

## *Thoroughly furnished unto ALL good works*

...Not one or two; not like those who perform one set of duties and neglect others: who attend lectures but absent themselves from the breaking of bread; who like to argue about first principles but disrelish exhortation to holiness and prayer: who get up public meetings but forget the ministration of the saints: who like discussion but have no taste for worship: who are interested in the signs of the times, but dull on the law of Christ: who take an interest in the stranger, but forget love to the brethren: who zealously invoke the law and the testimony, but neglect the daily reading of the Scriptures: who teach doctrine, but pass over mercy and the love of God: who are diligent in business, but do not serve the Lord; who cherish theory, but fail in practice; who are alive to correctness of belief, but dead to holiness of life; who contend for the faith, but neglect the works without which faith is dead; who promise liberty to others, while they themselves are servants of corruption. On the other hand, the man of God, furnished unto all good works, will not be found in opposite extremes. He will not exalt "charity" over the gospel: he will not preach "love" where the word of God is corrupted; he will not advocate peace where there is not purity; he will not hold up almsgiving as the way of salvation; he will not inculcate union and friendship with the world on the plea of loving our neighbors as ourselves. For everything there is a time and a place; and the study of the word will teach us the when and the where. There is a right division of the word of truth and a handling of the word of God deceitfully. The man of God, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, will discern instinctively the one and the other, and be enabled to give its right place to every part of the word of the testimony.

Robert Roberts, The Christadelphian, June 1878, pp. 258,259

# THE SANCTUARY-KEEPER



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

## BREXIT

**A CLEAR PROPHETIC SIGNPOST  
HERALDING  
CHRIST'S RETURN**

Also

**WHAT IS IT TO BE "CHRIST-LIKE"?  
HABAKKUK'S PRAYER & PSALM OF  
CONQUEST AND GLORY  
THE BATTLEFIELD OF LIFE  
FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT  
THE RAIMENT OF NEEDLEWORK**



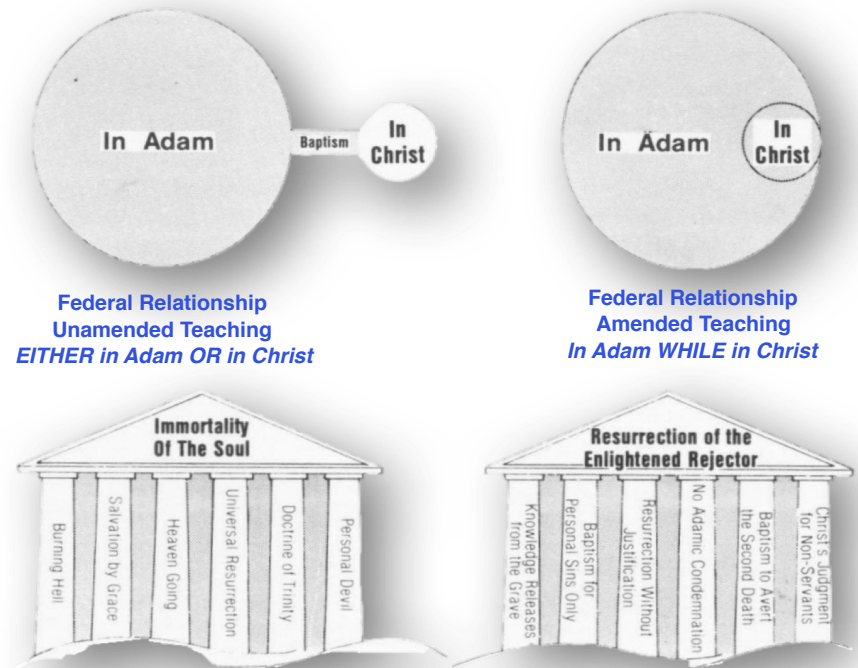
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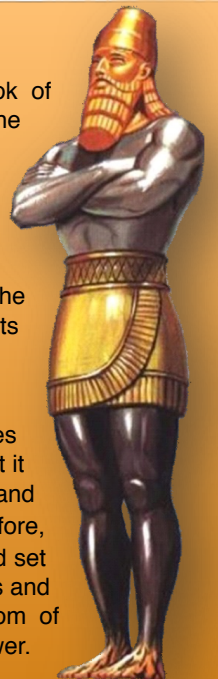


## THE ORIGIN AND EXTENT OF THE KINGDOM OF MEN

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 SANCTUARY - KEEPER

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

*"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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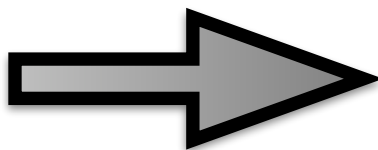
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## **"BREXIT"**



### **A CLEAR PROPHETIC SIGNPOST HERALDING CHRIST'S RETURN**

**O**N June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016, the United Kingdom (UK), headed by Great Britain, voted by referendum to leave the economic and political European Union (EU), thereby sending seismic tremors throughout the whole geopolitical world. For weeks the polls were pointing to a win by the Remain campaign as issues such as economic independence, immigration and terrorism were debated. The forces to keep Britain in the EU had been immense, headed by the leaders of the United States, European Union, and even the current Prime Minister of the UK, David Cameron. Last

minute efforts to keep Britain in included a dire warning by the European Council President Donald Tusk, who said: "As a historian I fear Brexit could be the beginning of the destruction of not only the EU but also Western political

civilization in its entirety". Nonetheless, as we now know, the Leave campaign won the so-called "Brexit" by a margin of approximately 3.5 percentage points or 1.3 million votes and Britain is now on the path to exiting the EU for good.



In the days that followed June 23<sup>rd</sup>, the political heavens were in turmoil as men's hearts failed them for fear of the things coming upon the Earth. Economically,

the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell over 800 points in the following days. The credit ratings of both the UK and EU were downgraded by Standard & Poor's. Politically, the leaders of this world and their media mouthpieces were beside themselves. As an example we'd like to quote from famed (by this world) journalist Christiane Amanpour, who referencing The Economist as an authority, said the following the morning after the Brexit vote came in: *"...this marks a victory... that will imperil the liberal world order that has guaranteed Western prosperity and stability since World War II and this is a huge, huge issue now that this country and the continent and the world is going to have to face... When reality interfaces with Brexit it is going to make Britain certainly in the short term poorer, less innovative, less strong, going as some people say from Great Britain to Little England. So this is a moment of destiny that many people, the overwhelming preponderant of experts, independent analysts and allies of the UK, and the scientists and the academics, the economists, and the business and even the sports people, the overwhelming majority said, 'stay in the EU'. The people wanted to do something different."*

Well, Mrs. Amanpour is right in one way, this is a moment of destiny though not in the way that she thinks. The entire world seemed posed against the Leave campaign and its leaders such as the hated Nigel Farage of the UK Independence Party and yet Leave did prevail against all of the odds that were stacked against them. Buy why? How did this happen? Was it solely the political cunning and courage of Mr. Farage and Mr. Boris Johnson, the former Mayor of London and a prominent Leave leader, that did this or was it something greater? We believe that while these men were certainly used,



hands infinitely greater than theirs were at work shepherding this event which is one of the greatest prophetic signposts of our time. Indeed, “this matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men” (Daniel 4:17). Brethren, simply put, we believe that Brexit is a clear prophetic signpost that Yahweh has given us to herald the return of His Dear Son Jesus Christ. We cannot understate its importance for it may very well be the last sign given to us before the Advent. It is critical then that we understand why these things are happening in the political heavens, what will be the outcome of the Brexit in the long run, and apply these things in our daily lives with the time we have left. We’ll discuss these things in the coming paragraphs.

### ***Tarshish: The Prophets’ Name for Great Britain***

Since the early days of the Christadelphians, Brother John Thomas and other students of the prophetic Word have identified Great Britain and its Commonwealth allies to be the world power that the Bible refers to as “the merchants of Tarshish” of the latter days. In Elpis Israel he stated,

*“The merchandise of the northern Tarshish, and of the eastern, identifies Britain and India with the two countries of that name; and Sheba and Tarshish in the prophecy of Gogue are manifestly indicative of the Lion-power of the Anglo-Indian empire.”* To this we wholeheartedly agree.

Nonetheless, since it is of such critical importance that we understand who the merchants of Tarshish are in relation to the Brexit, we would like to go through some quick verses proving how Christadelphians have come to this conclusion that Britain and Tarshish are indeed one in the same. We will find clues of Tarshish’ identity scattered all throughout the Scriptures and we believe there can only be one positive ID for us to conclude upon.

First of all, Tarshish we know was a trading maritime power often identified by her ships in Biblical times – hence the phrases “*ships of Tarshish*” and “*merchants of Tarshish*” (Isaiah 2:16, 23:1, Ezekiel 27:25). She has been an island power ever since her ancient Gentile ancestry through Japheth (Isaiah 60:9, Genesis 10:4-5). We know that she is located far to the west of Judea for this is where Jonah the Prophet sought to flee from God by ship – and he couldn’t go east (Jonah 1:1-3). So thus far we know that Tarshish was a trading nation of global markets, an island power of Gentile descent that could be searched out by sailing west from the Holy Land. These details really help us focus in on a latter day application.

Perhaps the most important key to unlocking the identity of Tarshish is found in Ezekiel 27:12, which says, “*Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all kinds of riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs.*” In ancient times, Britain was long known to the classical world as a source of tin particularly, as well as silver, gold, iron and lead. The ancient Greek historian Herodotus, who lived in the fifth century B.C., described how tin came from the Cassiterides, so-called “lands of tin”, that were located beyond Gaul (France). It has been said that the Phoenicians, whom we view as the ancient merchants of Tarshish, managed the trade of the tin as perhaps



a carefully guarded secret. They called the islands “Baratanac”, which again means “land of tin”. See a common theme emerging? Later on in history, the Romans called the land “Britannia”, once again meaning the “*land of tin*”, and we’ve read this was a reason if not THE reason that the Romans invaded the island nation’s Celtic tribes in 43 AD. We refer you to the included map of industrial mining in Roman Britain that highlights all of the metals mentioned in Ezekiel 27:12.

Coincidence? We think not.

This is the detail that Brother Thomas keyed in on in Elpis Israel and I believe it should alleviate all doubts on the subject – as he said, “the merchandise... identifies Britain...”. For these reasons and the prophetic points to be looked at next, we believe with certainty that Great Britain is indeed the Tarshish of the Bible.

## ***The Future Role of Tarshish and Her Young Lion Allies***

Having identified Tarshish as Great Britain, we now ask what does the Bible have to say about her future? Turning over to Ezekiel 38, we see a plan in place for the great day of God Almighty, called Armageddon in Revelation 16:16, where Tarshish has a clear part to play. The early part of the chapter describes an alliance of nations led by Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal. While this is another study in and of itself, the



overwhelming evidence points to Russia as the Autocrat in charge of this mighty army. Allied with Gog (Russia) will be Magog (Germany-led Eastern Europe), Persia (Iran), Ethiopia, Libya, Gomer (France-led Western Europe), and Togarmah (Armenia, Georgia and Turkey). This Russia-led Gogian confederacy equates to the Ten Toed Image Confederacy of Daniel 2, King of the North in Daniel 11, the Assyrian of Micah 5 and is the subject of many other latter day prophecies throughout the Scriptures. We remember the words of Adonai Yahweh in Ezekiel 38:17: "Thus saith the Lord GOD; Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them?"

So what will the Gogian Autocrat do – and how does this relate to Tarshish? **Ezekiel 38:8-13** gives the answer:

*"After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them. Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee. Thus saith the Lord GOD; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought: And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land. Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?"*

We see in this series of verses that when Gog comes down against the land of Israel, there will be opposing forces who at the very least question the



Gogian intent and oppose his conquests. Sheba and Dedan refer to southern and northern Saudi Arabia, respectively, a study for another day. We'd like to key in, though, on the latter words of verse 13 which speak of *"merchants of Tarshish with all the young lions thereof"*. Here we see the British power in clear opposition to the Russo-European coalition of countries who will come against Israel to take a spoil and a prey in the latter days. They will stand in protest along with their young lions, which we believe to be the current and former nations of the British Commonwealth. For centuries, Britain has been referred to pictorially, both officially and in satire, as the Old Lion (just as America is referred to as an Eagle or Russia as a Bear). Historically, we also know that countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa and India have been referred to as the young lions. A quick glance at Britain's World War I recruitment posters shows this well-defined relationship.

While the Lion of Tarshish will most certainly be the primary opposition to the Gogian Confederacy when he comes down as described in Ezekiel 38 and Daniel 11, they will not be allowed to interfere with his mission. We know from Zechariah 13 and 14 that Armageddon's primary purpose is a last and final humbling of the Jews in order to turn their hearts to the Messiah as recorded in Zechariah 13:8 and 14:1-2: "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein." "Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city." Indeed, Gog "shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain" (from Daniel 11:45), accomplishing what he feels is the great victory while bringing rebellious Judah to her knees.

Nonetheless, to finish the quote from Daniel 11:45, *"he shall come to his end, and none shall help him."* But how will this happen? How will the all-time greatest military confederacy of man be defeated on the mountains of Israel? It is important to note at this time that it will be Yahweh alone, manifest through Jesus and the Saints, that will save the Jews as they endure the time of Jacob's trouble – not Tarshish! Though well-intended perhaps in their opposition to Gog, Tarshish will not be allowed to stand in the way. Many Brethren have pondered the verse in Psalm 48:7 as a possible answer to how the Tarshish/King of the South Nations will be humbled: *"Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind"*. Only Yahweh knows how these things will play out.

Whatever be the case, we can be assured that it is Yahweh alone that will save His people through the mighty arm of Christ and the Saints. Thus we



read in the prophets that *"...it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, that my fury shall come up in my face. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel... Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am Yahweh"* (Ezekiel 38:18-19,23). As for Israel, *"...I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call upon my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, Yahweh is my God"* (Zechariah 13:9). And indeed, at last, Yahweh's name will be called upon and His Son recognized as the Messiah, the King of the Jews. *"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn"* (Zechariah 12:10). *"And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends"* (Zechariah 13:6). What amazing days we hope to be a part of, a day of great mourning which is the key step to national resurrection and the reestablishment of the Kingdom to Israel.

But what of Tarshish? Gog will have been destroyed on the mountains of Israel, but as Brother Thomas says in Elpis Israel, *"the lion of Tarshish survives the destruction of the Image."* Indeed this is Biblical Truth. The Old Lion and the Young Lions thereof will certainly have to be humbled from their wickedness of the past, no doubt. They will be a part of those nations put down before Yahweh as the Kingdom of God grows like a mustard seed and fills the whole earth in fulfillment of Daniel 2:44. After being humbled, however, Tarshish and her allies indeed have a glorious destiny under the iron rod of the saints. Perhaps due to their kindnesses to the Jewish people and the Nation of Israel through critical junctures of history from the Balfour Declaration to Armageddon, the merchants of Tarshish will play a key role in the future age. It is worth your time to explore this theme as highlighted by some of the following verses: *"The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him"* (Psalm 72:10-11). *"Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought"*

(Isaiah 60:9-11). And so we see that Britain does indeed have a destiny as foretold by the prophets of old. It matters not that the world cannot see because the Elohim have put Britain on a clear path to the day that, once humbled by Christ and the Saints, they will fulfill their twofold role of bringing the wealth of the Gentiles to Jerusalem and, perhaps most importantly, bringing the diaspora Jews back to their ancestral homeland.

## ***Coming Full Circle to Brexit***

Having looked at Britain's future roles both during and after Armageddon, we now see that it was impossible for them to remain as part of the European Union. They will be the head of the King of the South's allies that stand in direct opposition to the King of the North's Ten-Toed Image when it stands in the Holy Land at Armageddon. This puts the United Kingdom in direct opposition then to mainland Europe which will make up the lion-share of Russia's allies. Brexit then should be of no surprise any of us. It has shocked the world, it has shocked the European Union, and it has shocked many in the United Kingdom for that matter. But it had to happen and the time was now.

Moving forward, the world remains uncertain about Britain's future – we remember Mrs. Amanpour's deriding comments about "little England". Every day now we hear about the demise of the UK. The press cannot stop reporting on any so-called negative they can find. The pound currency is low. Scotland and Northern Ireland want to succeed. (As a side note, these areas don't seem to be a part of the historical Tarshish heartland as shown on the mining map). We are truly hearing it all, "doom and gloom". However, remember Brethren, the Elohim are in charge. If you are in any doubt of that, look at how Yahweh has used Britain in the past. Do you remember what Brother Thomas and other pioneering Christadelphians looked for? Take a look at these words from Elpis Israel: "I know not whether the men, who at present contrive the foreign policy of Britain, entertain the idea of assuming the sovereignty of the Holy Land, and of promoting its colonization by the Jews; their present intentions, however, are of no importance one way or the other; because they will be compelled, by events soon to happen, to do what, under existing circumstances, heaven and earth combined could not move them to attempt... The finger of God has indicated a course to be pursued by Britain which cannot be evaded, and which her counsellors will not only be willing, but eager, to adopt when the crisis comes upon them."

We know of course that this quote, based upon the prophetic word, found its fulfillment as Britain put forth the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and was heavily involved in the various key events which led to the "pre-adventual colonization" of Israel as a State in 1948. However, we can also clearly see that the finger of God is still upon Britain. With the Brexit they have been



compelled to do what the current political heavens and earth would not move them to do. We remember that even the President of the United States, for example, tried to interfere in the UK referendum by actively campaigning against the move. Thankfully, Yahweh is in control, not the basest of men.

When we first put this article together, the immediate future remained cloudy. We saw many of the political luminaries of Britain backing out of the limelight. Prime Minister David Cameron was resigning his position to be effective this coming fall. The opposing Labour Party's leadership was in turmoil. Nigel Farage stepped down from leadership of the UKIP party after accomplishing his life goal in politics, no doubt guided as a tool of the Almighty, to get Britain out of the EU. And Leave leader Boris Johnson shocked the nation as he declined running for the headship of the ruling

Conservative party which would have made him the new Prime Minister. It seemed as if we would not see any major shockwaves until the fall. However, since initially writing this, we have seen a quick turn of events that has propelled Theresa May to become the next Prime Minister. While God's choosing of her has a purpose, no doubt, it is up for us to wait and see. One thing is clear, however. Though she was initially for the Remain crowd, Mrs. May came out recently to say, "Brexit is Brexit and we're going to make a success of it. There will be no attempts to



remain inside the EU. There will be no attempts to rejoin it by the backdoor, no second referendum. The country voted to leave the European Union and as Prime Minister I will make sure that we leave the European Union."

Interestingly, she is already making good on her promises, promoting three key Brexiteers to important cabinet positions. Boris Johnson - whose political future had seemed past at the beginning of the week - is now Foreign Minister (equivalent to the U.S. Secretary of State), a direct slap in the face to Europe. Liam Fox is now international trade secretary. And finally, David Davis became the new "Brexit Minister" that will take charge of negotiating Britain's exit from the European Union. No doubt Yahweh will be using all three men as well as their new boss to make sure His prophetic will comes to pass. It is up to us to watch and wait.

Despite the rough stretch that they are in, for the short-term, Britain and her Commonwealth of Young Lions will rise again to become the great world power that they once were. Even through the biased media cloud, we are

beginning to see tokens of this. Key headlines in the weeks following Brexit ran like this:

- The world queues up to win trade deals with Britain after Brexit
- Australia to team up with New Zealand on Brexit fallout
- New Zealand offers UK top trade team to help in post-Brexit talks
- Brexit boosts 'CANZUK' replacement for European Union

For those who were wondering, CANZUK is a growing movement for strengthening ties between Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the UK. Can we not see the hand of the Elohim in this? It bears repeating that "The finger of God has indicated a course to be pursued by Britain which cannot be evaded, and which her counsellors will not only be willing, but eager, to adopt when the crisis comes upon them." History is repeating itself thanks be to Yahweh's hand.

## ***Conclusion***

Brethren, as we titled this article, Brexit is a clear prophetic signpost heralding Christ's return. Students of Yahweh's "sure word of prophecy" had long used the "light that shineth in a dark place" (2 Peter 2:19) to see this day coming, yearn for it and pray for it. Truly *"the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much"* (James 5:16). The morning of June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016 will long be remembered by many Brethren who woke up to this most exciting news. It was a wonderful day of strength for the remnant of the women's seed.

What now? Brethren, we are living on the cusp. There is not a single prophecy that must be fulfilled before the return of Jesus Christ to the Earth. Brexit may well be the last sure prophetic signpost that we see before our call to the Judgment Seat. Are we ready? Yahweh is giving His Children an opportunity to wake up! Just as He gave warnings to the pre-Noahic generation by that preacher of righteousness, just as Jeremiah foretold of coming judgment from Babylon, just as Christ and the Apostles warned of the Roman legions in A.D. 70, so too our generation has been given a sign to hearken the Master's return. Indeed, all of us must ask ourselves, are we listening? Are we watching? Are we preparing? We should be proclaiming as the Bride exclaims in the Song of Solomon 2:8, "The voice of my beloved! Behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills", which represent the nations of the Earth. And if we are not on track, now is the time to set the course aright as the Lord is "...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

No matter our personal struggles, no matter our hardships in this evil world, no matter how hard the fight is to maintain the Old Paths of Truth in a Laodicean Age, we must press forward, *"redeeming the time, because the days are evil"* (Ephesians 5:16). Soon will come the promised rest for the

faithful. *“There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God” (Hebrews 4:9). So “therefore, my beloved brethren” use Brexit (among other prophetic signposts) as motivation in your daily lives so that you will be found “stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58). “He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus” (Revelation 22:20).*

*David Bryan*

The Lord Jesus Christ at his appearing in his kingdom finds Judah inhabiting the land. Not all the Jews, but a goodly number of them. Having gained the victory of Armageddon, he convenes the elders of the people, which as their deliverer he has a right to do. Thus “thus look upon him whom they have pierced” (Zech. 12:10); “and one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thy hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends” (Zech. 13:6). The effect of this information upon the people, is to cause a national lamentation. They will then discover that he, to whom they owe their deliverance from Gogue is Jesus of Nazareth, whom their fathers crucified. They will therefore “mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and will be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. In that day, there will be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddo” (Zech. 12:10-14; Rev. 1:7). Two-thirds of the people will have been cut off by the war against Gogue, and the third which will have passed through a fiery ordeal. It will have been a refining process in which they will have been refined like silver, and tried as gold is tried. Thus prepared, “a spirit of grace and of supplications” will be poured upon them, and they will call on the name of the Lord, and He will hear them” (Zech. 13:9), and open for them a fountain for sin and for uncleanness (ver. 1). He will say, “It is My people and they shall say, The Lord (even Jesus) is my God” (ver. 9). Thus will Judah be grafted again into their own olive, and brought to acknowledge Jesus as King of the Jews, and to confess that “he is Lord to the glory of God the Father.” *Elpis Israel, p. 460*

# WHAT IS IT TO BE “CHRIST-LIKE”?

1 Peter 2:21 - *“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.”*



**W**E understand that the continued development and application of the Christ-character in both belief and practice in our lives is the utmost requirement if we are to be found pleasing to our Heavenly Father. Exhortations and articles have been necessarily abundant over the years that call Brethren to remembrance of the standard which we are to embrace and emulate. But, we see a critical reason to revisit this subject as it is one that has been increasingly misunderstood and misapplied, to the tragic detriment of the Brotherhood in these Last Days.

Instead of the example of Christ being set up as a source of absolute strength and certainty, it is often twisted and used to represent something quite different from this Scriptural reality in order to promote a spirit of humanism, to project weakness and uncertainty, and as a weapon, to try to silence those who are in fact contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Not only does this do grave disservice to the Truth of Christ's character, it misrepresents the character of the Father Himself – a character that was perfectly represented and manifested by His Son.

It leaves us scratching our heads when “being Christ-like” is described in a way that is totally foreign to the Scriptures we read. When the Truth is proclaimed and defended, we often hear its' enemies lob attacks at faithful brethren for not being “Christ-like”; that they are being “mean-spirited”, “too harsh”, or “too unloving”. In many cases, such attacks work in silencing brethren, much in the same way that we see those of the world shrink in fear when they are called “racists”, “homophobic”,



“sexists”, or “haters”. It is quite the effective political maneuver by those walking in the way of error to silence the voices of Truth by defining their enemy through such labels. None of us wish to be perceived as “un-Christ-like” by friend or enemy. At the same time, is it not a matter of life or death to truly understand what it means to be Christ-like as opposed to how the enemies of the Truth define it?

### ***What being “Christ-like” is not:***

#### **It is not effeminate or passive.**

Yes, Jesus came as a Lamb at his first appearance in regard to the lack of military conquest, and his voluntary submission as the Covenant Sacrifice. But, Christ demonstrated a bold and assertive nature in his ministry that is nothing short of remarkable in the power and strength which it demonstrated; challenging the Jewish leadership with relentless opposition to their hypocrisy and falsehood, teaching to the people in penetrating and uncompromising terms, and above all, overcoming the diabolos nature. As was commanded of Jeremiah and Ezekiel in their prophesying to the people, we read prophetically of Christ in Isaiah 50:7 - *“For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.”*

#### **It is not tolerant of sin or sinners.**

We have heard it claimed that Christ was very inclusive in his fellowship practices and quite tolerant in his approach to men. It might be referenced that he sat down to eat with publicans and sinners (Mat. 9:11-13) - but we must realize they came to him. It should be clear to us that he never excused their position, and he made it clear to the Pharisees who found this distasteful that such individuals were “sick” and that he had *“not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”* Repentance was necessary, not coexistence and mutual respect - an agreeing to disagree while sinful behavior continued. To the woman caught in adultery (under questionable circumstances) Christ did not excuse anything, but simply stated *“neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.”* Christ was most certainly merciful, but not tolerant - giving the opportunity for repentance, with repentance as the requirement. Christ makes the exclusive nature of association with him very clear in Mat. 12:48 - *“Who is my mother? and who is my brethren? And stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.”* And we remember from 1st John 1, that fellowship with God and the Son is contingent upon our *“walking in the light”*. Christ also tells in quite blunt terms that *“narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life.”* Tolerant? Inclusive? We think not.

#### **It does not strive for peace and unity at all costs.**

Quite the opposite is true. Actually, we are called to the promulgation, defense and application of the things concerning the Kingdom of God at all costs. Luke 12:51-53 - *“Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather*

*division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.”* It is not that division is desired. When we refuse to compromise the Doctrines and Laws of God, division with those who are willing to compromise or who stand completely on the other side is inevitable and quite necessary. We could compromise, but then that would make us as wrong as those with whom we are compromising.

**It is not Political Correctness.**

We have never heard brethren openly promote “political correctness”, but we have seen it practiced at great length - *an obscuring of language, a beating around the bush, or simply not coming out and speaking the Truth directly out of fear of offending others.* It is true that our words are to be, as Christ commanded, “seasoned with salt”. We know that Solomon informed us that “*a soft answer turneth away wrath.*” There is a difference between acting and speaking out in the heat of fleshly wrath (e.g. wounded pride or ignorance), as opposed to acting upon the passion of jealousy for Yahweh’s Honor and Truth with an agape motive towards the welfare of our Brethren. We know that Christ “reviled not”, which is to say that he did not vilify or abuse others as was done to him. But Christ was in fact very direct and forceful in his language. He did not throw out personal insults, nor manifest a spirit of contention (2<sup>nd</sup> Tim. 2:24) but spoke the truth when he called the Jewish leaders “*hypocrites*”, “*blind leaders of the blind*”, and “*whited sepulchers*”. How did he react to his own disciples when they displayed spiritual weakness? Christ declared to them on more than one occasion in supreme disappointment - “*o ye of little of faith*”. He didn’t pat them on the back and say all was well - he was extremely direct in his assessment. Why? Their lives (OUR lives) depended on not being told what they wanted to hear, but what they needed to hear – since failures in faith in fact lead to death. A brother, long before our time, would often state - “*speak the Truth and let the chips fall where they may*”.

We do no one any favors when we refuse to call a spade a spade, as it were. And, we do no one any favors when we obfuscate our displeasure towards falsehood. Yes, as instructed by Paul in 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:24, “*the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient.*” There is a proper approach to our brethren that is to be void of fleshly fierceness, but such does not negate the fact that matters should be set forth plainly, without patronizing or ambiguity. No one should have to read between the lines as to what we are trying to say, teach or warn.

It is true that our culture, and therefore Christadelphia, has been greatly softened in recent generations towards frank speech and disagreement. It is no wonder then that more Christadelphians shy away from the forthright language of our early brethren and run and hide from disagreement and controversy. We recently read a news article that talks about how the younger generation, particularly females, have been

dubbed “generation snowflake” due to the fact that they emotionally melt-down in the face of disagreement and conflict. Have we become “snowflakes”? Did the apostles shrink in emotional despair at the chastisement they received from their Master? We must be as living stones, built up as a spiritual house enduring the polishing process we must undergo (1st Peter 2:5).

**It does not mean that everyone will and should like us.**

Though it is true that early on in Christ's life and early on in his ministry he grew in favor with both God and man. But when Christ reached the full force of his ministry the favor with men soon faded. If we are truly Christ-like we will find that to certain individuals or groups we will in fact be highly offensive due to the Truth that we proclaim. John 15:18 - *“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”*

**It does not mean we always must assume the best of everyone's motives.**

We do not want to promote a spirit of cynicism among brethren nor of suspicion and paranoia, but simply a spirit of spiritual discernment. Someone may be sincere, someone may have the best of motives, but wrong is wrong and right is right. Too often have we heard brethren put way too much trust in someone based upon how “sincere” they appear, or on past reputation and friendship when clearly their beliefs or actions do not match the Scriptural standard. Christ commanded us to not judge according to our eyes, but to judge righteous judgment.

When the Israelites first saw Jesus' miracles we are told that many *“believed in His name”* (John 2:24, 25). For the average individual, the experience of having so many accept our message would probably blind us with excitement, optimism and a bit of pride about the prospects of success and the influence that we are having. BUT, we are told that *“Jesus did not commit (entrust) Himself unto them, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.”* Christ understood the flesh nature therefore he was not blinded by the apparently sincere intentions of those that accepted him in the emotions of the moment. Christ was quite measured in his discernment of the situation despite the joyful acceptance that he received, knowing that one day soon most would reject him.

We only use this as an example to show that we are never to blindly be at ease with a situation or the motives behind circumstances, especially when there are warning signs to be discerned. The spirit of Christ is not one of foolish naiveté, nor a spiritually reckless deferment to giving “the benefit of the doubt”.

## ***What is it to be Christ-like?***

**Christ had the highest level of agape love towards God and his brethren.**

He reaffirmed and demonstrated the two commandments in which hang all the Law and the Prophets. 1<sup>st</sup> - *“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.”* 2<sup>nd</sup> *“And*

*the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”* (Matt. 22:37-39). Let us keep both of these and all they imply faithfully, but at the same time let us not reverse the order of these two commands - putting man first and God second. In perfect obedience to his Father's will he overcame the sin nature even unto the death of the stake. Along with this, Christ stated (John 15:13) - *“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”* What are we willing to do for the spiritual benefit of each other? What sacrifices of time and energy are we willing to make - first to God and then for our brethren?

### **Connected to this is “compassion”.**

This word is associated with Christ numerous times in the Gospel accounts. In the original Greek it means *to be moved in one's bowels, to have love and pity*. It is interesting to us that the humanistic world speaks much of compassion for fellow men, but it tends to be very shallow and often extremely self-serving in nature, resulting in more harm than good, albeit in the name of “kindness”. To have compassion is to have a deep and almost physical reaction...something that we can feel...for the welfare of our brethren. But compassion cannot be restricted to just a feeling. Sometimes it is a voice of empathy or encouragement, other times it is a helping hand of labor or financial assistance, and at other times it is a strong admonition. Compassion isn't always telling our brethren what they want to hear, but, as we stated earlier, what they need to hear. As Christ followed up his sense of compassion with sensible action for the benefit of his followers, so too must we towards others for natural concerns when need be, but more importantly for their spiritual welfare.

Christ's sense of compassion was so profound that he fed the multitudes, he healed the sick and raised the dead – but always with a sense of the longer view of the hope of salvation in mind. So strong and thorough was his desire and compassion toward Israel that when he looked over Jerusalem and saw a people that would reject and crucify him, he wept. Leading up to his crucifixion he asked his Father that they might be forgiven of their rejection of him.

In 1st Pet. 3:8 we read - *“Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous (kind).”*

### **Meekness**

Christ proclaimed in his Sermon on the Mount - *“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.”* There is nothing that Christ commanded or stated that he himself did not perfectly manifest. To demonstrate meekness is to have a profound degree of personal humility and patience - a disinterest in the preservation and advancement of self, and a high degree of self control in the face of great pressure. But meekness must be considered in relation to the next point...

### **Zeal.**

Like Moses who was recorded as being *“very meek, above all the men which were on the face of the earth”* (Num. 12:), Christ exhibited, as did also his father David, an



unquenchable zeal and boldness to the honor of the Father’s Name. The man who offered himself up, without resistance or defense to the shame and torture of false accusation, beatings and crucifixion, is the same man that made whips, and drove out the money-changers who had made merchandise out of God’s House of worship. During his ministry he did not defend himself against those who cursed him, but he did in fact condemn those who blasphemed the power of the Holy Spirit by which he carried out great acts.

This present life and work in the Lord is not about us, so let the insults, the accusations, the slander fall by the wayside. But let us not stand idly by when the Honor of God’s Truth is insulted, accused and slandered. We read in Psalm 119:139 - *“My zeal hath consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten thy words.”* When Christ drove out the money changers, it was then (John 2:17) that his disciples remembered the words of Ps. 69:17 - *“The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up”* (literally to devour or consume). Are we consumed by a zeal or jealousy for God, His ways, and His Plan and Purpose? But we must carefully make sure, that unlike the Israelites (Rom. 10:2), that our zeal is according to a knowledge of the Truth and not blind emotion.

### **Absolute devotion.**

Christ was absolutely devoted to His Father. By extension and to show our devotion to God as well, we must be devoted to the Son. This is a principle that is continually emphasized through-out the Scriptures, but especially in the Gospel account. Going back to Matthew 10 and starting in the 37th verse we read - *“He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of Me. And he that taketh not his stake, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it.”* This is single mindedness towards one goal - ***“seek ye first the Kingdom of God”*** - to the exclusion of worldly ambition and material gain.

### **Supreme Faith.**

While Christ upbraided his disciples for their lack of faith, he exhibited perfect faith. Jesus was the perfect anti-type of the faith displayed by Abraham and his Son Isaac, knowing that Isaac would have been raised from the dead if the sacrifice was carried through. Christ also had the faith that he would be brought back again from the dead on the 3rd day and exalted to the right hand of his Father. Faith does not exclude us, just as it did not exclude Christ, from sorrow in regard to present circumstances, but it gives us the strength to move forward in the carrying out of God’s will for the joy set before us. Without faith, it is impossible to please God.

## **Conclusion**

In understanding and imitating the Character of Christ, we have to remember that we must see Him through the lens of the Divine Standard, which is usually completely at odds with mans’ perceptions - *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are*

*your ways my ways, saith the LORD*" (Isa. 55:8). Let us not fall prey to the humanistic mold in which Christ is often portrayed. The standard is extraordinarily high. But what is the alternative for not striving after that standard? Christ commands us in Matt. 5:48 - *"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."* Such is to be "complete" in regard to mental and moral character. We have the perfect example in Christ, and it is our work to do all that we can to reach this condition of completeness, though we know that even if we do all that we can, we will still fall short. Therefore, we must rely and trust in the grace of God as we work to emulate the perfect and beautiful character of our Lord and Master.

*"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked"* (1<sup>st</sup> John 2:6).

*A Thomas*


## *The Beauty of Christ*

The saint has every reason to love Christ. He is in all respects beautiful in himself to such as have learnt the first and the great commandment to "love (and fear) the Lord with all the soul, and mind and strength." By any other class his beauty is not appreciated. His beauty is not such as would answer to the world's ideal - moral, artistic, or religious. It is not the beauty of a statue or of a "gentleman born." Christ is more than kind; he is holy. He is more than forgiving; he is just, and with wickedness angry. He is more than gentle; he is exacting of supreme affection. He is more than good; he is zealous of the Father. He is more than courteous, refined, and cultivated; he is the impartial judge according to each man's work, regarding not the persons of men, and speaking flattery to none. He is more than man; he is God manifest. The Lamb of God, he is yet the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. The healing Sun of Righteousness, he is yet the treader of the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. A right acquaintance with him will embrace all the features of his beauty, and will lead to the imitation of each of them in our own characters: for he is the example set us to copy. The omission of any causes defect. Some try to imitate his kindness while forgetting his zeal. Others copy his severity while failing to remember his gentleness. Others extol his placability and charity while overlooking his righteousness and jealousy of the Father's honour.

*Robert Roberts, "The Beauty of Christ", Seasons of Comfort,  
Vol. 1, pp. 240, 241*

# HABAKKUK'S PRAYER & PSALM OF CONQUEST AND GLORY

## *Part 2 of 2*



A question must be posed as we move into the final thoughts of this wonderful prophecy. It surrounds the *Day of the LORD* and the gathering of all nations to Jerusalem. Why is it significant that Jew and Gentile (all nations of the earth as recorded in Joel) be gathered at Jerusalem for the “Day of the LORD”? It is because almost 2,000 years ago Jew and Gentile were gathered in Jerusalem to put to death Jesus the Christ. Very soon that same Jesus will appear a second time to vindicate himself and his Father’s name to all nations of the earth - both Jew and Gentile at the very same place. The city that Yahweh has chosen for His names’ sake even Jerusalem.

Continuing to verse 15 of the third chapter we see the phrase “*Thou didst walk through the sea with thine horses*”. In Micah 4:3 we find a more literal translation of the opening phrase which reads, “*He shall rebuke strong nations afar off.*” The interpretation is that Christ will not wait to be attacked but will resume the offensive for the destruction of Gog and the heathen confederacy gathered with him and for the redemption of God’s people. Sea is representative of nations as we see in Revelation 17:15, “*And he saith unto me, The waters, which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations and tongues.*” In Jeremiah 47:2 we read where waters signify an army, “*Thus saith the LORD; Behold, waters rise up out of the north, and shall be an overflowing flood, and shall overflow the land, and all that is therein; the city, and them that dwell therein: then the men shall cry, and all the inhabitants of the land shall howl.*”

Brother Thomas in Eureka Vol 4, Page 188 in discussing the symbolic type of Sea, quotes Homer,

*“SEA, clear and serene, denotes an orderly collection of people, in a quiet and peaceable state. Sea, troubled and tumultuous, signifies a collection of men in motion and war. Either way, the waters signifying people, and the sea being a collection of waters (all nations gathered to Jerusalem-TN), the sea becomes the symbol of people, gathered into one body politic, kingdom or jurisdiction, or united in one design.” Christ and the saints will march through the seas in anger, in war, in battle array (horses) to destroy the Gogian invader and all the Gentile nations gathered with him (the great heap of waters). The Hebrew word for heap is chomer derived from a root signifying to boil up, to ferment. The margin renders it mud. The idea is that of roaring, foaming waves: a virulent, Gentile opposition to Christ which refuse the yoke of obedience. Such antagonists are beyond rehabilitation. Their end is utter destruction and death by the mighty hand of Yahweh’s anointed; Christ as the manifestation of “He who shall be armies”.*



## **Conclusion**

The prophet Habakkuk has experienced a full development of character and his example is what the Scriptures cry out to us to emulate. There may not be a more well defined, more concise or pertinent template of how a true believer must work through frustration, confusion, and/or emotional despair to ascend to an understanding, a conviction and resolve to finally obtain peace and even joy in the midst of trial than that laid out before us in the book of Habakkuk.

Consider the effect of the vision and the transformation of the prophet. Habakkuk’s belly trembled and rottenness entered into his bones as he first heard the vision and despaired at the judgment upon his people by that wicked nation Babylon. But through understanding, the development of patience and faith, he finds a new resolve amidst the troubling times and days of wickedness: he finds rejoicing and joy (vs 18). Moses trembled at the



awesomeness and glory of Yahweh and we might include at His judgments and prophecies against His wicked nation. We remember that because of Israel's wickedness Yahweh had intended to destroy them and start anew through Moses. This judgment and demonstrative anger would surely cause any (i.e. Moses) to tremble at the pronouncement and the voice of the Angel of Yahweh's presence. Prophets were made to experience visions through all their senses. They were made to see, hear, smell, touch, taste and feel the visions delivered to them. All non-prophets struggle to identify with the intensity these men experienced when receiving a vision from the Creator of Heaven and Earth. Prophets like Daniel and John were made to experience their own death. Habakkuk trembled and had been sickened by the prophecy about to befall his people, but a transformation now changed his disposition. No more complaining, no more wallowing in despair and hopelessness. He now quietly waited, resolving to continue "building the wall" for himself personally (The lesson of Nehemiah: *"so we built the wall...for the people had a mind to work."* [Neh 4:6]. *"...every one with one of his hands wrought in the work and with the other hand held a weapon."* vs 17). Salvation after all is an individual matter which requires personal perseverance. Habakkuk has given us this template. *"The just shall live by his faith"*.

In the final verses of the book, Habakkuk reveals to us this strength of character and new found resolve gained through understanding - only by going into the Sanctuary in prayer to Yahweh. The RSV renders the latter part of verse 16 to mean, *"I will quietly wait for the day of trouble to come upon people who invade us."* Habakkuk could do this because he saw the day of trouble as just a prelude to better things. The lesson is for us as well, especially in these very last days. We must wait for that day just as Yahweh does in Isa 30:18. It is a day appointed, set in stone, it will not tarry.

In verse 17 we have a listing of trees, all indigenous to the land of Israel. More specifically the trees and animals listed here are symbols of Israel in her various states. In Joel 1:7 wicked Israel is symbolized by a fig tree, *"barked, bare and cast away"*. In Ezekiel chapter 15 Israel is typed as a vine tree fit only to be cast into the fire. In Romans 11:17 Israel is typed as the unbelieving branches cut off from the olive tree whose *"first fruit and root being holy"* (The faithful Fathers: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David). In Jeremiah 4:3, Israel is represented by dry, "fallow" ground full of thorns and waterless (without the Word). And in Ezekiel chapter 34 Israel is typed as a diseased and scattered flock (absent of shepherds) devoured by the beasts (Gentile nations) of the earth.

Verse 18 is the consummation of Habakkuk's transformation, rejoicing and joy. It is the true peace which our Master outlines in contrast to the empty, fleeting and deceptive peace of the world. It is the joy set before us. It is the

ascending of the mind to the things unseen and transcending above the tribulation and despair that is inherent in the kingdoms of men in this temporal, mortal body. We rejoice because of the great and precious promises given to us. A calling out of so many families of the earth to know the Truth and its' author, Yahweh, *"blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all the things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee!"* (Neh 9:5-6). We rejoice for that glorious Kingdom 'day' and we look up, anxiously awaiting the return of our Lord and for our ever near redemption.

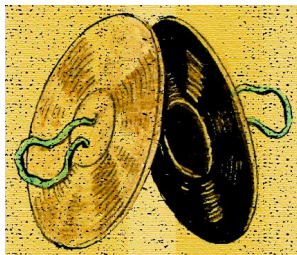
Habakkuk's prophecy closes with *"Yahweh Adonai is my strength"*. It is not of himself. It would not come in the events shortly to unfold; it would only come through faith and hope in the things promised but still yet unseen. The Apostle Paul struggled through the similar emotions, but his response was the same, *"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me"* (2 Cor 12:9). "Hinds feet" resemble strength, to leap or spring forth, sure footedness, and are used in a context of rising or standing again (Anastasis). Habakkuk's prayer and song is for the elevation of Israel in the Age to Come.

Lastly, Habakkuk leaves instructions *"To my Chief singer on my stringed instruments"*. The prophecy of Habakkuk put to song. *"Moreover David and the captains of the host separated to the service of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals..."* (1 Chron 25:1). The singers in the temple service *"prophesied"* in their singing. The chief singer led the song, and so guided the other singers. The Habakkuk Expositor provides the following comments on the last phrase of verse 19, "Some revisions of the Septuagint translation render: *"To the Giver of Victory."* Other versions make the subscription part of the Psalm. The Septuagint renders: *"He maketh me to mount upon high places, that I may conquer by his song."* The title *#The Chief Singer* points forward to the Giver of Victory, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will lead in the singing of this song, in that he will enact the prophecy that it proclaims. The Psalm, therefore, is dedicated to the One who will come and for whom the prophet was exhorted to *"wait"* (Ch. 2:3). The Hebrew for *"stringed instrument"* is *neginoth*. It signifies smittings, and relates primarily to a percussion instrument which implies a smiting down. The word is used in the





Psalms (Ps 4,6,54,61,67,76) where they appear as superscriptions, but actually should be shown as subscriptions to the previous psalms). "Smiting" is appropriate for such a psalm, because the Mighty One from Teman will smite down his enemies. The psalm reveals the sharp, strong, decisive notes of action, by which the wicked will be overthrown and their power destroyed." Men sometimes marvel at the musical genius of great classical composers such as Beethoven and Bach, and the pieces that elicit the emotions and feelings of war and triumph, but they all pale in comparison to the Divine composer and the saintly orchestra that will sing (and perform) this prophecy with Habakkuk in the glorious Age to come.



Our duty (the same as Habakkuk's) is to wait for him! Let the future be a reality for us. Let the Truth we profess to hold become the only living, motivating force which governs all of our life. Let us go into the Sanctuary with belief, with faith and petition our heavenly Father in prayer-constantly. *"Soon the Sun of Righteousness will rise into the political heavens, and the darkness of night will be driven away."*

*Tom Northey*

## PROMISE OF THE COMING MESSIAH

The basic message of the prophet is: "The just shall live by his faith" (Ch. 2:4). These words are a complete summary of the doctrine of the Atonement, and, indeed of all religion and revelation. They are associated with the one who will come to establish it. The prophet was told: "Though it (the vision) tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." The Septuagint renders this: "Though he should tarry, wait for him; for he will surely come, and will not tarry." The words in this form are cited by Paul and applied to Christ (Heb. 10:37), suggesting that the original Hebrew conformed thereto. Christ, as the Word made flesh, is the personification of the vision given to the prophet (cp. Hab. 3:3). The One who will come is the Mighty One from Teman: Christ in glory; and the prophet was exhorted to wait for the glorious consummation he will effect. - The Book of Habakkuk, Expositor, p. 5

# THE BATTLEFIELD OF LIFE

I have entitled my remarks— “The Battlefield of Life”. This is a shortened phrase from a statement that I recently heard. *“We are all fighting a war on the battlefield of life.”* I believe that this is a very good summary of our probationary lives. As we consider our individual trials, tribulations and temptations and also the trials that we are facing within the Unamended community, I think that all of us would agree that we are in a constant state of preparing for and fighting these battles. At times, I am sure that all of us may experience battle fatigue and battle weariness.



However, we must endure. We must stay strong. We must never quit. We must be like Paul and press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Col 3:14). We can never desert our high and holy calling and our position in which we have been placed on the battlefield of life. We must not leave the battle to others. True brethren of Christ are not traitors or deserters nor do we ever go AWOL.

It has been said that the only way to achieve peace is to win the war. There is an article on the web entitled *“The Military Objective of a War Is to Win the Peace That Follows”*. How true this is even in the spiritual sense. It is the peace with Yahweh that should be our primary objective. We can never achieve peace with Yahweh until we win the battle of the flesh. We are commanded in 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 6:12 to fight the good fight of faith. If we are successful in this battle of faith versus flesh, we find these words of comfort in



Romans 5:1 – *“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”.*

The Scriptures use many types of the natural ways of the warfare of man to teach some very special spiritual lessons. We ask our readers to look up these verses and become very familiar with these scriptures - 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 4:7; 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:3-4; and 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 1:18. Let us also read the verses in Ephesians 6:11-18 which describes the whole armor of God.

Although the Scriptures teach us that we cannot participate in actual physical wars, we are not pacifists as defined by modern terminology. There will come a time in the not so distant future where the faithful brethren will participate with Christ in cleansing the nations of the evil that is so rampant in today's generations. We all know what Psalms 149:5-9 states - There will be a designated time in the future when the immortalized brethren will carry out the judgments of God upon unrepentant and unbelieving nations. This will be a time of trouble like there never was (Daniel 12:1). Many nations and individuals will experience the wrath of the Almighty God and will experience the outcome of the warfare mentioned in Revelation 19:11-16.

Yes, brethren, there will be literal wars to be fought if we are part of the multitudinous saints that will follow the Captain of Yahweh's armies, even Jesus the Christ. Our participation in those wars depends on how successful that we are in winning the wars on our battlefield of life.

Although these latter days of Gentile times have brought unfathomable doctrinal errors into the Brotherhood, these are not the primary enemies and nor the primary battles that we must face. Individually, we all face the battle against our own nature and the evil and wicked ways of our own flesh. Each day that we arise from our night's rest, we face a new and different battle. It doesn't matter what we overcame yesterday or the past battles that we fought and won or lost. As Paul states in Romans 7:18 – *“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me: but how to perform that which is good I find not”.* The works of the flesh are and will always be the banner of the enemy that we must never let pull us away from our divinely commanded position on these battlefields of life. There are times when we may face battle field situations that are brought about by the weaknesses or the frailties of the flesh that may appear to be absolutely unmanageable. One of the greatest generals found in the pages of Jewish history is Joshua. He was commanded to always be strong and courageous. This should be our resolve also. When these situations arise when we are at our wit's end on how to overcome our thoughts, and our actions and are close to succumbing to the trials of our flesh, let us remember the words of Deuteronomy 20:1 – *“When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of*

*them: for the LORD thy God is with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.”* This is a good verse to remember when we believe that we are overburdened and have no place to turn. The wise man tells us to *“trust in the Lord with all our heart and lean not to our own understanding”* (Proverbs 3:5). We understand that God is our refuge in times of trials and tribulations and temptations.

- **Deuteronomy 33:27** - *“The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.”*
- **Psalms 46:1** - *“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”*
- **Psalms 57:1** - *“Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be over past.”*

There are battles to be fought and a war to be won on these battlefields against the flesh. Our daily studies will reveal that there are divinely appointed principles that should be followed in order to win these battles and to achieve the desired result – peace with Yahweh and with Him who is the coming King of Peace (Hebrews 7:2) ruling from the city of peace – Jerusalem.

Let us look at some of these principles that have been detailed in the word of God that one must follow prior to being successful in these battlefields of life.

## **1. Define the Objective**

What is our goal? What are we aiming for? What do we want to accomplish? Is it friendship with the world? Is it close personal associations with all people that we come into contact with? Is it promotion of self? None of these things should ever be our objective in the battle of flesh versus faith.

The true soldiers in the army of God’s Captain of Salvation will have only one goal – *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God* (Matthew 6:33). We should follow this commandment in Ecclesiastes 12:13 - *Fear God and keep His commandments* and we must recognize that this is our only duty that we will be responsible for in God’s army of prospective saints. We should have the attitude of King David – this was all his hope and desire – 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 23:5.

## **2. Unity of Command**

This principle indicates that all the soldiers are under one commander. We have one Captain (Hebrews 2:10). He is our utmost example in every battle that we enter into. He faced the same trials and tribulations as all of His followers. He overcame all. He was totally successful in His war against His flesh and thus became the divinely appointed leader of the hosts of Yahweh. He believed in the objective of the battle of the flesh versus faith that we

previously discussed and he truly looked forward to the joy that would be achieved by overcoming. He fought the same battles that we fight. He won every one of His battles of the flesh. He knows our infirmities, what makes us weak and what helps us to be strong. He knows what is needed in order that we too may be victorious over the sin power that continues to throw fiery darts against us. He understands that we all have chinks in our armor of faith. He knows how easy it is to allow our weapons to get rusty through lack of continual usage.

We are told that we cannot serve two masters – Matthew 6:24 – *“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.”* So we must choose to follow the Commander appointed by Yahweh.

Of course, every military commander in the battlefields is ultimately answerable to a higher level of authority. And the Commander of the Divine army and His followers must be at one in thought, deed, and word with this higher authority. Read John 17:20-23. Unity of command also means unity of purpose. All those on the correct side of these battles must be unified in purpose, desires and character, to the best of their ability and have a correct understanding of the objective.

### **3. Identify the Enemy**

Romans 7:23 – *“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.”* Who is the enemy in the battle of the flesh versus faith? It is not our brother, our wife, our husband, our children, our boss or any other associate that we may encounter. Nathan’s words to King David after David’s sin against Uriah and Bathsheba should always hit home to each and every one of us – *“Thou art the man”* (II Samuel 12:7). We have no one to blame for our sinful actions except ourselves. No one can make us sin. We sin because of our own sinful thoughts, our own sinful deeds. No one can make us mad, no one can make us jealous, no one can make us manifest a prideful countenance, and no one can make us use words of human anger or hurt against our loved ones. No one can make us murmur or complain about what may come our way in the battlefields of life. No one can make us bemoan our perceived lack of riches or blessings or the trials that we face anew every day of our lives. We and we alone can control our attitude and our actions, our words and our thoughts. As has been said - Each of us is our own worst enemy.

### **4. Take the Offensive**

Once we can truly identify the enemy in this battle of the flesh versus faith, which is our own selves, we must be on the offensive to not let this enemy overcome us. Ephesians 6: 13-18 teaches us that there is one offensive

weapon at our disposal in these battles of life. Verse 17 tells us to take the sword of the spirit which is the word of God. As our Commander did, we can only overcome the origins of the sinful works of the flesh which start with a sinful thought with a “Thus saith the Lord”. There is nothing that we face that is not addressed in God’s Word. We are encouraged by both positive examples of faithful brethren and negative warnings of admonitions against those who have succumbed to the wily and crafty ways of the flesh. When we use this spiritual sword of God’s Word to destroy the works of our flesh, we become good examples to other soldiers in this war. We can offer words of advice to others so that they too may destroy the works of their flesh. However, we cannot make them use the Spiritual sword as the Commander has commanded. They have to learn to use it in their own battles. But, we must always encourage them at all times. No soldier in Christ is expected to fight their battle in isolation. There are others who can help us and strengthen us, but most importantly, we must remember Yahweh’s consoling words – *“I will not fail thee nor forsake thee”*. This promise is mentioned at least 4 times – see Deuteronomy 31:6; Deuteronomy 31:8; Joshua 1:5 and I Chronicles 28:20

In order to take the offensive against the ways of our flesh, we must recognize our own personal sins. Sin recognition is a very difficult battlefield tactic for each of us. If we can correctly identify our past sins, then through the offensive weapon of God’s word, we may be able to overcome the sin before it becomes a part of our character, our way of life. When we examine ourselves and the outcome of the battles that we have entered in the past with the ways of our flesh, we should learn that we have two choices to make. We can succumb to the same battlefield pressures that may have caused us to lose the historical battle or we can create a new battle plan. The new battle plan should include alternative actions of attack or maybe a need to draw on additional sources of strength to help us through the ways of the enemy of the flesh. Some of these alternative actions of attack may include a greater resolve to watch the statements that drop out of our mouth, for we know how hard it is to tame the tongue – James 3:5-10. These alternative actions may include a plan to refrain from certain actions that are enjoyable to the flesh, but not spiritually profitable; they may include a plan to not let things personally offend us; they may include a plan to refuse to murmur or complain. They may include a plan to strengthen our resolve to remain separate from all appearances of evil (1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:22). How many times do we get into arguments/disagreements that are absolutely meaningless? What is our plan to overcome these? One way is to ask ourselves if the outcome will make a difference in our standing in front of our Master. Will the outcome affect our walk in a year from now, a month from now? Does it really matter?

## **5. Optimize Your Strengths**

The only way that we can become strong enough to overcome the enemy on this battlefield of life is through the daily application of the Word of God. This means that we have to be familiar and have a very good knowledge of God's Word. Paul told Timothy to *"Study to shew thyself approved of God"* (2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:15). We must have maximum effort in this utilization of the Spirit Word. There can be no slacking of action, resolve, or determination. We must be *"steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord"* (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:58). We must have continual prayer to help us to be strengthened. We must never forsake others that can help us to remain strong in this battle. We must never embrace those whose only desire is to lead us away from a correct battlefield position against the forces of sin. Paul stated in Philippians 4:13 – *"I can do all things through Christ, which strengthen me."* All of our mental and physical forces must be focused on the destruction of this great enemy of all mankind – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.

## **6. Continuity of Action**

Success against this common enemy of all mankind can only be achieved through constant and continual actions that are designed to win the battle against the flesh. Brethren, the enemy of the flesh is so powerful that we cannot afford to take a little break from the war. Notice the divine principle in these verses:

- **John 8:31** - *"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed"*
- **John 15:9** - *"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love."*
- **Romans 2:7** - *"To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life"*
- **Romans 11:22** - *"Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off."*
- **Galatians 6:9** - *"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."*

We can never let our guard down in this battle. Weariness, age, frustration, loneliness, infirmities cannot distract us. Romans 8:38-39 reads – *"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

## 7. **Self-Discipline and Endurance**

The definition of self-discipline is *“the ability to control one's feelings and overcome one's weaknesses; the ability to pursue what one thinks is right despite temptations to abandon it.”* The discipline that is required to endure and persevere through our daily battles is described in 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:3-4 – *“Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier”*. This type of discipline requires a keen mind, a meek character, a steady walk, self-sacrifice, an unwavering trust in God, the development of a keen eye of faith, and ears that hear what the Spirit saith. The discipline that we must develop should have one goal – to keep God's commandments. Those who can manifest this quality have no need for anything other than to become and to remain obedient to his Lord's commands. These faithful soldiers of Jesus will not entangle themselves with any affairs of the world which will take them away from a complete and total allegiance to the Commander of their army. This type of self-discipline requires steadfastness (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:58) and dedication of self to God and a sacrifice of our own will. That is the only way that we can return a small degree of love back to the Father. We probably wonder how we ever can have the right discipline to use the available scriptural weapons at our disposal. How can I overcome? The message to the seven ecclesias in Revelation describes the very beautiful blessings that we can attain if we overcome. But, how can I remain faithful and diligent in carrying out the responsibilities that Yahweh expects of me? There are many answers to this question in God's Word. As a start, I would suggest that each of us turn to and read and fully absorb the words of our Master in Matthew 5-7 – ***“The Sermon On The Mount”***. I think these words describe the character of the man Jesus Christ. We should learn to apply and to think of each and every one of these verses in our daily lives and in our individual battles against the flesh.

## 8. **Simplicity of the Plan**

The last, but not least, spiritual principle that we need to remember is that the overall plan must be simple and easy for all to understand. What happens when there is misunderstanding of the goals and objectives of the plan to win the battle and ultimately the war? There is confusion, brethren stumbling over each other, going different ways on the battlefield of life. Confusion on the battlefield will usually result in death to the participants in the war. There can only be one way to navigate the field mines on this battlefield of life. It is the way defined by Yahweh and manifested by His Son. Following the straight and narrow way that leads to the victory of eternal life limits our options, does it not? Following the simple and perfect example of our Saviour will prevent



the ultimate loss of eternal life. Following our Master removes the worldly blockages from our path.

If we are confused on how to fight the battles on the battlefield of life, then we become part of that group of people that Paul identified in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 11:3 – *“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ”*. He was worried that there would be some who would forget the simple plan of redemption and salvation that was manifested in Jesus Christ. These individuals would develop corrupt minds. They would be eager to follow other ways, other paths, and other commanders. To keep the battlefield plans simple, there must be continual communication and association with the Master plan on how to defeat the enemy of the flesh. Daily readings and constant association with others who are trying to fight the same battle of flesh versus faith are ways to keep the plan simple. Malachi 3:16 teaches us that those who fear Yahweh and speak often one to another of His plan will be written in Yahweh’s book of remembrance. Although the plan is simple, it requires absolute dedication and self-sacrifice and as we experience every day, the execution of the plan on an individual basis can sometimes be difficult. Winning the battles against our flesh requires a daily and hourly self-examination. It requires that we constantly compare ourselves to the Commander of Yahweh’s armies. He is our standard that we must look to. To win the battle against the flesh requires us to put aside all things, all attitudes, and all thoughts that may take us away from Christ.

In closing, let us remember the words of Paul in the book of Philippians.

- **Philippians 3:13-14** – *“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”*
- **Philippians 4:13** - *“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”*

*B Henderson*

“We cannot make the world quiet about us; its noise cannot be hushed; we must always hear its clatter and strife. We cannot find anywhere in the world a quiet place to live in where we shall be undisturbed ourselves. We cannot make people around us so loving and gentle that we shall never have anything harsh, uncongenial or unkindly to offend us. The quietness must be in us, in our own heart. Nothing else will give it but the peace of God.” Advocate, May, 1901

# FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT



Sept. 1

My Dear Mother:

Your letters are very encouraging to me, and I hope you will continue to write often. I am beginning to feel very lonely at times. No one seems to sympathize with me in my search for truth and I imagine that some look upon me with suspicion as though I was a person to be avoided. Even my dear wife does not seem the same towards me as formerly. I think she considers me on the downward road and mourns in secret. Her eyes often look as if she had been weeping.

I attended the Baptist church yesterday and heard a sermon on baptism. It was proved clearly enough that immersion is the only true form of baptism. According to that I am not a baptized man. The preacher endeavored to show that baptism is essential and necessary if we wish to be an obedient Christian. It all looks reasonable enough but does not seem to harmonize with Baptist practice. They are very inconsistent, for they refuse to fellowship with us at the Lord's table on the ground that we have not been baptized; yet they unite with us in holding revival services, call us brethren, and divide the converts between the two churches according to the individual preferences of the converts. I have been told that in the early history of our church, Methodist preachers refused to immerse their converts, on the ground that immersion was not baptism, but now they give them their choice of modes. I believe they changed in order to keep their converts from joining the Baptist churches.

Sept. 5

My Dear Mother:

I had another brief conversation with our pastor yesterday. I wanted to know what he would say as to the mode and necessity of baptism. He says the mode makes no difference. Indeed he goes further than other ministers and does not believe in baptism at all. He spoke something like this:

"I am something of a Quaker in regard to baptism. I believe that water baptism was superseded by baptism of the Holy Spirit. At the same time I am willing to

administer baptism to any one who thinks it necessary and by any mode that may be desired.”

Who can tell what to believe when the leaders of the people diverge so much from each other in their teachings?

Mr. O’Neil has loaned me his Catholic catechism, and I find a statement therein that immersion was the ancient form of baptism, and was practiced even by Rome for the first 1200 years of the Christian era. According to that, sprinkling is a Roman Catholic invention and is not Christian baptism at all.

You cannot imagine how distressed I feel over my situation. Sometimes when at my work I get to thinking deeply over these things and I feel so troubled that the cold sweat breaks out all over my body and I feel almost too sick to work. What am I to think of my former religious experience? I certainly felt at the time of my conversion that I had received the witness of the Spirit that I was a child of God. Must I now say that it was all a delusion: that thousands of other people are also under a delusion; and that when I was rejoicing with my Methodist friends at the prayer meetings I was in reality an “alien from the commonwealth of Israel, a stranger from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world?” “O, my God, I cry unto thee in the daytime but thou hearest not, and in the night seasons and am not silent!” Sometimes I am almost tempted to think there is no God, and that all religion is a humbug, but that is because of the unsettled state of my mind and the terrible conflict of opinions which rends my soul asunder. May the good God send me speedy relief and place my feet upon the solid rock of truth.

Sept. 14

My Dear Mother:

A revival is now in progress at our church, under the leadership of Mr. Buckland, an evangelist. He is a young man but has had quite a checkered career according to his own confession. At a meeting “for men only” he told the story of his life, and it seems that he has been guilty of almost every known crime. He has been a drunkard, thief, blackleg, libertine, gambler, and wife-beater. He now claims to be wholly sanctified and perfectly pure in heart and life. He labors very hard to make converts, and many are nightly going forward for prayers. I attended his meeting last night. Near the close of the meeting the evangelist invited all the young men who were church members to come forward and fill the space near the altar in order to encourage the unconverted to come when the invitation should be extended to them. I went forward mechanically with the others and stood leaning against the side of the pulpit and watched the scene. How strange and unreal it all seemed to me! The evangelist shouting, “Come! Come! Come to Jesus!” The people singing “Almost Persuaded,” men praying and everybody excited. A few months ago I would have become as excited as any of them, but now I stood calmly surveying the scene. What do these people know of the gospel of the kingdom, I thought? Not a word about the glorious truths of the Bible; nothing but frantic excitement and frenzied prayers. I felt absolutely a stranger and alone among them. I can never be as I was once. The

spell is broken and I must have something more substantial than mere feeling upon which to build my hopes. I must follow the truth of God even if it proves my former experience to be a humbug and delusion. Yea, if it leads me into trials and tribulations, even into the valley of the shadow of death. May God help me.

Sept. 18

My Dear Mother:

I have finished reading the "problem of Life", and I am now thoroughly satisfied that I am only a poor, mortal son of Adam, under sentence to return to the dust of the earth. The popular doctrine of the immortality of the soul originated in the lie of the serpent in the garden of Eden, "Ye shall not surely die." Immortality is a gift of God through Jesus Christ. If we are not in Christ we have no hope of a future life; in other words, we shall perish like the beasts of the field. How blind I must have been not to have seen this truth which is taught so plainly in the bible. How frail we are! "All flesh is grass;" our life is but a "vapor that appeareth for a little while then vanisheth away." The churches are all astray; even my formerly beloved Methodism is founded upon delusion. How wonderfully the words of Paul have been fulfilled: "For this cause God shall send upon them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie." The doctrine of endless misery in hell I now gladly repudiate as a horrible nightmare. I never felt right upon that doctrine anyway, but I could not see any escape from it if men were immortal and died in their sins; for I knew they could not go to heaven, and there was no place for them but hell, although I did not believe in literal fire.

I now see that Mr. Evans was also right about the devil. God would not create an immortal, fire-proof devil and let him loose to prey on suffering humanity. No, the only devil we have to contend with is "sin in the flesh" in its various forms of manifestation, although that is bad enough. It seems good to feel settled in regard to some points at any rate. There are a few other matters that require clearing up and then I shall know what to do. I do not see that it will do me any good to attend church any more. I would better stay at home and search the Scriptures than spend my time listening to "things wherein there is no profit." I hope you will read carefully the copy of the "Problem of Life" I sent you and let me know what you think of it. I wanted to read some of it to my wife but she cut me short and said she did not wish to hear it. If she could have her own way she would not allow a Christadelphian book in the house. It seems to me that if she would only listen a little while she would accept the truth, but she cases her ears and refuses to hear. I cannot understand why she should do so. It does not seem in harmony with her natural disposition.

Sept. 25

My Dear Mother:

Evangelist Buckland called to see me last evening. It seems that my wife invited him to come and try to bring me back into the old way. I asked him first to show me a passage where heaven is promised to the righteous. He quoted, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." I replied by quoting another verse in the same connection, "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth." I

said, "if the kingdom of heaven means heaven itself there is a manifest contradiction here, for we cannot inherit heaven and earth at the same time. When we understand that the kingdom of heaven is really a divine kingdom which is to be established on the earth at the appearance of Christ we can see there is no contradiction. If we want the truth we must make the Bible harmonize with itself, not see one passage against another." He then brought one or two more passages but they were not to the point. I next challenged the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and he thought he had seen the phrase somewhere in the Bible but failed to find it after spending some time looking through the Concordance in the back part of his Bible. I then quoted several passages concerning the state of the dead, showing that they are unconscious and therefore totally incapable of feeling joy or sorrow. he did not seem to know what to say on this point except to cite the case of the rich man and Lazarus. I showed him the impossibility of understanding that narrative literally; that it is a parable and is now admitted to be such by many "orthodox" authorities. I said we must not interpret a parable in such a way that it is made to contradict plain statements in the Word of God. I was intending to ask him some more questions but he was evidently not satisfied with the way our interview was being conducted and suddenly changed his tactics.

"My dear brother," said he, "what does all this amount to? What does it matter whether our inheritance is in heaven or in the earth so long as we shall be with Jesus. I do not care whether I go to heaven when I die or sleep unconsciously in the grave until he comes so long as I have the blessed assurance in my soul that I am his and he is mine. My dear brother, do you feel that you are saved? Do you feel the witness of the Spirit that you have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, and are a child of God through Christ.?"

"No," I replied, rather bluntly, "I do not, but I am trying to rid myself of the vain traditions of my fathers, and to find the truth which I must believe and obey in order to obtain the great salvation promised in the Scriptures."

"Let us pray!" he exclaimed suddenly, and down he went upon his knees and prayed reverently that the Holy Spirit might come down and lead me into the light. The Spirit did not come, however, and I hardly expected it would. I simply felt disgusted at the shallowness of the man. What kind of a man is he to teach people the truth when the Bible is almost a sealed book to him? There was a time when his fervency would have thrilled me into a state of ecstasy but it has no such effect on me now. After rising to his feet the evangelist departed hastily so as to be in time for a meeting.

Oct. 1

My Dear Mother:

I received your letter and was glad to hear that you liked the "Problem of Life." I have just finished reading another wonderful little book by the same author, entitled "The Great Salvation." It was written originally for the free distribution at the World's Fair at Chicago, but has since been enlarged and many thousands have been sold. It sets forth the principal doctrines of the Bible with such clearness and

simplicity that the dullest seeker for the truth may easily comprehend the plan of salvation. I must confess that all my objections to Christadelphian teachings have not disappeared, and I firmly believe they have the truth which was once delivered unto the saints, but which has been buried for centuries under the rubbish of Papal and Protestant traditions. How strange it all seems. My mind has undergone a complete revolution. How utterly foolish and unscriptural the teachings of Christendom appear to me now.

A dark cloud of ignorance and superstition hangs over the nations of the earth, yet they call this “the enlightened nineteenth century.” How glad I am that I have at last found the truth! I feel now that I could go through fire and water if necessary to enter the glorious kingdom which God hath promised to them that love Him. I feel that I do love Him, He has been so merciful in bringing the gospel to my attention and opening my eyes to see the truth. I hope my dear wife will soon look into these things so that we may be “heirs together of the grace of life.” I will send you a copy of the “Great Salvation” and I hope you will soon be able to rejoice with me in the possession of the “pearl of great price.”

I will now prepare to render the required act of obedience which shall unite me to Christ. First, I must tell my wife of my decision, and I hope she will not take it too hard as her health is not very good and trouble of any kind might make it worse. Then I shall write to Mr. Wilson, withdrawing from the church and giving my reasons. Then I shall be ready to ask for baptism at the hands of the Christadelphians. I know how my friends will feel about it but I am ready to become as the “filth and offscouring of the world” for the truth’s sake.

*W.H. Clough*, The Christadelphian Advocate, May 1901

## “THINGS HARD TO BE UNDERSTOOD”

### The Effect of Adam’s Justification

**Question:** *Seeing that Adam was justified before his children were born, what proof is there that they also did not share in the mercy of God? Must they be visited for their father’s sin when he himself was pardoned before they were born?*

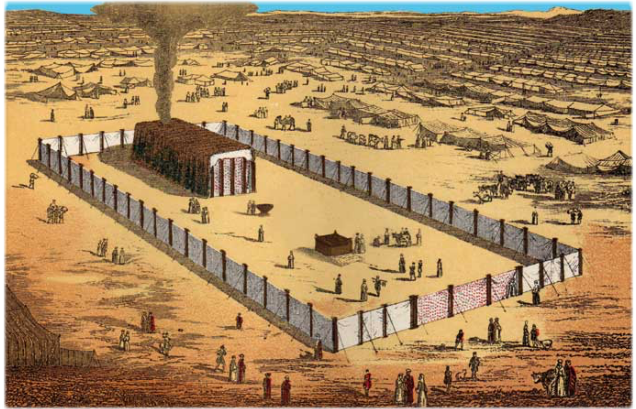
**Answer:** The proof asked for is to be found in the fact that each descendant of Adam is born with “sin in the flesh.” On this account every Jewish babe defiled its mother at birth - “a man child” for “seven days,” and a “a maid child” for “two weeks”; and from this defilement the mother could not be freed without “a sin offering” (Lev. 12: 1,5,8). If the justification of which Adam was the recipient in Eden extended to his posterity, none of them would be born with “sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3). SK, 1894, pp. 23,24



# THE RAIMENT OF NEEDLEWORK

**W**e have for a long time been impressed with the craftsmanship that was employed in the making, the fabricating, and the shaping of all the pieces that went into the building of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. And consider this - it was a wilderness. There were no foundries, there were no state of the art computerized milling machines, no quilting machines, and definitely no precision tools with which to fashion the furniture or the winged Cherubim. They had no digital tools to check their work. They were artisans whose hands were guided by the Eternal Creator, and whose minds and heart were fully set on the task they were called upon to perform.

We wish to consider one aspect of that work, and draw and appreciate the type therein presented.



In our time, embroidery is a hobby that is enjoyed by some. In days gone by it was a greatly valued and extensively used trade. In the thirteenth century, for one to become an embroiderer, an eight year apprenticeship was required.

Throughout history embroidery has been widely used. Chairs and pillows featured embroidery, and frequently are valued possessions. Tapestries are displayed in museums around the world and many apostate churches have

them hanging prominently for decorations. When we examine the Word of God we find that Yahweh used embroidery as part of that system of things by which He was to instruct His people.

## ***Bezaleel and Aholiab***

The two craftsman charged with leading the work of the tabernacle was Bezaleel and Aholiab. We are first introduced to them in Exodus 31 and again in Exodus 38 in relation to the work of embroidery.

*“And Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the LORD commanded Moses. And with him was Aholiab, son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, an engraver, and a cunning workman, and an embroiderer in blue, and in purple, and in scarlet, and in fine linen.”*

Bezaleel's name means - *“in the shadow of El”*. He was the son of Uri (“light”), the son of Hur (“white linen” or righteousness), and of the tribe of Judah (“praise”). To be “son of” can signify to be “filled with” - so we see that Bezaleel was one *who abided in the shadow of El and was filled with light and righteousness, and counted among those who praise Yahweh.*

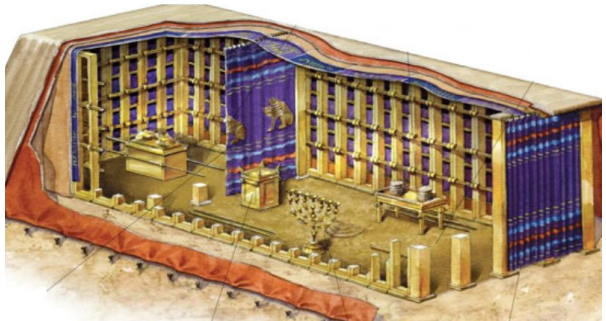
We are told in Ex. 38:23 that Aholiab's area of expertise was that of engraving and embroidery. The name Aholiab carries the meaning of *“a Father's tent.”* Naturally speaking this would seem appropriate for one connected to textiles and embroidery (Ex. 38:23). Spiritually speaking, this takes our mind to the Lord Jesus Christ in whom the Word was made flesh and tabernacled among us. He was the true *“Tent of his Father”*, the dwelling place of Yahweh in the midst of the Jewish nation, the antitypical Aholiab. He was son of Ahisamach, whose name carries the meaning of *“My brother's support”*. Similarly, Christ is the brother upon whose support we are dependent. Aholiab was of the tribe of Dan. The name Dan carries the meaning of “judgment, and so collectively the meanings attached to these names tells us it is only by our Lord's upholding and supporting us that we will be able to stand before the judgment seat.

Under Bezaleel's lead, Aholiab played a prominent part in the building of the tabernacle. Being of the tribe of Dan, the whole of his work was based upon judgment, and together with Bezaleel, Aholiab was given the task of teaching. The spirit of teaching was put into the heart of Bezaleel:

Exo 35:34 - *“And he hath put in his heart that he may teach, both he, and Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, even of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work.”*

They were appointed to oversee the work, and to teach. The word teach is from a Hebrew word that carries the meaning of *to shoot an arrow, or to guide, direct, or to instruct in a right way or course of action, just as one aims an arrow towards a target*. It was therefore the responsibility of these men to instruct and direct the other craftsmen in the workmanship of the tabernacle, that it might be a fit dwelling place for Israel's God. It was the responsibility of Aholiab to do and direct those who made the gate into the court, and the door into the holy place.

While the expressions change when we read of the vail that was to be hung between the holy place and the most holy place; the fine needlework that was needed to produce the work that bore the colors of blue, purple and scarlet, in the form of



cherubim was done by the craftsmen under the direction of Bezaleel and Aholiab. Thus Yahweh used embroidery in those parts of the tabernacle which mapped out the way into the holiest of all, which we are to understand typifies the immortal state unto which we all hope to aspire.



Their names are not directly connected to the making of the priestly attire but we read of the workmanship that went into the Coat, the Girdle of the Coat and the Robe. The coat was a tunic, or long inner garment, of fine linen, of woven work, and embroidered. The Girdle of the Coat, made similar to the Coat but a sash with which the Coat was held closed.

### ***The development of Israel***

The prophet Ezekiel speaks of embroidery in relation to Yahweh's development of the nation of Israel. Israel was found cast out in a field and Yahweh passed by and He chose her to bring her to maturity. Ezekiel 16:10 - *"I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk."* He chose her when there was nothing desirable about her and gave her the means of

becoming an honor and a glory before all nations of the earth. He gave her this privileged position as His own national bride covered with embroidered work when He constituted her a nation at Sinai.

Had the people applied their minds to his commandments and statutes they would have manifested a wisdom and a beauty of character that would have put them above all other nations. Tragically, Israel misused the privileges that were heaped upon her.

Ezekiel 16:17 - *"Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest to thyself images of men, and didst commit whoredom with them, And tookest thy broidered garments, and coveredst them: and thou hast set mine oil and mine incense before them."*

Israel is thus shown as an adulteress who took all the gifts that her legal husband had bestowed upon her and used them to further her own adultery. The embroidered wedding garment that had been given to her by Yahweh, she took to cover the idols she had made to herself.

Ezekiel uses the same word for cover as is used in Psalm 32, verse 1 - *"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered"*. The phrase, **"whose sin is covered"** literally means as it were "covered over;" that is, concealed or hidden; or, in other words, so covered that it will not appear. This is the idea in the Hebrew word which is commonly used to denote the atonement, - כפר, *kâphar* - meaning "to cover over;" then, to overlook, to forgive; Gen 6:14; Psa 65:3; Psa 78:38; Dan 9:24. The original word here, however, is different - כסה *kâsâh* - though meaning the same - "to cover." The idea is, that the sin would be, as it were, covered over, hidden, concealed, so that it would no longer come into the view of either God or man; that is, the offender would be regarded and treated as if he had not sinned, or as if he had no sin. It is a word that is used of the way which Yahweh covers sins when He blots them out and forgives them. It is also a word that is used of the way in which men devise means themselves to cover their own sins.

What did Solomon write in his Proverbs? Proverbs 16:25, *"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."* Proverbs 28:13, *"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."*

Just as Adam and Eve devised a fig leaf covering to hide their nakedness when they knew that they had sinned, so to was Israel using all the privileges of the truth to hide and conceal the idolatry of their heart. Just as Israel used all their privileges to hide their inappropriate behavior; we also use the truth to hide inappropriate spiritual behavior.

## ***Embroidery in the Psalms***

We see the use of embroidery in the book of Psalms, Ps. 45:13 , *“The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold.”* Ps. 45:14 - *“She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.”*

This is a symbolic picture of the Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Psalm presents her as one who has been drawn by the king's beauty and the gracious words of his mouth. She became captivated with his meek, humble, yet majestic stature blended with his love of righteousness and the hatred of iniquity. Seeing him as one who excels all others, she had been caused to forsake the things of her old life that she might learn of him.

Filled with desire to please him and worship him, she diligently prepared herself by the practical application of his teaching in her own life. This is symbolized in the Psalm by the raiment of needlework, or embroidery, with which she is gorgeously appareled.

**Psalms 139** presents the very heart of the true spiritual significance of the art of embroidery.

- Firstly there is the mind of the Psalmist toward his God.
- God's omniscience, verses 1-6
- His omnipresence, verses 7-12
- Then the psalmist contemplates God's omnipotence in his development and formation as he sees himself in the hand of the Master embroiderer, verses 13-16

Here is the expression of the mind of a man in whom all the self-will, self-interest and self-exaltation has been completely humbled by the knowledge of the power and the glory of the creator and sustainer of all life. He is one who presents himself before his God as a blank piece of material that God, as the Master Embroiderer, might embroider His own character within him.

The 139<sup>th</sup> Psalm shows the attitude of the Lord Jesus Christ toward his Father: the attitude that each one of us should have towards Him who has called us to glory and virtue. David writes, *“O Yahweh, Thou hast searched me,”* the process of investigation, *“and known me,”* that is having complete knowledge of me. He continues, *“Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, Thou understands my thought afar off,”* Jesus knew that every aspect of his life was open and naked in the eyes of his God. He knew everything he did - getting up in the morning, sitting down, thinking the thoughts of his heart, were all known and understood by the One who had created him.

David continues, *“Thou compasses my path”*. The margin correctly gives an alternate rendering, *“Thou winnowest”*, as to separate the wheat from the

chaff. It was this divine scrutiny of his ways which would do that. *“Thou winnowest, my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Yahweh, Thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid Thine hand upon me.”* If we are going to totally dedicate ourselves to the things of God we must have the mindset of the Psalmist. We must know that every moment of our life is open and naked to Yahweh. Every thought of our heart is known unto Him. In his mortality, the Lord Jesus Christ was a man who had that very mind. It was because of that consciousness of his Father’s presence that he was able to live the life that he did. He saw himself as absolutely nothing, and his God as everything.

Verses 13 to 16 reveal the work of the Divine Embroiderer. They are, through the pen of David, an expression of Christ’s mind and his experience as far as he was personally concerned; but it also has application to his multitudinous body. He makes reference to his divine begetting, the protection and wisdom that went into his very formation before he even had a conscious moment. The passage before us continues, *“For Thou hast possessed my reins”*. Strong’s #3629 gives the meaning of reins to be “kidneys”. They, the kidneys represent the innermost thoughts, and rightly so as the function of the kidneys are affected by a man’s most innermost emotions and moral sensitivity. Love, hate, anger, even fear, affect a man’s cardio-vascular system. As a man’s kidney is affected, so also is his blood pressure. Our Lord became moved by such intense love and respect for his God that all his emotions were directed towards Him.

But the Psalmist is saying that in Christ, Yahweh was the inspiration of all those emotions. Was something going to stimulate his love? It would be the things of his God. Was something going to arouse his hate? Again, it would be because of the Truth. Was something going to fire him with anger? Not self-interest, but his love for divine things. That is what it means for Yahweh to possess the reins or kidneys, to be at the very center of our moral sensitivity.

We continue, *“Thou hast covered me in my mother’s womb”*. The word covered means literally to entwine as a screen or as Rotherham translates, *“Thou hast interwoven me in my mother’s womb”*, as if to protect. Right from his very conception by the power of the Holy Spirit there was the overshadowing protection of his Father. As he contemplated those things, he burst forth: *“I will praise Thee: for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.”* From his earliest conscious moment that was the mind of the Lord Jesus.

Verse 15 reads, *“My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret and **curiously wrought** in the lowest parts of the earth”*. The Psalmist is speaking of the resurrection of Christ from the lowest parts of the grave.



The words “*curiously wrought*” are the same words that are translated in Exodus as “needlework”. It refers to the work of embroidery, and as the Lord was brought out of the lowest parts of the earth to be clothed upon with divine nature, the Father’s work in that man would be brought to completion. Standing before his Father, the Master Embroiderer, he would be a blank piece of cloth, soon to be a masterpiece, clothed with divine majesty, truly a reflection of his Father which art in Heaven.

These things apply not only to the Lord as an individual, but also to his Multitudinous Body. A body of individuals who have allowed themselves to be crafted by Yahweh’s skilled hand during the days of their probation, awaiting completion of the needlework process and final presentation before the Master, to be fully embroidered with the same precious elements as the Master when he was seated at his Father’s right hand some 2000 years ago.

When we consider the love and the grace and the compassion that our all-powerful Creator has shown to us, we can also say: *“I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.”*

The knowledge of that love which the Father extends to us is the means by which He will purchase for Himself our reins, our kidneys, the innermost center of our emotions and our moral sensitivity.

When we stand before the Righteous Judge and await His words, if we have not spent our probation preparing for the final moment of Judgment, in other words whether we receive commendation or condemnation, it will all depend on how we presented ourselves to God; how we conducted ourselves during that period of our probation. Are we like unto a blank piece of cloth, so that the Father, through the power of His word of truth, might silently and skillfully embroider into us the image of His character? Or is there self-interest within our heart, self-exaltation, and self-will? If so the Embroiderer will not have been able to work in us because we will have been unresponsive material, having a character already formed and set by the impulses of the flesh within us - unusable and without beauty.

### ***In closing***

The apostle Paul speaks at great length in several of his epistles on reasonable service, and uses this expression in his letter to the Romans,

**Rom 12:1** *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”*

We read in Job; *“Stand still and consider the wondrous works of God”. Consider also what could happen should God withdraw from us His mercy and loving kindnesses.”*

Let us so present ourselves unto Him that He as the Master Embroiderer might interweave into us the beautiful reflection of His own character and lead us in paths of righteousness. Brethren, all our hope, all our desire, indeed all our prayers should be directed to pleasing Him in whom we live and move, indeed have all being.

We can express it no better than the prophet Isaiah when he wrote - *“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee:.”*

*Herb Thomas*

## EDITORIAL FLYLEAF

We apologize to our readers for the late nature of the Summer Quarter of the SK. We had hoped to have it out by late July or early August, but various duties and circumstances required us to leave the SK only partially completed for an extended period of time. Also, continued changes and adjustments to our magazine formatting has made the process of putting the magazine together even slower as we become familiar with a new publishing program. Yahweh willing, we hope to have the Fall and Winter issues back on schedule.

### WORLD EVENTS

World events continue to proceed at a dizzying speed. The BREXIT vote resulting in the process of Great Britain leaving the EU certainly has been thrilling to watch, as outlined in our first article. Let it be understood though, and something we wish to address further in our next issue of the SK, that though the European Union itself may be down and showing signs of great weakness, it certainly is not out and will no doubt still play a critical role in Latter Day events.

Relations between Russia and the U.S. continue to disintegrate to critical levels, nearing confrontation. The U.S. finds itself looking in on Middle Eastern affairs from the outside while Russia asserts its absolute military and political dominance in the region. Israel continues to find itself in quite the precarious situation - caught between trying to carry on relations with the U.S. and receive substantial military aid, while at the same time walking on egg shells with Russia, while trying to secure its own defensive interests in the region. All this powder keg now needs is the right match.

We also watch the upcoming U.S. election, now only a little over a month away. What impact will this extraordinarily unusual election have on world events? We will soon see.