IIIB, page 159, after indicating that the drying up of the Euphratean power under the sixth vial began in 1820, he says, “Who can doubt that its water has been drying up during all the past forty-eight years?” This forty-eight years added to the 1820 inception date gives us the time of his writing, or 1868. Again, on page 169; “and not as it is now, almost ready to give up the ghost.” This indicates that the time of writing was after 1867 and a change had occurred in the Austro-Papal dominion that weakened it.

Then on page 171, he says, “We are now at this writing, in the spring of 1868, near the last months of the 1260 years, during which the saints were sentenced to involuntary subjection to the Little Horn with eyes and mouth.” We do not have to do any calculating to see that he was writing in 1868. He further writes, on page 185, “Such is the manifestation of the third phase of the Frog-Sign as far as it has been displayed to this February, 1868, at least 14 months after the preface date of *Anastasis*.”

Writing under the heading, “The Thief like Advent,” Dr. Thomas undertakes to answer the question, when, where and how is the Perfect Man apocalypse, or revealed. He reminds the reader that the constituents of the Perfect Man are “the kings from a Sun’s risings” (Rev. 16:12), and that this host comes in from Teman, Paran, and Mt. Seir. This leads into the quotation shown on the inside front cover from page 189 [vol. 5, p. 234, Logos Edition]:

“The King of the Jews will first manifest his presence, not to the world at large; which will not know of his being there, or, if told the fact, would not

believe it; but to those whom 'the blood of the covenant' brings before his tribunal. [Dr. Thomas would be called an extremist for saying this today.] This southern region of which as King of the Jews he is king, therefore, 'King of the South,' is the locality of that tribunal, or judgment seat (*bema*, not *thronos*), before which we must all stand that we may be made manifest. The locality of the Throne (*thronos*) is Jerusalem, about 280 miles in a straight line from Sinai. Mount Zion is the place of 'The Great White Throne' (Rev. 20:11; 4:2). This is not ascended until the victorious King of the Jews and his Perfect Man of 144 cubits, or thousands, have wrested the city out of the hands of the Little Horn of the Goat (Dan. 8:9,11,23,25). We have not now to do with this; but with the *bema*, or Supreme Court, the judicial bench, styled in Romans 14:10 and 2 Corinthians 5:10, 'the judgment seat of Christ.' All who have made a covenant with Yahweh by sacrifice, and in any way related to the 'Covenant of Promise,' [Are we to believe that it is necessary to be related to the Abrahamic covenant in order to assure our resurrection? This is precisely what he is saying in 1868] will be gathered (Psa. 50:5) and stand before this; but it will only be the chosen few, 'the called, and chosen, and faithful,' who will be admitted to share in the honour, dignities, and glory, of the name of Yahweh in Jerusalem enthroned (Jer. 3:17). Let the reader well note this distinction between the Throne and the Judgment Seat, their different localities, and the different times of their establishment. The transactions connected with each are different series of events; which if mixed up together create inextricable confusion."

Now we should look at the other quotation shown on the inside front cover. This is taken from page 256 of Eureka IIIB. Notice that the quotation has two ellipses indicating that part of the text has been omitted for brevity. We will quote in the entirety to make certain that nothing is missed in the sense of the writing.

"The reader will remember that before the Judgment Seat of Christ in the wilderness of Teman, there were two classes of saints [There you go again, Dr. Thomas] in Christ Jesus constitutionally; the one class consisting of the called, the chosen, and faithful; or, as Paul styles them in 1 Corinthians 3:12, 'gold, silver, and precious stones,' which are made manifest as such in the day when things are revealed by fire; and the other class consisting of 'the called,' but not 'chosen,' because not 'faithful; or, as Paul styles them in the same place, 'wood, hay, and stubble.' The constitution and destiny of these two classes, though originally built upon the same foundation, is widely divergent. The gold, silver, and precious stones of the New Jerusalem are fire proof. Like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they can dwell with devouring fire, and with the burnings of Olahm; fire having no power over their bodies to singe a hair of their heads, nor to leave its smell upon them. Not so, however, the wood, hay, and stubble. They cannot continue to exist in fire, being in nature destructible. The judicial inspection of his household [what, no rejectors?], having separated the refuse and the vile, from those 'accounted worthy to obtain of the *aion*, and of the resurrection;' the rejected

[of the household], by virtue of the sentence pronounced upon them by Christ, saying, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into the aionian fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels,' forthwith enter upon their journey to the place of exile or torment; or, in the words of Jesus, 'they go away into aionian punishment;' while the righteous, by their being quickened, enter into aionian life."

You may choose to believe otherwise, and differ from Dr. Thomas, but the facts are that he taught that there are two classes of saints, not a mixture of saints and unbaptized rebels, who stand before the *bema*. These saints are in Christ Jesus constitutionally, not merely associated by knowledge. Constitution implies legal relationship, having been born into Christ, having been adopted into the commonwealth of Israel, having put off the old man, having been made nigh by the blood of Christ, having made a covenant with God by sacrifice. Simply stated, the constitution of Adam is death without hope of renewed life, and the constitution of Christ is hope of the resurrection (*anastasis*, or standing again) and additionally, life (*zoe*). If we persist in implying resurrection by other means than the sacrifice of Christ, which involves the blood of the everlasting covenant, we are preaching another Christ. Either Christ is THE resurrection, or he is A resurrection. Which? If we say he is A resurrection, then there are other appointments that God has made to effect resurrection. Christ did not say that he was A resurrection and A life; he said that he was THE resurrection and THE life. If we cannot affirm this great and pivotal truth, a fearful time could be awaiting us. Shall we deny the Lord that bought us?

To summarize, Dr. Thomas, in his earlier writings, taught a resurrection of the enlightened rejector. In his later writings in Eureka, volume III (5th volume in the Logos Edition), as evidenced by the two passages quoted, he taught the resurrection of two classes, the just and the unjust, a resurrection limited to saints in Christ Jesus constitutionally. This is the affirmation of the Unamended Statement of Faith, a two-class resurrection involving those who have made a covenant with Deity by sacrifice. That sacrifice is a symbolic death in the waters of baptism, a baptism into his death, whereby we acquire a title to resurrection and to land inheritance in the Abrahamic grant, a title which we previously did not have, being dead in trespass and sins, and having no such hope. Before baptism – no resurrection. Upon baptism – assured resurrection.

JAMES STANTON (*The Sanctuary-Keeper*, Dec. 1985)

"Dangerous departures from the truth have of late taken place, and it is the duty of every one who loves the purity of the Truth to warn, expose and correct. "

Thomas Williams, "Selected Works", p. 486

CIRCUMCISION

Adam's Sin – and the Consequences Thereof

ALL mankind are born under a legal condemnation to death. This came about as a consequence of the transgression of Adam in the garden. See Christadelphian Unamended Statement of Faith Proposition 3, 7. Cp. Gen. 3:15-19; Rom. 5:12-14, 17-19, 1 Cor. 15:21-22; Psa. 51:5; Job. 14:4.

In addition to this legal pronouncement, the entire race bears the physical execution or effect of this condemnation in their body. This we know as Sin in the Flesh. The substance is so named because the present organization of our nature, with its deteriorating condition and tendency toward unlawful behavior, is the direct consequence of transgression, or sin. The flesh is what it is as a consequence of Adam's sin, therefore it is called Sin in the Flesh, or Sin's Flesh. It is a source of defilement to everyone who possesses it, even prior to yielding to its innate sinful impulses. See Rom. 7:17-24; 2 Cor. 5:4; John 3:6; 2 Pet. 1:4; Rom. 8:3

Divine justice required that deliverance from the sentence of death and its effects can only be obtainable by the execution of the penalty incurred by Adam upon a personally sinless bearer of the condemnation and its physical effects, Sin in the Flesh. (Heb. 2:10-15; 9:22-26; 1 Pet. 1:19-21; 3:18; Rom. 8:3; Heb. 10:4-10; Rev. 13:8 Gen. 2:17; 3:21)

The entire race of mankind is involved in this condemnation as well as its physical execution. It has therefore been appropriately termed "racial condemnation" by brethren of past days. This condemnation and its effects are the subject of Divine reprobation, disfavor, and displeasure, and therefore a cause of alienation or estrangement from Yahweh. (Eph. 4:18; Col. 1:21; Ps. 58:3) Another term has been appropriately given to this aspect of the consequences of Adam's sin, and that is "racial alienation." Individuals continue under the inherent disfavor with which Yahweh views the flesh until they rise from the waters of baptism, at which time they enter into Yahweh's "grace," or favor, as many passages demonstrate. (2 Jn. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:10; 4:10; 5:5, 12; Rom. 1:7; Gal. 2:21) The removal of this disfavor and alienation is a direct consequence of the present benefits of baptism, namely: The removal

of/justification from inherited condemnation (Rom. 8:1-2; 5:18-19; 6:7); The atonement/covering of Sin in the Flesh (1 Cor. 6:11; Rom. 6:6); The forgiveness of personal transgressions (1 Jn. 2:12; Eph. 2:1; Col. 2:13; Acts 2:38); The adoption into the Abrahamic Covenant (Gal. 3:27-29; 2 Pet. 1:4; Rom. 11:16-20; Eph. 2:12-19).

From the time of Adam's sin, no man has entered the Everlasting Covenant without having previously or simultaneously obtained justification from inherited sin, whether in shadow or in fact. This is an important principle to understand. The Abrahamic covenant is the only means by which God has graciously provided man access unto Himself. A relationship through this covenant is only open for participation to those who follow Yahweh's prerequisites, which are designed to elevate and glorify Him, while debasing and destroying sin, or the flesh.

Many of the sacrificial institutions under the law were intended to teach this fact in shadow form. The Abrahamic covenant is the only Divine provision that admits of any life beyond death, therefore it was through this covenant (and its extensions, the promises made to Isaac, Jacob and David) that the way was opened for life after the execution of the death penalty upon Christ, who was the personally sinless bearer of the Adamic condemnation. (Acts 2:24-32; 13:32-37; Heb. 13:20)

The Institution of Circumcision

The Divine institution of circumcision is one of the ceremonies that demonstrate all these principles in a shadow or symbolic form. The covenant of circumcision was instituted with Abraham in Gen. 17: 9-14, as a token of the Everlasting covenant previously made to him.

And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant. (Gen 17:9-14)

Just as the "bow in the cloud" is a token of the covenant with Noah (Gen. 9:8-17), and the blood struck about the door of the homes of the obedient Israelites in Egypt was a token between the inhabitant and the destroying angel (Ex. 12:7, 13), the token of the Abrahamic Covenant was intended to remind

those who looked upon it of their special relationship to the Creator resulting from the promises made to their father Abraham. It was upon the basis of this special relationship, the token of which being circumcision, that the Jews were entrusted with the “oracles of God.” (Rom. 3:1-2)

Rom 4:9-11 tells us:

“Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:”

Just as the faithful obedience which was counted to Abraham for “righteousness” involved the shedding of blood for its exhibition (Gen. 12:7-8; 15: 8-11), so also the “seal” (sign of Divine approval) of this righteousness involved the shedding of blood. This seal was placed upon Abraham at the age of 99. (Gen. 17:24)

It is evident from Gen. 17:14 (quoted above) that there is a greater significance to the institution of circumcision than a simple reminder to the nation bearing it. Abraham is warned that any among his descendants who remain uncircumcised would be “*cut off from his people*,” for “*he hath broken my covenant*.” Lest there be any mistake as to what this cutting off would involve, we shall look at the account of Moses, who neglected to circumcise his son. Ex. 4:24-26:

“And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the LORD met him, and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me. So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision.”

To be “*cut off*” means to be slain, or covenanted. The uncircumcised Israelite, by virtue of his uncircumcision after the 8th day of life, became liable to an untimely death. Does this not suggest the converse to be true? If the non-observance of the edict incurred a premature death, would not the obedience to the edict prevent a premature death? This is a logical conclusion supported by the account to which we referred in Exodus. If this be not the case, there would be no apparent benefit to obedience.

The Mosaic Law and Circumcision

The institution of circumcision was later incorporated into the Mosaic Law. All of the ordinances of this law were intended to elevate Yahweh while debasing the flesh. Lev. 12:1-6:

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean. And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled. But if she bear a maid child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her separation: and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days. And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest:”

In this account we have a case of defilement resulting from childbirth, along with the means of being purified from it. Why would defilement arise from childbirth? Was there some moral transgression involved in the act of childbirth? Certainly not, for this activity was in harmony with the commandment to “multiply,” a necessary part of the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant.

If anything, childbirth should be seen as being in harmony with and obedience to Divine command. The defilement of childbirth did not arise from any moral transgression, but from the nature of the product that the woman had introduced into the world—Sin in the flesh. This ordinance provides excellent evidence of the defiled, sin-stricken **nature** with which all are burdened prior to any transgression of their own device. We also see demonstrated in shadow the attitude of Yahweh towards the flesh, even in its moral innocence—an attitude of disgust and disfavor.

Childbirth defiled the mother. In the case of a female child, the mother was unclean for two weeks, and required purification for sixty-six days. After this a sacrifice was made which atoned for and cleansed her from this defilement. In the case of a male child, both these periods of time were divided in half. She was counted as unclean for 7 days, and continued in purification for 33 days, after which the atoning sacrifice was offered. The difference of time required for purification depending upon the sex of the child demonstrates that the defilement arose not on account of some moral sin involved in the act of childbirth, but from the product of the birth.

The shorter period required for purification from the birth of a son may be owed to the atoning nature of circumcision. The interruption in the period of uncleanness seems to be a result of the blood-shedding ceremony of the circumcision of the son, which is then followed by only 33 days of purification.

The “Sign of Circumcision”

In light of this testimony, the description of circumcision as a “*sign*” takes on a greater significance. Of what is it a sign? We believe it is typical of the sacrifice of Christ. This is in fact plainly stated by Paul in his letter to the Colossians.

“In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.” (Col 2:11)

The following note appears in The Christadelphian of 1876, Pg. 111: *“Note, the Sinaitic, Vatican, and Alexandrian MSS. do not contain the words “of the sins,” and Griesbach rejects them absolutely as spurious.”* In this case the verse should read:

“In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.”

This would better fit the type, which was a provisional shadow justification from inherited sin (“*body*”) rather than a forgiveness of transgression (“*sins*”). This fact is self-evident when we consider what transgression an 8 day old child is capable of committing.

The mother, being a bearer herself of Sin in the Flesh, necessarily transmits this to her child, for “*Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.*” (Job 14:4) This unclean, sinful nature is the subject of Divine disfavor, and the cause of alienation. As Paul says, we are “*by nature the children of wrath,*” (Eph. 2:3) and “*alienated,*” as well as “*enemies in mind by wicked works.*” The divine disfavor upon our nature and its consequent alienation long precede the time at which we become “*enemies in mind by wicked works.*” In a shadow, circumcision offered a provisional justification from the inherited condemnation to death. This is evident from the consideration of Gen. 17:14. By the ceremonial cutting off of a piece of flesh, blood was shed and atonement was provided. Life was thereby prolonged, in this case the life being that of Abraham’s son.

What we have seen thus far is that all Flesh since the Adamic transgression is, by birth, under condemnation to death; All flesh is invariably regarded as unclean as a result of the effect of this condemnation, called Sin in the Flesh; This uncleanness is the subject of Divine displeasure; The shedding of blood is the only means by which the condemnation can be removed and the unclean nature can be covered; Circumcision was commanded of Abraham’s descendants; Failure to observe this ordinance would result in an untimely death; Observance of this ordinance would avert premature death.

The shadow should start becoming apparent as we continue. The entire race of mankind has come under condemnation to death on account of our

forefather's (Adam) action; The Israelite remained subject to the untimely execution of this condemnation as a result of their parent's action. The Abrahamic covenant is the institution through which death is to be destroyed; the "*token*" of this covenant warded off premature death. The Abrahamic covenant is the means by which Eternal Life is to be obtained in the Kingdom; The "*token*" of this covenant prolonged temporal life in the land. Circumcision introduced the Israelite into a position of privilege before God; The "*Circumcision made without hands*" does the same. The "*oracles of God*" were committed to the Israelites on the basis of the circumcision; Those who have been "*circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ*" have been entrusted with the Truth of Yahweh's word. (1st Tim. 6:20; Titus 1:9)

The means by which provisional atonement was provided for inherited sin was the bloody cutting off of a piece of flesh; The means by which the actual atonement was provided for inherited sin was the sacrificial cutting off of a member of the condemned race.

In these ways circumcision was a type of both the Abrahamic Covenant and the mediator of that covenant, Jesus Christ.

Circumcision as it pertained to Jesus

"And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. (Luk 1:31)

And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb. And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons. (Luk 2:21-24)

We learn from these passages that, despite being named by Yahweh prior to his birth, Jesus was not called by this name until he had undergone the provisional justification provided by his circumcision.

We read in Rom. 2:25, "*For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.*" In this way Christ was profited by his circumcision, for he upheld the law in every jot and tittle, thus fulfilling it perfectly, until he was hung upon the stake. In being hung upon the stake, he involuntarily came under the curse of the Mosaic Law. (See Matt. 5:17-18)

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: (Gal 3:13)

At the time of his hanging upon the stake, Jesus came under the curse of the law. His circumcision was thus made uncircumcision, and it therefore became ineffective in preserving life. He was again defiled, thus becoming an unfit dwelling place for the Spirit, and it was therefore withdrawn from him. *And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* (Mat 27:46)

As in the case of the inherited curse of Sin in the Flesh, this Mosaic curse came upon Jesus involuntarily, through no fault of his own. It was necessary that he come under both of these curses while remaining personally innocent in order that he might bear them both away. (1 Pet. 2:24; Isa. 53:11-12)

As every other Israelite who came under the condemnation of the law, though they much earlier and frequently than he, Jesus now required a sacrifice to atone for this defilement, though, as with the new mother, he bore no personal or moral responsibility for this defilement. He, like her, was fulfilling the commandment he had received, though this brought the curse of the Law upon him. (Jn. 10:18; Heb. 10:5-9) This atonement was provided when his side was pierced and the “*blood of the everlasting covenant*” was poured out from his body.

“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen”. (Heb 13:20-21)

The anti-typical 8th day and circumcision

The final fulfillment of the shadow of circumcision will be at the beginning of the 8th millennial day, when sin will finally be eradicated from the earth, and the Son will deliver up the Kingdom unto the Father, after he has put down all rule, authority and power. (1 Cor. 15:24-28)

“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.” (Rev 20:7-9)

“For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.” (Psa 37:9)

SPIRITUAL SANCTIFICATION & DEFILEMENT

Reading: Haggai 2:10-19

OUR past two installments have considered the book of Haggai up to Haggai 2:10. In Chapter 1 we reviewed Haggai's call for the people to consider their ways. While Yahweh had mercifully allowed a remnant of Judah to return to the land, they soon became discouraged in the work of the LORD and started to concentrate on their own lives at the expense of their commitments to Yahweh. As a result, He had cursed them with drought and famine. Mercifully, Haggai was sent to begin a spiritual revival, to have the people set their hearts on their ways. Thankfully, we know that in just a short three and a half weeks, the people had answered the call and were back at work. Three and a half weeks!

In Chapter 2:1-9 we reviewed Haggai's exhortations to the working Hebrews to "*be strong*" and "*fear not*" as they completed the Temple revival in the face of apathy and enemies. They were to learn the lesson that Paul stated in Romans 8:31 – "*If GOD be for us, who can be against us?*" Additionally, Haggai encouraged the people to have a forward-thinking vision. The Temple that they were working on would eventually be destroyed, a destiny shared by the world as Yahweh will "*shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land*", as stated in verse 7. What Yahweh was truly pleased with, though, was their efforts and their faith. Ultimately, if found faithful, the Hebrews of that generation had the potential to be part of Yahweh's desirable ones that will build the Temple shown to Ezekiel and, more importantly, be part of that heavenly New Jerusalem – the Temple of the Living GOD. Finally, the LORD told them in verse 9 that He would give peace, the peace of Jerusalem that we all long for.

Picking up in verses 10-19, a new message from Yahweh was given through Haggai in the ninth month. This is over 3.5 months after Haggai has stirred up the people in Chapter 1 and about 2 months after the prophecies earlier in Chapter 2. The people were now actively working with a forward,

future-oriented vision. They had an opportunity to continue their work and make even more progress in the Temple's reconstruction. Haggai is now sent with a warning and a reminder of all that has happened since the foundation had been built many years before.

Haggai's main message in Chapter 2:10-19 considers the topic of spiritual sanctification and defilement. As Yahweh knows the rebellious heart of man, He knew that it would be easy for the people to forget the horrible situation they'd been in, without the spiritual and material blessings that they were now being blessed with due to their spiritual revival. Unfortunately, mankind continually corrupts and GOD knew that it was only a matter of time before the people would revert to their former, rebellious selves. This, we know, is all too easy for us today as well. We constantly face this both in our own hearts and the Brotherhood. Verses 11-13 read as follows:

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Ask now the priests concerning the law, saying, If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No. Then said Haggai, If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean".

In these verses, Haggai reminds the people about the laws of spiritual sanctification and defilement under the Mosaic Law. Under the Law, if a priest came into contact with the flesh of a sin offering to GOD, he would become ceremonially holy. In verse 12, the emphasis is on the status of the skirt. The skirt would be holy because of the holy flesh that it carried, but that same skirt could not then pass on holiness to the bread or pottage or anything else that it might later touch. In Leviticus 6:24-27 we see the connection between the sin offering and holiness upon contact:

"And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, saying, This is the law of the sin offering: In the place where the burnt offering is killed shall the sin offering be killed before the LORD: it is most holy. The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it: in the holy place shall it be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation. Whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy: and when there is sprinkled of the blood thereof upon any garment, thou shalt wash that whereon it was sprinkled in the holy place."

We could also choose to look at the sanctification of the tabernacle furniture in Exodus 30:22-29. Here we see then that the anointing of holy ointment on the furniture made it symbolically holy, and in verse 29 we see that *"whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy"*. The process leading up to this proclamation of holiness was not easy – it was hard work. The ingredients had to be gathered, they had to be mixed in the proper amount, and had to be anointed upon the tabernacle furniture in the way that GOD commanded.

Another example under the Law of Moses is that a sin offering had to meet specific qualifications of purity, had to be offered and slain in a specific way as outlined in the Law in order to make acceptable atonement. In either case, the sanctification or atonement was made for a specific object or person according to the prescription of Yahweh's Law. While effective if done correctly, though, this sanctification or atonement could not spread and did not last forever. Much to the rather, the persons or objects in question could be defiled again.

In our day, what can we learn from this lesson of sanctification? How are we cleansed or made holy? These things we know can only happen from our connection with the blood of Christ. By coming into covenant relationship through baptism, we gratefully take part in his sacrificial offering which sanctifies us or sets us apart from sin. Please turn to Hebrews 9:1,9-14; 10:1-6,10. In these verses we see that we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ. In Hebrews 3:1, we are given the title of "*holy brethren*" due to our being "*partakers of the heavenly calling*" in Christ Jesus. However, we all know that our baptism is just a starting point. While we are sanctified by the blood of Jesus in baptism, we cannot pass on our cleanness and it will not automatically grow within us and perfect our mind. Instead, we must continually fight against defilement from sin both personally and ecclesially.

Preserving the sanctified state

After our baptism, how can we stay in a sanctified state as holy brethren? Jesus in his beautiful prayer of John 17 gives us the answer when he said in verses 17 through 19: "*Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth*". Here we see that the Truth as it is in Jesus can sanctify us after baptism. In Ephesians 5:26, this element of sanctification and cleansing is also called "*the washing of water by the word*". In Romans 7 and 8 we see the war of our mind and the continual battle between the carnal mind and the spirit mind which sanctifies. This is a lifelong battle that can never end and will never stop until we die or our Lord returns.

As we look back at Haggai's time period, we can see that he was using this example of the holy flesh as a symbol of the people's own purification. It had likely taken much effort, sweat and tears for the children of Israel to get back on track after considering their ways. They had finally turned around and Yahweh was well pleased, but they had to be on guard lest they turned again to defilement. Haggai thus continued with a warning in verse 13. "*Then said Haggai, If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean.*"

In this verse, Haggai asks the priests to confirm the law of spiritual defilement, namely that one touching a dead body under the law would

become unclean and defiled instantly. Note that this is similar to spiritual sanctification. If one touched holy flesh, they would be sanctified. If one touched a dead body, they'd be unclean. The major difference is that while sanctification could not and would not automatically spread, defilement could. There are many examples throughout the Law, but perhaps it is most clearly stated in Numbers 19:22: "*And whatsoever the unclean person toucheth shall be unclean; and the soul that toucheth it shall be unclean until even*". Just as the priests of Haggai's time had confirmed, defilement spreads – just like a virus.

Spiritual defilement

We would now like to take a side trip from Haggai to look more deeply at the concept of spiritual defilement, as it is such a sinister concept that affects us all. We would like to first look at personal defilement and then ecclesial defilement. As we look at personal defilement, we see that all things of sin truly stem from the heart. Jeremiah 17:9 states,

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Jesus further expanded upon this in Mark 7:14-23: "*And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand: There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable. And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, **out of the heart of men**, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man."*

Through this passage, Jesus lifted the minds of his disciples to a higher level, as he often did. Yes, a literal dead body could defile, but in reality the element of greatest defilement they had to deal with was themselves. They were all dying bodies, they were all corrupting and tending towards death. Yet Jesus alone would provide the Way, the Truth and the Life for them to overcome their hearts.

As we have already mentioned, Jesus first provided his covenant sacrifice to wash us and sanctify us, but after baptism we must continually be on guard. Our hearts are desperately wicked and so we must continually fight our flesh with the Word of GOD. Paul accurately told of this battle in the familiar

Romans 7:15-25. He said, *“I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members”*. As Paul describes, there truly is a battle that we must be fighting in our minds. Remember that Paul was an inspired apostle with the Holy Spirit and yet he still struggled against himself. Fortunately, while the battle within our minds is long and arduous, we have Yahweh and Christ to help us in the fight. We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us – remember he too bore our wicked frame – and someday, somehow we can reach that true pinnacle of *“life and peace”* connected with being *“spiritually minded”* as mentioned in Romans 8:6.

Before moving onward to the concept of ecclesial defilement, please turn back to Haggai Chapter 2. In verse 14, having spoken of spiritual sanctification verses defilement, Haggai says *“so is this people, and so is this nation before me.”* In the Haggai Expositor we read the following comments: *“This statement of Haggai refers to the state of the people before they had commenced to do the work that GOD required of them. They were both defiled and defiling like the ‘dead body’ he mentioned; though claiming to be the holy nation they did not transmit holiness like the ‘holy flesh.’ Their previous attitude toward the work of the temple was indicative of their general apathy toward the things of GOD, and showed them to be spiritually dead...”*

Ecclesial defilement

In verses 15-19, Yahweh continues to ask the people to consider all of the things that had happened before even a stone was laid on a stone in His Temple. If you remember, the people had been cursed and smitten with never enough food to go around. As Haggai 1:9 says, *“ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little”*. As Yahweh had already told them, though, their lack of blessings were their own fault and Yahweh brings these things up again to warn them lest they would slip into a state of spiritual defilement.

Looking back, we can effectively say that the people of Judah were Yahweh’s ecclesia. They had been brought out of captivity in Babylon and given an amazing hope of salvation, an opportunity to rise up and build, and yet they’d allowed themselves to be defiled and cursed. What an apt representation of the ecclesia today. Though we believe small pockets of men and women have had the Truth throughout the centuries, the Truth was not revived on a large scale until Yahweh used Brother John Thomas and other pioneers to resurrect the Truth from the trash heap of Christendom. We as a community were taken out of captivity from Babylonian superstition centered in the Catholic doctrines and given the things concerning the Kingdom and the Name. This was not a quick and easy affair and took a long time for the sanctifying Truth to be fully revealed. Brother John Thomas did not understand the Truth in a night and the ecclesia did not grow to its Philadelphian state in a night.

Unfortunately, just as with Judah over 2000 years ago, we too are facing widespread spiritual defilement in the ecclesia at large. Just as Judah allowed apathy and unbelief to take over and in so doing ruined their ecclesia, so the Christadelphian body is also suffering. Doctrines are now being taught in Christadelphia that are totally contrary to the things that the Bible teaches. Each and every false doctrine is a canker that destroys what the Christadelphians stand for and, like the Protestant daughters before us, we seem to be going back to the mother Church. These doctrines surround the apostate trifecta of (1) Christ being King now, (2) aionian and/or eternal life now, and therefore (3) “logically” a spiritual Kingdom which believers are a part of now. There are many other growing movements as well such as the woman’s rights movement, the unity at all costs movement, etc.

Do we believe these things? Unfortunately, until Christ returns, these cunningly devised fables will continue to be a major source of spiritual defilement to the Truth. All of our ecclesias across the country are affected in some way as fewer and fewer Brethren believe **and** defend the One Gospel that has been delivered to us all. Unhappily, even some of the Bible Schools that some of us may have historically supported have been swept away as the false teachers have been harbored or put at the stand. Recovery is possible, and we hope so, but prospects are not bright.

As sad as this is for all of us, we must take the lesson of Haggai to heart as we are in the exact position that Judah once was. If we are to preserve the Truth and the ecclesia at large from spiritual defilement, what are we to do? In the second epistle of John, we are given clear instruction as to what we must do. Verses 10 and 11 state, *“If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds”*. In other words, we must not receive those who are teaching falsehoods nor should we fellowship or otherwise support them. They should not be welcome in our personal homes, in our ecclesial homes, nor should we go to their Bible schools and other events. Instead, the Bible would always have us to stand for the minority who stay true to the Truth, supporting those who are contending for the faith in their individual ecclesias as long as it is done in the Christ-like, scriptural manner appointed. We are all in different situations, but we must do what we can to support each other in order to stop the spread of the leaven and, hopefully, reverse course.

We’ve talked a lot about the defilement facing our body, but the end of these things does not have to be negative. Please remember that back in Haggai’s time that the course was reversible. **Remember their turnaround in two and a half weeks!** First of all, they had to realize they had a problem, they had to stop continuing in the problem, and then turn around. To their credit, the remnant of Judah did turn around. As we conclude, we would like to look at two verses that tell us what we need to be doing in these last days:

- 2 John 1:8: *“Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.”*
- Jude 1:3: *“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”*

In conclusion, we must all remember that sanctification is a process that is hard, but leads to eternal life. We must do our best to fight the fleshly inclinations of pride and lust within ourselves first and foremost. However, we must separate ourselves from those who would turn the Truth into a lie, hoping and praying that they would return to it, while also strengthening the things that remain and supporting those in unenviable situations where the fight has come to them directly.

In Luke 18:8, Jesus asks, *“When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith – or The Faith –on the earth?”* Our hope and our prayer is that the answer to that question will be ‘yes’. If so, if we keep the faith, if we earnestly contend, we have the assurance of Haggai Chapter 2, verse 19. May we all hear the words that the repentant children of Judah heard so long ago from Yahweh, as our GOD said *“from this day I will bless you.”*

Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Note: *LORD willing, our final installment will focus on the last four verses of Haggai 2 and parallel verses in Zechariah focusing on the great prophetic work of Zerubbabel and the man that he typifies, Jesus Christ.*

DAVID BRYAN

“Yes, the God of Israel is a personal God. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is a personal Father, yet not a man, though we faintly borrow our image from Him. He is glorious and incorruptible in His substance; unchangeable in His nature, one with the universe, clothed with eternal light and power. He fills heaven and earth by His spirit, which is one with Him. By this He upholds all things, and knows and controls everything. Honour and majesty are before Him; strength and beauty in His sanctuary. Who in heaven can be compared unto the Lord? Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. His greatness is unsearchable. I will speak of the glorious honour of His Majesty to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His Kingdom.” The Ways of Providence, p. 11

FUNDAMENTALS OF PROPHECY

MESSIAH THE PRINCE

A brief consideration of the 70 weeks prophecy

“Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow”
(1 Peter 1:9-11).

T **HERE** are three things chiefly testified here by Peter which provide inspired insight into the writers and the writings of the Old Testament concerning Messiah. *First*, that the prophets did indeed inquire of the Spirit concerning Messiah, from which Spirit they received the Logos, or Divine computation, which, in due time would become the Word made flesh.

Second, that having received from the Spirit this good news of the Kingdom of God, they testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, being the Lamb of God, but also (*third*) testified of the glory that should follow when he returns as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah with all his Saints with him, and they shall live and reign on the earth for a thousand years.

This article will focus on the second part of this testimony: Christ as the Lamb of God, sent forth as the savior of the race at the time which had been appointed by the Angel messenger to Daniel the prophet, and testified of and witnessed to by John the Baptist.

Christ as the Lamb of God

Mark 1:1-3 - “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

John the Baptist hailed the coming of Messiah, yet John’s own calling and election had been foretold by the prophet Isaiah, who testified that *“the glory*

of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."

Although we normally think of the prophets in the formal sense of those Old Testament writers beginning with Isaiah and ending with Malachi, consider what the Messiah himself says about John the Baptist in Matthew 11: 7-15:

"And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

John was indeed the last and greatest of the prophets of Israel inspired by the Holy Spirit to foretell of the coming of Messiah as the Lamb of God. So important was this mission and purpose that Yahweh had proposed for his life that by necessity he was led by the Holy Spirit from the womb, and was to personally see to it that this same Jesus, on that certain day in the waters of the Jordan River, would receive by his reluctant hand the rite of baptism, and thereafter he personally witnessed the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon the Son of the Highest without measure. John 1:29-36:

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Spirit. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!"

Please take note of the prophet's words concerning Messiah in verse 30: **"for he was before me."** What did this signify to the Israelite indeed? Did this mean that Jesus was born before John, or did the ministry of Christ somehow precede the ministry of John? Certainly not, as the scripture meticulously indicates by the testimony of Luke that John's birth and circumcision preceded the birth of Christ. Furthermore, when Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit upon the occasion of John's birth he exclaimed: *"And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways."*

The meaning of this saying then must be in accordance with what Jesus testifies of himself in several instances. On the occasion of his last journey to Jerusalem with his disciples, Jesus said: *"Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, **and all things that are written by the prophets** concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again"* (Luke 18:31-33). Further, in John 8:54-59:

*"Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Before Abraham was, I am.** Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by."*

In this instance, Christ uses a title which should have been easily recognized by the Jews to indicate the principle of God manifestation in himself – that he was indeed in the mind of Yahweh as His Son from the very beginning. "I AM" is the name that the Almighty chose to use to reveal himself to Moses and the children of Israel which signified a blueprint for the saviour of the race (Exod. 3:14). The title is Hebrew *Hayah (Ehyeh)*, the future form of the verb, *"to be"* or *"to become."*

While the name Yahweh signifies the object of the Deity's future manifestation in a multitude of the redeemed ("He who will be mighty ones"), the I AM, or *Ehyeh*, signifies the active extension or manifestation of Yahweh in the person of His only begotten son. Christ was the very image of his father by his moral character, mental constitution, and manifestation of the Holy Spirit without measure. Furthermore, Christ, being the "firstfruits" of them that slept, is able to purchase through the shedding of his blood, and thereby redeem from death, others who will complement the divine family by sealing in their foreheads the Word of God. Therefore, at the time appointed, Yahweh

sent forth his Son, the Word made flesh, the one through whom all the redeemed from Adam to this very day must be saved. Luke 1:26-31:

“And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.”

The 70 Weeks Prophecy

The Messiah proclamation to Mary by one named Gabriel should not escape our attention, as this great event was something looked and longed for by every Israelite in expectation of the fulfillment of prophecy concerning Messiah the Prince. At this time then, we turn our attention to the prophet Daniel, for approximately 536 years earlier, being about two years before the expiration of the 70 years captivity in Babylon, Gabriel was summoned to go to Daniel in answer to his prayer recorded in Daniel 9:1-5; 19-27:

“In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments:....”

(Picking up at verse 19) *“O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name. And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God; Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy*

*supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. Seventy weeks [70 x 7 = 490 years] are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. **Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks [7 x 7 = 49 years], and threescore and two weeks [62 x 7 = 434 years]: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks [62 x 7 = 434 years] shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week [1 x 7 = 7 years]: and in the midst of the week [$\frac{1}{2} \times 7 = 3\frac{1}{2}$ Years] he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.**"*

In a consideration of this most significant prophecy, we suggest that several items be taken into consideration, as not to obscure the object of the message by entangling ourselves in the mire of profane chronology:

1. Accept that the chronologies of most, if not all, profane writers of history are imperfect due to a disregard for the inspired writings of the Bible. The resultant inaccuracies are suspected to be between 10 and 44 years off from the Divine reckoning of events. Therefore the witness of Daniel and the prophets, the apostles, and gospel writers are a more reliable source for identifying people with specific times and events.
2. Accept that we do not know for certain the exact date of Messiah's birth and therefore the crucifixion, in relation to the Gregorian calendar, although they are commonly but not necessarily correctly observed to be between 4 - 3 B.C. and A.D. 29-30, respectively. The taking away of the Temple and the City in A.D. 70, being one 40 year generation following A.D. 30, would seem to add validity to this estimate.
3. It would seem appropriate that the prophetic time periods in question should be viewed from the perspective of Sabbath years and jubilee years. For to say seventy weeks (**70 x 7 = 490 years**) is as much to say "seventy Sabbaths of years", or approximately 10 jubilees. This may in turn have a bearing on the precise or correct year of interpretation.

With this as a basis of understanding, we can observe that the prophecy is segmented into several important parts.

First, it should be known that Gabriel was sent to make sure that Daniel not only received the vision, but that he understood it (vs. 23). This did not mean that Daniel would know exactly from what date to what date the prophecy should be measured (even as we do not yet know the day nor the hour that Christ will come), but Daniel would certainly comprehend a recognizable pattern set in motion, and that of a surety Messiah the Prince would arrive on the scene 483 years following the command to build the walls of Jerusalem, and that Messiah the Prince must suffer, finally being cut off out of the land of the living as one despised and rejected of men.

But the Jews as a whole missed much of what the prophecy reveals for the Jews did not look for the Lamb of God, a savior from sin and death, but rather they desired a Messiah who would defend and save their national identity and were in no wise concerned with their national or individual state of spiritual and moral depravity. This in many ways reflects the Israel we see today; it has flesh and bones, so to speak, but there is no breath in them. Hence the Jews greatly erred in thought and belief that Messiah would rally a profane nation in a political and military ousting of the Roman oppressors and completely ignored both Isaiah's and Daniel's testimony to the contrary.

The Structure of the 70 Weeks Prophecy

Daniel's prophecy is divided into several time periods. Verse 24 indicates that within 490 years six particulars would be accomplished by the conclusion of Messiah's ministry. (We will review these six items at the end of this article.)

In verse 25 the beginning of the 70 weeks is fixed *"from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince"* with a time period of seven weeks, or 49 years (thus identifying the jubilee cycle of years), plus a time period of threescore and two weeks, or 434 years (for a total of 483 years), after which Messiah would appear to Israel.

Then in verse 26, it is prophesied that following the expiration of the 483 years (or 69 Sabbaths of years), Messiah would be crucified, which then would be followed by the coming of the people of the prince, or the Roman Armies, to destroy the profaned Jewish Temple. The necessity of this action was sealed 40 years prior to its occurrence when the Jews proclaimed, *"his blood be on us, and our children."*

Finally, in verse 27, the covenant was to be confirmed within the seventieth week, at which time the necessity for animal sacrifice and oblation by Spiritual Israelites would cease, Christ having offered up himself once as a perfect sacrifice for sin and having entered into the holiest of holies to make intercession for his brethren.

For the beginning point of the prophecy, consider Nehemiah 2:1-8.

*“And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence. Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid, And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire? Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it. And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time. Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah; **And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into.** And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.”*

Nehemiah records that upon the 20th year of King Artaxerxes, a command is issued forth for the rebuilding of the wall around Jerusalem, answering the requirement of the 70 weeks prophecy. To correlate this fact with the message of the other prophets, it should be remembered that Artaxerxes, Darius, and Ahasuerus are not personal names but are titles of distinction which belonged to the kings of Persia, just as Caesar, Augustus, and Pontifex Maximus all related to the reigning Roman Emperor. Thus a problem ensues among historians and chronologists alike, that being which Artaxerxes in the genealogical record gave the decree from which the prophecy can be reckoned.

We would suggest to you two possibilities as to the identity of this particular King. Darius Hystapes is a strong possibility who reigned from 521 – 485 BC, according to popular chronology, the 20th year of his reign being 501 BC. However, as we mentioned earlier, the profane chronologists are upwards of 44 years off from Biblical chronology, thus several expositors suggest adjusting the 20th year of Darius Hystapes from 501 to 457 BC. Hence the following chronology: (see next page)



* **457 BC** - Decree on 20th year of Artaxerxes (Darius Hystapes)
 - 49 YRS - Seven Weeks
 = **408 BC**

- 434 YRS - Threescore and Two Weeks
 = **27 AD** - Total of 483 years or 69 Sabbaths of Years
 (49 + 408 + 27 = 484, minus 1 for BC to AD = 483)
 - Messiah announced by John the Baptist
 - “Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age”

+ 7 Years - The 70th Sabbath of Years, However....
(+3.5 Years) - Messiah is “Cut Off” the midst of the week (or 3.5 yrs)
 = **30 AD** - Completion of the 70 Weeks or 490 Years by 34 AD

Though this chronology is not conclusive, it is intended to provide a framework for looking at the prophecy as a whole. Some expositors have good reason for believing that the 70 weeks prophecy indeed terminated at the very crucifixion of Jesus upon the stake. Be that as it may, if Darius Hystapes is the Darius of Ezra, the Artaxerxes of Nehemiah, and the Ahasuerus of Esther, then this king would have been the husband of Queen Esther, who we believe is referenced in Nehemiah 2:6. What would be more appropriate than for this King, who delighted to honor Mordecai, to also grant Nehemiah’s request to return to the land of his fathers to complete the work of rebuilding the city walls of Jerusalem in favor of the Jews, thus marking the signpost of the coming of Messiah the Prince?

A second suggestion is that the Artaxerxes of Nehemiah was Artaxerxes Longimanus who ruled Persia from 465 - 423 BC, with the twentieth year of his reign being 445 BC. H.P. Mansfield points out in the *Story of the Bible* that if this were the Artaxerxes of Nehemiah, that Ezra, who was at least 1 year old in 587 BC when Nebuchadnezzar had his father slain, would have been 141 years old or more when he walked in the procession at the dedication of the wall. Nehemiah 12:26,27:

*“These were in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of **Nehemiah the governor, and of Ezra the priest, the scribe. And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings, and with singing, with cymbals, psalteries, and with harps.**”*

Based upon these observations, it would appear that the greater probability is that the Darius of Ezra and the Artaxerxes of Nehemiah are the same king,

who ruled for at least 32 years (according to Neh. 5:14 and Neh. 13:6), who gave the decree to build the wall, and who was still in power when Ezra and Nehemiah dedicated the wall. However, it is the opinion of Bro. Thomas that the chronologists have incorrectly attributed the 20th year of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus to 445 BC, and that based on Rollins History, which at the time was thought to be a more reliable source, this should be adjusted to 456 BC (455 years and nine months).

The conclusion of which of these kings was truly responsible for the milestone decree to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem may never be determined in this dispensation. Of greater importance are the six particulars listed in **Daniel 9:24** concerning the salvation of a remnant of Adam's descendants (as signified by the number 6) that would hang in the balance until the conclusion of the seventy weeks, or 490 years, came to fruition. These six particulars to be accomplished within the total of the Seventy Weeks are translated by Bro. Thomas in his *Exposition of Daniel* as follows* :

1. ***The perfecting of Judah's transgression:*** This was accomplished by the providential and overshadowing suppression of Judah by the Romans, which would at last bring to a head Israel's rebellion. This they fulfilled by killing the true heir to the throne of David in order to secure their own power structure. Hence, with hypocrisy to the full, exclaiming "we have no king but Caesar," they denied the Holy one and desired rather that a murderer be delivered to them. In this act, the words of Isaiah 53:3 were fulfilled. *"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."*
2. ***To cause to cease from sin-offerings.*** Christ, being the perfected Lamb of God, was offered up once. Thereafter there is no requirement for sin offerings of animals by those who have been sprinkled by the Blood of Christ, as he is now both the offering and the priest. In Hebrews 9:11-12 we read, *"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption."* Thereafter it is recorded that his brethren *"continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers,"* with individual sacrifice becoming personal endeavor (Rom. 12:1-2).

* Bro. Thomas states in "Exposition of Daniel" in regard to the 6 signs that such were *"to become accomplished facts before an army should be given to the Raomano-Greek Babylonian Little Horn [i.e., The Roman Legions of Titus – ed.], against the evening and morning sacrifice for the suppression of it, and the destruction of the holy city and people, and the consequent abolition of the Mosaic law and constitution."* Editor

3. ***To make reconciliation or a covering for iniquity.*** In Romans 3:25 we read concerning Christ, *"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."* The word "propitiation" comes from the Greek *hilasterion*, meaning "an atoning victim, or specifically, the lid of the Ark in the Temple, called the mercyseat." Christ, being typified in the mercy seat that covered the ark of the covenant and in the coats of skins given to hide the sin-nakedness of our first parents, is also our sin covering. By his sacrifice not only was the way of future covering opened, but he also brought into effect all the typical sacrifices of the ages. Hence, he is the mediator of the New, or Abrahamic, covenant (Heb. 9:15) and by means of his death has redeemed those who were under the first covenant, that they and we together might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.
4. In Romans 5:18-19 we read, *"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."* The imputation of righteousness made possible by the perfect obedience unto death by Jesus Christ is what Gabriel referred to as the ***Righteousness of Ages***.

(On this point Bro. Thomas wrote in the *Exposition of Daniel*: "Faith in the things of the Kingdom could not have been counted for righteousness to life in the future ages of glory without a propitiatory, or mercy seat, sprinkled with blood. The cutting off of Jesus [and we would underscore that this cutting off could not consist of a mere falling asleep, but death by sacrifice] ...provided this indispensable *kaphporeth*, or cover for sin; so that he being slain and raised from the dead, the means of a sinner's justification, styled, "The righteousness of God", was brought in or completed within the period appointed.")

5. ***The sealing of the vision and the prophet.*** A seal being a mark of authenticity was demonstrated in the words that Jesus spoke and in the miraculous works that he performed, not as a humanitarian, but as a witness and testimony of his Divine Sonship. John 19:37-38 records, *"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him."* The multitudes were witness to these things, and some among them believed saying, *"This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world."* Thus by his words and his works he became the *I AM*, the Immanuel, wherein Yahweh dwelt among us as a mighty one through the divine character of His son. Upon his lips while dying on the stake he uttered, *"it is finished."* The sealing of all things related to the everlasting covenant through his sacrificial death was

complete, and through him all Saints from every age are sealed in their foreheads and in the book of life by the name of the Holy One of Israel.

“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life” (Rev. 21:27).

6. The last of Gabriel's particulars is ***The anointing of the Holy of holy ones***, of whom Peter testified saying: *“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power”* (Acts 10:38; Heb. 1:9). This event transpired on the day when Jesus was baptized when, immediately following his baptism, he was anointed with the Holy Spirit without measure. This was signified by a voice from heaven saying, *“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”* Jesus was anointed with Spirit power from on high and with Yahweh's great words of Truth. In transmitting the Word from his Father to his brethren, they in turn become anointed ones, made separate for the ministry of the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. *“Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts”* (2 Cor. 1:21-22).

To summarize, prophetic events revealed to Daniel over 500 years previous to the appearance and ministry of Messiah are a confirmation of the veracity of the inspired Word and of the great and precious promises wherein we have hope. John the Baptist was an eyewitness to these things and beheld his majesty and power after personally preparing the way for Messiah to fulfill all righteousness.

Christ came as a Lamb sent from Yahweh to purchase unto himself a multitude in whom he will be glorified as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and King of Kings. He came in this way, unseen, in the person of the “people of the prince,” or the Roman armies, in A.D. 70 to destroy the sinful nation. He will come again to the world in the person of himself and his glorified brethren as the Angel of the Bow to reap the great harvest of Armageddon and for the glorification of the Yahweh Name over the earth, so fulfilling all the visions of Daniel revealed some 2,500 years ago.

AL BRYAN

Please continue to pages 32 for the 70 weeks chronology chart, as well as further notes on page 33.

-Kings and Time Periods of Daniel's "Prophecy of the 70 Weeks"

~ Daniel Chapter 9 ~

Darius Hystaspes ruled Persia : 521-485 BC; 20 th yr. = 501 BC (457 BC corrected)			
Artaxerxes Longimanus ruled Persia: 465-423 BC; 20 th yr. = 445 BC (456 BC corrected)			
H.P. Mansfield	John Thomas	W.H. Carter	Notes:
~ 457 BC***	~ 456 BC	~ 455 BC**	✓ Decree on 20 th year of Artaxerxes for Nehemiah to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 2:1-8; 12:26-27)
- 49 years	- 49 years	- 49 years	✓ "Seven Weeks" (7 x 7 = 49 years of Dan 9:25)
= 408 BC	= 407 BC	= 406 BC**	✓ Completes first Jubilee cycle of years
- 434 years	- 434 years	- 434 years	✓ "Threescore and two weeks" (7 x 62 = 434 of Dan. 9:25)
= 27 AD	= 28 AD	= 29 AD	✓ "Seven weeks and threescore and two weeks" unto Messiah the Prince = 483 years or 69 Sabbaths of Years. Example: 49 + 408BC + 27AD = 484 years (-1 for BC to AD correction) = 483 years]
"This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me." (John 1:30); "Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age" (Luke 3:23)			
+ 7 years	+ 7 Years	+ 7 years	✓ The 70 th Sabbath of Years ✓ Messiah "Cut Off" in the midst of the week or between 29 and 30 AD (Birth estimated between 3BC and 1BC ****)
= 34 AD	= 35 AD	= 36 AD	✓ Completion of the Seventy Weeks Prophecy

** According to Bro. Carter's calculations, 455 BC was a jubilee year and thus begins the cycle of the 10 jubilees or seventy weeks (490 years), with 406 BC being the first of the 10 Jubilee cycles.

*** This is one of several possibilities that H.P. Mansfield presents as a probable solution. Another possibility places the 20th of Artaxerxes at 462/63 BC, with the terminus of the 69 weeks (7 weeks, plus 62 weeks) at A.D. 21, and terminus of the 70th week on A.D. 28, however admitting that "*None can be precise with our current knowledge of Old Testament dating*" (pg. 252 and 259, The Book of Daniel, Verse by Verse Exposition).

**** Some chronologies place the Birth of Christ as early as 6 BC on the authority that Herod the Great ordered the slaying of all youths of *two years old* and under at Bethlehem before his death. This was not out of character with Herod, who also had several of his sons slain to extend the longevity of his reign. As Herod is believed to have died in 4 BC, this would place the birth of Messiah at approximately 7 BC - 5 BC. Subsequently, this would place the terminus of the 69 weeks to begin the ministry of Jesus at AD 23 - 25, and the crucifixion between A.D. 26-28 (The Book of Daniel, Verse by Verse Exposition, pg. 259).

The six particulars to be accomplished within the total of the Seventy Weeks (490 Years) are (as translated by Bro. Thomas):

1. The perfecting of Judah's Transgression
2. The causing to cease from sin-offerings
3. The covering of iniquity
4. The bringing in a righteousness of ages
5. The sealing of the vision and the prophet
6. The anointing the Holy One of holy ones

Suggested Reading: Exposition of Daniel, John Thomas, pp. 30-39; The Book of Daniel, Verse by Verse Exposition, H.P. Mansfield, pp. 242-264; Times and Seasons, John Carter, pp. 38-53.



GOD

MANIFESTATION

**THE YAHWEH,
ELOHIM OF ABRAHAM,
ISAAC & JACOB**

“BY faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.” Hebrews 11:8-16

There is something very important in those verses, a key if you will, that unlocks the significance of our topic. We will come back to Hebrews 11 but we first want to provide a brief introduction by laying the foundation or groundwork for our study. We are certain our readers would agree that God Manifestation is a very important and timely subject matter but how important and why it is so timely, we will examine in the commentary ahead.

Nothing you read will be new information or new material and I'm sure the various topics we will review, you've read and discussed many times before. However, there is nothing wrong with going over this subject matter again and again and again. Therefore, feel free to treat this content as a refresher course on an important and fundamental subject matter.

Let's go ahead and begin our study of God Manifestation with getting your attention by stating the following: If we don't get this subject matter (God Manifestation), we don't have the truth. To make it very clear, if we don't understand this subject, we don't have **THE TRUTH**. It doesn't matter what other doctrines we have or what other doctrines we understand. If we don't understand the doctrine of God Manifestation, we do not have **THE TRUTH**.

So let us share with you why this subject matter of God manifestation is so important in this very moment of time. God manifestation is the foundation, the heart, and the very core of what the truth is all about. However, God manifestation is the exact opposite of the world we currently live in. We live in a world that is overwhelmed by HUMANISM.

For clarification and proper context, let's define humanism:

- 1) Any system or mode of thought or action in which human interests, values, and dignity predominate**
- 2) A variety of ethical theory and practice that emphasize reason, scientific inquiry and human fulfillment in the natural world and often rejects the importance of belief in God.**

Summarizing the definitions provided: With humanism, it's all about me. It's about what the world can do for me – My thinking and my course of action. What I think, feel, imagine, need, and what I want. We go through life and craft the reality of our own journey because we are continuously told, "every human being is extremely precious and important."

However, God manifestation says something very different. It's not that you aren't important but you are only important in as much as you relate to this idea of God manifestation. It's not about what you think or I think but instead it's about what God says and what God thinks. We live in a world that absolutely and utterly rejects that spirit and that idea. Hence, as sinful creatures, we are challenged and encouraged each and every day to think and behave in humanistic ways.

In this Laodicea time period, our thinking is totally dominated by humanistic principles. Through work, school, social media, worldly associations, internet, TV ... the list goes on and on. Far more than we can even comprehend or admit to ... we simply become numb to our surroundings. Therefore, humanistic principles become tolerated, accepted, and then a dominating part of our everyday life.

And that is why we are going to get back to this topic, God Manifestation, for a review. This is the foundation of what the truth is all about.

On this specific subject matter Dr. John Thomas penned the following:

“The high importance of this great subject, that, namely of knowing the true God understandingly, is manifest from the magnitude of the evil consequent upon not understanding Him. Thus, in writing to the Thessalonians, Paul testifies that the Lord Jesus shall be apocalypse or revealed from heaven: and that in that apocalypse he will inflict condign punishment upon them “who know not God,” and who obey not the Gospel of Jesus the Anointed ...”

“... let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I, Yahweh, do exercise mercy, judgment, and righteousness on the earth; for in these I delight, saith Yahweh.”

Hopefully we now have your attention and have properly identified the importance of this particular subject and why we plan to consider it in more detail.

Yahweh – the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

Let’s start in the book of Genesis. **Gen. 12:1-3**

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

This is the great promise to Abraham. *“In thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed.”*

Question: When it says in verse 2, **“I will make of thee a great nation”**, How would God make Abraham a great nation? In very simple terms, what would he have to do?

Answer: Abraham would have to have a child, who had children, who had children, until there was a nation. A multitude needed to develop from Abraham.

Two ideas develop out of the promise to Abraham.

- 1) He was going to be a multitude (verse 2)
- 2) In him all of the families of the earth would be blessed (verse 3)

Now, turn to **Genesis 26:2-4** in regard to Isaac:

“And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father; And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed...”

Now we have a promise being given to Isaac as well.

Question: What was that promise? (vs. 4)

Answer: He was going to be multiplied and in his seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed. That is the same promise in Genesis 12 to Abraham and now to Isaac in Genesis chapter 26.

Here is the last one in Genesis chapter 28. This is the occasion of Jacob’s journey to Padanaram. **Gen 28:13,14:**

“And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; Gen 28:14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”

So now the promise comes to Jacob. The seed is going to be multiplied because it says it will be as the dust of the earth and spread everywhere and also in thy seed shall all of the families of the earth be blessed. So now we have three men being singled out for special involvement in terms of the promises of God. **JUST THESE THREE.**

The promise of God to Three men Genesis Chpts: 12, 26, 28

Question: Was that same promise (the one given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) given to Joseph?

Answer: No

So the promises were given to:

- A father → Abraham
- A son → Isaac
- And to a grandson → Jacob

Three generations of this one family.

There must be something unique about these three men that the promise of God would come to them in this special way. Repeated in not one, not two, but three generations. Three men, singled out, JUST THESE THREE MEN.

The name of God linked to three men

Exo 3:6 *“Moreover He said, I am the God (Elohim) of thy father, the God (Elohim) of Abraham, the God (Elohim) of Isaac, and the God (Elohim) of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.”*

So when God reveals Himself to Moses, He does not just refer to Himself as the God of Abraham. No, He’s the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. He binds these three men together in some special way. And likewise in verse 15.

Exo 3:15 *“And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.”*

What is His name? – YAHWEH, The Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob.

What we are being told is that the name of God is linked to these three men in some special way. We are not told why just yet and we don’t know for what reason they are linked to the name of God but they clearly are.

Let’s look up three references from the old testament and three from the new testament.

Old Testament

- I Chron. 29:18 - David references *“O LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers ...”*
- I Kings 18:36 - Elijah states *“LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel”*
- II Chron. 30:6 - Hezekiah also references *“Ye children of Israel, turn again unto the LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel ...”*

New Testament

- Christ refers to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in Luke 20:37
- Peter refers to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in Acts 3:13
- Lastly, Stephen refers to the same in Acts 7:32

As we work our way through the Bible, both in the Old and New Testament, God is consistently referred to as *the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*.

The Elohim of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

Question: How many years from Exodus 3, when Moses first receives the name of the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to the time Stephen gives his address in Acts 7 in the New Testament? What span of time do you think travels between Moses and Stephen? How many years?

Answer: Approximately 1,500 years

The wilderness wanderings when Moses brings Israel into the promised land or towards the promised land is about BC 1,450. When does Stephen give his address? Probably about AD 36 or 37. Let's say another 1,450 years of BC and another 50 years of AD and that gives us about 1,500 years from Moses to Stephen. What's interesting is that during that entire 1,500 years, God is called the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God's name is somehow linked to these three men. But why is that the case?

Take special note of the following:

- God is never called the God of Jacob, Joseph, and Ephraim. Father, son, and grandson?
- God is never called the God of Aaron, Eliazar, and Phineas. Three generations of the priesthood.
- God is never called the God of Jesse, David, and Solomon. Three generations of the kingly family.

Through 1,500 years, why is he always called the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in both the old and new testament? There is a very good reason why and the answer can be found in the book of Hebrews.

Notice what Hebrews 11:8-9 says:

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise"

"With Isaac and Jacob the heirs with him of the same promise"

Three men are given the same promise. That's what Hebrews 11 states. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are all "heirs of the same promise". Somehow these three men are bonded together. Why are they bonded together?

Look what Hebrews 11 goes on to say in verse 15:

"And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned."

Question: What was the country they came out of?

Answer: Ur of the Chaldees

Now verse 16:

*"But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore **God is not ashamed to be called their God:** for He hath prepared for them a city."*

There it is - "**God is not ashamed to be called their God**"

Question: Who exactly do you think "their" is speaking of in verse 16?

Answer: He is still talking about these three men. He is not ashamed to be **called** the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

Notice the word "called" in verse 16 of Hebrews 11. That word "called" is a very interesting word. It actually means to be surnamed. **Strong's #1941:** epikaleomai (pronounced ep-ee-kal-eh'-om-ah-ee) – *to entitle; by implication, to invoke (for aid, worship, testimony, decision, etc.):--appeal (unto), call (on, upon), surname.* **Thayer's Greek Lexicon:** 1) *to put a name upon, to surname.*

When we think about our own names it might help us understand a little better and provide further clarity. We have a young member of our ecclesia named Luke. Luke's last name is Kuipers. What is Kuipers? That is Luke's surname. What this passage in Hebrews says is that God surnamed himself upon the name of these three men. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He never did it to anyone else ... just these three.

Why? Why did he surname himself upon just these three men? There must be a logical reason why.

Here is the answer: God titles Himself – *Yahweh Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob.* Yahweh's purpose to manifest Himself is revealed in the names and lives of the three patriarchs, hence the title – *"He who will be manifested in the mighty ones of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."* **TOGETHER, THESE THREE MEN FORM A PROPHECY OF YAHWEH'S INTENTION TO BE MANIFESTED.**

These three men are going to be a parable of the whole purpose of God to manifest himself. These names were chosen to represent the memorial of His proposed manifestation in flesh, and to identify his selection of the family through whom such Mighty Ones of the future would be established or revealed. (*Yahweh willing, to be continued next quarter.*)

Joel Thomas

EDITORIAL FLYLEAF

ARKANSAS BIBLE SCHOOL - 2014

We were blessed with a very good week of classes and lectures at the ABS this past June. Many of like-mind, and who are concerned for and seek a preservation of the “old paths” of Bible Truth and of our Unamended Christadelphian spiritual heritage were in attendance.

The young teen-age classes were conducted by brethren John Bouma, Sid Strickland and Bobby Henderson.

The young people/adult classes were conducted by brethren Mac Briley, Lou Locklear and Don Northey. (1) Bro. Briley considered the “*Restoration Prophecies*” as found in Ezekiel 33-37, with special attention given to Ezekiel 37 and its message as a prophecy not belonging to the establishment of the Nation of Israel in 1948 and partial return of the Jews to the Land, but as a prophecy directed towards the “whole house of Israel” and still belonging to the time when it is Christ’s privilege and honor to gather all of Natural Israel together under his protection and reign – as was understood as a necessary fulfillment of the prophecy by our early brethren. (2) Bro. Locklear presented the allegorical lessons of the ministry of Elisha with many thought provoking lessons to consider. One lesson that especially made an impression was in regard to the toxic pottage as found in 2nd Kings 4:38-41. It is recorded there that one of the prophets went out to collect items for a pot of stew during a time of famine, but gathered a “wild vine/gourd” that tainted the pot. The connection was made with the wild vine of apostate teachings that are unsuspectingly mixed in with the Truth, and that in fact poison the whole of life saving Truth. As the prophets dutifully cried out in warning – “there is death in the pot.” (3) Bro. Northey gave consideration to the “Eight Signs of John”, providing very interesting observations for self-examination and a better understanding of the allegories intended by the signs recorded by the Apostle John. In considering the 8th Sign, and Christ’s dialogue with Peter, one of the final thoughts provided was in regard to the Judgment Seat: How will we be able to answer Christ if he simply asks us, “*lovest thou me?*”

Bro. John Manson also gave a series of three evening lectures that considered the natural and spiritual lessons of marriage as revealed in the Scriptures – with careful consideration given to the betrothal period according to the historical Jewish practice of marriage that was the backdrop of Biblical references. Attention was given to the exclusive nature of divorce to the betrothal period; to the principal of spiritual adultery and as applied to the influences such as the UA08 that pull us away from our fidelity to the Truth; and also to the subject of Resurrectional Responsibility and the inappropriateness of anyone other than Christ's betrothed (the Household of Faith) to appear at his Judgment Seat.

All other presentations, both evening and morning, were very well prepared and provided excellent food for rumination for a great while to come.

ARKANSAS BIBLE SCHOOL STATEMENT

In the June issue of The Christadelphian Advocate, the ABS restatement of their fellowship position was printed along with additional commentary by the Advocate Committee. Though the Advocate Committee states that they support *"the ACBS' long standing basis of fellowship"* they then open up concerns and criticisms in regard to *"the Bible school committee's recent interpretations and enforcement of that policy..."*

We wish to here reiterate what was stated in the 1st Quarter S.K., in that we (The Sanctuary-Keeper magazine) fully endorse the ABS policy as it is presently stated as well as its interpretation and enforcement. We believe that the concerns expressed by The Advocate are misplaced and reveal a great deal of misunderstanding in regard to the ABS policy in belief and practice, as well as a continued demonstration of views regarding fellowship that are neither scriptural nor historically supported.

The Advocate provides four specific areas of concern:

- a) *"in effect reduces the working definition of fellowship to participation at the memorial table:"* - Certainly fellowship is not limited to the memorial table alone, but it has always been understood as the most intimate or highest form of fellowship. Ecclesias, gatherings, and bible schools have always set limits to the basis of fellowship around the memorial table and have understood its supreme importance. Please refer to bro. Williams' article in "Life and Works of Thomas Williams" - "Fellowship and the Memorial Service".
- b) *"places a small number of brethren in the position of having influence on other ecclesias' inter-ecclesial fellowship policies and practices, in that the letter is as much about fellowship outside of the ACBS as it is about fellowship at the ACBS."* This statement leaves us scratching our heads, as it doesn't matter if it is a bible school committee or an ecclesial board – what brethren believe and/or do outside of any given ecclesia, gathering or bible school event does matter when such beliefs/activities are not in harmony with the fellowship standards of the place they wish to attend.

BUT, we do not see the ABS committee or any other ecclesias with similar policies trying to tell other ecclesias what to do in regard to fellowship. We simply have a Bible School committee making clear the perimeters of acceptable fellowship at their own location. The choices that ecclesias and individuals make in regard to their beliefs or what or who they choose to tolerate or support is a decision that we all have to make for ourselves. But to not make our bounds of acceptable fellowship to those visiting known, and to not enforce those limits when others attend the worship services that we may host would be nothing short of a dereliction of Scriptural duty. This was known by earlier brethren, and stated repeatedly within the pages of the Christadelphin Advocate during the 1930's as the "Law of the House." No other ecclesias or individuals are being forced to abide by the ABS fellowship position, and if they do not approve of the ABS position or the position of any other Bible Schools or ecclesias – they do not have to attend. They can certainly express their objections or concerns, but no one is forcing them to change their ecclesial policies and practices.

- c) "places the ACBS at risk for being labeled as teaching contamination by association. One might expect that incidents of alleged contamination would require a person to person inquiry to assess; presumptive or group enforcement of this policy may run contrary to just judgment and the instruction, But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." First of all, the phrase "contamination by association" continues to be an incorrect, misapplied and purposefully incendiary phrase that falsely confuses the erroneous idea that by merely being in contact with someone in error that this somehow "contaminates" the other brother; IN CONTRAST with the Scriptural principal of "wishing God-speed" upon those in error, by tolerating or condoning such error. The latter (a sanctioning of error) is a principal not exclusive to 2nd John but found throughout all of Scripture. We understand that the ABS committee has been very diligent in speaking directly to any individuals who there have been concerns with. And though we are all responsible to "examine" ourselves (1st Cor. 15:28) at the memorial table, this command has been dangerously misapplied. Our self-examination is in fact a personal reflection of whether or not we are approaching the memorial table with the correct mindset, a keeping in view or discernment of the "Lord's body" – i.e. a solemn consideration as to the meaning and purpose of Christ's suffering and shed blood. If the context of Paul's address is kept in its proper context, it will be seen that the fleshly feasting of the Corinthians had polluted the true intent of the Memorial Service. It has nothing to do with putting the sole responsibility of worthiness to partake of the emblems upon the individual – especially if the individual may themselves think they are not in error, but scripture and the basis of fellowship of the Ecclesial House indicate otherwise.
- d) "does not offer a path toward resolution of the doctrinal and fellowship issues facing our community, but rather serves to foster isolation and

exclusion.” We only have to provide one scriptural example here (of many) to show how mistaken this statement by the Advocate is. In 1st Cor. 5 – we have the example of the young brother who was committing fornication with his father’s wife. The ecclesia, which had tolerated the action, was commanded to “*purge*” the leaven of this brother’s sin, “*not to keep company*” with the brother and to “*put away...that wicked person*”. Rather than blocking a path to resolution, IT IN FACT OFFERED A PATH TO RESOLUTION. Rather than serving as a means for isolation and exclusion it in fact opened up the way for the brother’s repentance and reinstatement to the ecclesia (2nd Cor. 2:1-8) as he (and the ecclesia at large) was forced to see the grave and serious nature of the matter. The doctrinal and fellowship issues facing our community have been plaguing us for several years now, and they in fact involve matters of fellowship/commonality. When clear boundaries are defended and disfellowship takes place it unmistakably communicates the great seriousness of matters and that such indecision and breach regarding the error (whether in belief or practice) cannot be allowed to continue without a change of course. Merely continuing on, agreeing to disagree, following continuous process, while fellowship and social favorability is allowed to continue solves nothing, but ensures that no resolution will ever come and is not according to the Scriptural model.

Pulling these concerns together, the Advocate goes on to state that – “*We are concerned that the practical effect will be to exclude a number of brothers and sisters from the memorial table at the Bible School, many of which had formerly been welcomed to participate.*” Tragically, when there is a breach in fellowship such is the case. And, we have seen nothing but great pains taken by the ABS and other ecclesias that share a similar stand on fellowship to carefully verify facts. Issues such as the UA08, “*spiritual eternal life now*”, “*present spiritual kingdom now*” with “*Christ as its king now*”, etc. – are in fact critical matters that affect fellowship. Unfortunately, there is not consensus within the Unamended community as to the dangerous nature of these issues and/or the application of fellowship in general. If the warnings were heeded, a sense of urgency embraced, and clear lines enforced, there would maybe be a way to arrest the growing rift and falling away rapidly unfolding before our very eyes.

FUTURISM?

The May Advocate printed an article titled “*The Statement of Faith in Relation to the Dry Bones*”. In it, the contention is made that early brethren, including bro. Robert Roberts, did not view that any national repentance would be necessary by the Jews prior to their Restoration to the Land. The argument is made to support the belief that some/many have, that 1948 marked the end of Israel’s suffering and scattering and that the prophesied restoration (such as what is found in Ezekiel 36 and Ezekiel 37) is currently being fulfilled and that

no more harm will befall the Jewish people or the Zionist nation. Unfortunately confusion is made in not separating early brethren's understanding of the need of a pre-adventual colonization of the Land by a portion of Jewry prior to Christ's Return which requires no national repentance; and the prophecies that speak of Israel's final restoration under the work of Christ and the saints (THE WHOLE HOUSE OF ISRAEL – Not a part). John Thomas, Robert Roberts, Thomas Williams and others understood that there would be a necessity of a pre-adventual colonization of the Jews on "purely political principles" (Elpis Israel, p. 454). But they also understood that such would involve an invasion of the Land by the Gogian Host (Ezek. 38/39; Joel 2 & 3; Zech. 14; Micah 5; Dan. 11:40-45); a cutting off of 2/3rds of the population within the Land of Israel at the hands of the Gogian conquest (Zech. 13:11); the rescue and redemption of a purified "remnant" by Christ and the Saints (Is. 4:2-4; Joel 2:32; Is. 28:5); and then a full gathering of the majority of Jewry which still reside scattered throughout the world, which themselves will have to go through the purifying process of purging "the rebels" before they are allowed to enter into the Land (Ezek. 20:33-39; Zeph. 3:11).

Then and only then do the Jews experience the national resurrection and uniting together as prophesied in places such as Ezekiel 37 – which is prophesied **as the work of Christ at his 2nd coming**. Such a view, as held by early brethren, does not take away from the great joy, excitement and building of our faith that we are to glean from the establishment of the Zionist state in 1948; for such was a necessary and expected precursor of the end times and continual witness to us and the world. (For an understanding of where our early writers stood on the matter we encourage you to peruse "Elpis Israel", pp. 454-461; "The World's Redemption", pp. 98-102, pp. 107-109, pp. 177-179; and "Christendom Astray", which was not quoted in its full context in the Advocate article – pp. 301-304, 1884 edition.)

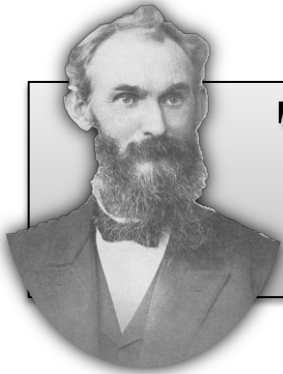
It is not our intent to lay out the entire matter here in our brief editorial remarks (Please refer to bro. Mac Briley's ABS class for a thorough exposition and defense of the matter; and the series of articles "The Final Scattering of Israel" that appear from the 3rd Quarter, 2007 – 3rd Quarter, 2008 S.K.'s). **We recognize that there has been for many years a divided view on the matter of the restoration of Jewry and latter-day scenarios within the Unamended community; and though a source of great frustration on both sides, not a matter of fellowship.** But, the writer of the Advocate article attempts to incorrectly connect his position to the Statement of Faith and to a prophetic view that early brethren did not hold (see Unamended Statement of Faith, articles 20-22.) **So, are we now to make the divergent positions a test of fellowship?:** 1) *that 1948 began the restoration prophecies, the time of Jacob's trouble is past, and the Jews will continue to return to the land and will no longer face catastrophic destruction and will simply have a change of heart to accept their Messiah when Christ returns;* OR 2) *The long held, "traditional" understanding that there would be a pre-adventual colonization of*

the Land on purely “political principles” and that such was not a fulfillment of the “restoration prophecies”, and that the Gogian Host will overrun the Land causing a 2/3rds destruction of the Nation, resulting in their rescue by Christ and the Saints and a turning of the hearts (a “refining”) of a remnant towards their Messiah. And, that the rest of world-wide Jewry would also be brought back, but with the purging of any rebel elements before their final entrance into the Land.

The article also charges that those who view Ezekiel 37 as a prophecy that still belongs to the future as the work of Christ “*have much in common with futurist interpretations of prophecy in which the great events of God’s purpose are compressed into a very short interval at the end of history.*” Such is an unacceptable suggestion, and is a complete wresting of the meaning of “Futurism”. The term is in relation to the false theory of interpreting the Apocalypse, by placing the majority of its prophecies in which it concerns itself in the future. A correct, “*continuous historical*” approach views its prophecies as commencing shortly after 96 A.D. and unfolding throughout the centuries on a continual basis until its terminus at the end of the 1,000 year reign of Christ, with a peak into the 8th millennial day. This does not negate the fact that MANY of the prophecies found in the prophets of old (including the Restoration Prophecies found in Ezek. 33-37) have yet to be fulfilled – such as the return of Christ to the earth; the Resurrection and Judgment; the rescue of Judah from Gogue; their repentance of their former ways and their acceptance of Christ, and their restoration as one kingdom under Christ (Judah and Ephraim) upon the mountains of Israel; subjection of the nations, destruction of the Harlot System and the building of the Temple (dealt with in Ezek. 40-48). If it hasn’t been fulfilled yet, it still belongs to the future – it’s as simple as that; **BUT IT DOES NOT WARRANT THE FALSE AND SLANDEROUS CHARGE OF PROPHETIC “FUTURISM”**. If such is true, then bro. Thomas, bro. Roberts, bro. Williams (and all those who have ever agreed with their understanding) must also be labeled as “Futurists” and considered as embracing egregious error.

FOLLOW UP

Last quarter we made mention of the fact that there was an Unamended Ecclesia whose arranging board had passed a policy to allow/welcome those of the Amended and UA08 camps to participate in fellowship in their meeting as well as the opportunity to speak and teach. All prospective speakers, including those members within the meeting, would be required to sign/abide by a “speaker’s commitment” document that affirmed support of the Unamended Statement of Faith and a requirement to break bread if they were speaking/teaching. As many are already aware, that ecclesia was Mountain Grove in Ontario. An attempt was made by objecting brethren to overturn these two decisions in order to exclude UA08 and Amended members from the memorial table and from speaking – but the motions to overturn the previous decisions of the arranging brethren were struck down by majority ecclesial vote in early June.



THOMAS WILLIAMS ON ISRAEL'S RESTORATION

“**T**HE famous prophecy of Ezek. 37 is so clear upon this subject that it would seem impossible for anyone to mistake it. There is a vision of a valley of dry bones and the question is asked, “Can these bones live?” Then, there is a “shaking among the bones coming to his bone”; there is flesh upon the bones and then they are covered with skin; and breath is breathed into them and they live and stand upon their feet and know that God is the Lord. What is this a vision of? **What does it represent?** The answer is given. “Then he said unto me, son of man [a title pointing forward to Christ and his work – S.K.], These bones are the whole house of Israel” (verse 11). **Not part of the house**, as in the case of the restoration from Babylon which restoration, as we have seen, was only a temporary affair; but is **the whole house of Israel**, the twelve tribes, the house of Jacob, the descendants of his twelve sons ... If there were nothing more said, this would be sufficient to show that divided Israel is yet to be united, that Israel and Judah are to become one, but we are not left to conjecture.” (The World’s Redemption, pp. 99,100) (*moving on to p.178*)

“Following along to chap. 38, Gog, of the land of Magog, is introduced and the part he is to play in the final drama of this world is vividly described; and it is all to take place in the “latter years” and “latter days” (verses 8:16). **That which tempts the cupidity of Gog to overflow the Holy Land is the fact that part of Israel has returned there** – to the “land that is brought back from the sword,” “gathered out of many people,” “dwelling without walls and having



neither bars nor gates.” They “have gotten cattle and goods and dwell in the midst of the land.”

Now that this is partially fulfilled, and is rapidly fulfilling nothing is clearer; and the more enlightened among the Jews see that the tide is swiftly turning in the direction of the preadventual return of the Jews as the prophecies require.” ... “This tide of public sentiment is still flowing and now it is not at all averse to the settlement of the Jews in Palestine **as an independent State.**”[†]

Now, according to prophecy a preadventual colonization should take place of Jews in Palestine. It is partially done [as of 1898 – S.K.] **and is being carried on with great success**, even to the extent of having money ready to offer and tempt the bankrupt Sultan to sell his sovereign right to that part of his domain. The sign to be seen in this is that the very situation which the prophet Ezekiel says is to bring the king of the north to the mountains of Israel is forming and almost formed. The time is then here for the fulfillment of the words, “Prophecy against Gog, thus saith the Lord God; in that day when my people of Israel shall dwell confidently, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou and many people with thee, *** And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel as cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the nations may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes.” Then says, “My fury shall come up in my face,” and He “pleads with Gog” till he is left upon the open field to be buried in the valley of Hamon-Gog. The victor in this great battle is Christ; for when the king of the north “plants the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain,” that Michael, the great prince, is to stand up for the children of Daniel’s people, Israel, and a time of trouble is to follow such as never was; and “many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake” (Dan. 11:45; 12:1,2). **First, then, Israel partially returned to the Holy Land. Second, Russia’s for-a-time successful assault upon them. Third, the sudden and powerful appearance of Christ to destroy the great Philistinian giant with the sling and stone of divine accuracy of aim and force of defeat and destruction.** What is the sequel of the Israelitish sign then? – Christ in the earth again. (The World’s Redemption, pp. 178-179) (Bold added)

[†] Please note that bro. Williams makes a clear distinction between the application of Ezek. 37 as involving the “whole house of Israel” vs. the preadventual return as involving only a “part of Israel”. Bro. Williams wrote this in 1898, and was blessed to see the activities of the Zionists movement, but did not apply Ezek. 37 to what he was seeing taking place, understanding that a preadventual and partial colonization of the Land was first necessary to bring down Gog to overrun the Land, and therefore Christ to appear to destroy them. Early brethren recognized the need for a preadventual return, AND THEIR EXPECTATIONS WERE RIGHT based upon what the Scriptures prophesied. This is why brethren were so thrilled in 1898, 1917 and 1948. Why then do some brethren feel that the establishment of the nation of Israel in 1948 requires some kind of rewrite to long held prophetic understanding? - S.K.