

# THE SANCTUARY-KEEPER

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



**OUR DESCENT INTO SPIRITUAL  
ANARCHY**

**OVERCOMING SIN - PART 3**

**THE LORD'S TABLE**

**UNDERSTANDING THESE TIMES**

**LESSONS FROM THE BOOK  
OF NEHEMIAH**

**STAND FAST**

**CONFIRMATION OF THE  
COVENANTS OF PROMISE**

**CNSC ANNOUNCEMENT**

**EDITORIAL FLYLEAF**



**The Sanctuary-Keeper** is published on a quarterly basis at \$10.00 per year (U.S. funds). The doctrinal position of this magazine is founded exclusively on the principles of Bible Truth as outlined and defined in **The Christadelphian Unamended Statement of Faith**. Subscriptions, correspondence and materials submitted for publication should be sent to the editors/publishers – Bobby Henderson ([bobdebhend@aol.com](mailto:bobdebhend@aol.com)) & Aaron Thomas ([aaronstaciethomas@google.com](mailto:aaronstaciethomas@google.com)) or to the physical address of "The Sanctuary-Keeper", P.O. Box 13045, Maumelle, AR 72113.

Internet Version: [www.sanctuary-keeper.com](http://www.sanctuary-keeper.com)

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

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

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

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

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

#### THE ORIGIN AND EXTENT OF THE KINGDOM OF MEN

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

#### THE FEET OF THE IMAGE

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

#### THE DESTRUCTION OF THE IMAGE

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



# THE GOODNESS OF GOD

## AN EXCERPT

**BEHOLD**, then, the promised goodness of God! An Immortal King shall reign and prosper in the land of Israel, and shall execute judgment and justice there over the Twelve Tribes, and the obedient nations of the world, for a thousand years. This is the oath which Jehovah swore to Abraham, saying, “*In thee, and in thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*” – a blessedness in the establishment of which Israel will have been delivered out of the hand of all their enemies, and henceforth enjoy the privilege of serving Jehovah without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of their mortal career. The nation of our adoption will then be the chief of all the nations dwelling safely in its own land. Gentiles by birth, but Jews by regeneration, the goodness of God promises us resurrection from among the dead, and exaltation to the highest honours of the State; as it is written “The saints of the Most High shall possess the Kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever”.

Such mercy Jehovah keeps for thousands of Israel and adopted Gentiles who believe the promises He has made to the fathers. But His goodness promises even more than eternal life and honour to the just. It promises them wisdom, and knowledge, and physical strength, the possession of the world and the fullness thereof, glory, equality with the angels, and the high favour of God for ever. He keeps this mercy in store for them that love him, and obey His word. Who that believes these things would hesitate to respond, “Jehovah is good, for his mercy endureth for ever?” Yea, it is even so: for “the mercy of Jehovah is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children’s children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those who remember his commandments to do them”. Mark, dear reader, “to such as keep his covenant and obey him”. Dost thou know what it is to keep Jehovah’s covenant and obey Him? Know then that it is *to believe the gospel of the kingdom, and to be baptized, or united to the name of Jesus, and thenceforth to continue patiently in well-doing*. The covenant is the covenant concerning the kingdom of which the gospel treats – the oath of national blessedness through Abraham and his seed, which Jehovah swore to him when He brought him into the territory of the future kingdom. You must believe this same particular gospel or you cannot “keep the covenant”, or have any part in the kingdom it proclaims.

John Thomas., from *The Faith In The Last Days*, pp. 189, 190



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

*Num. 18:5*

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

*I Peter 2:5*

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

VOLUME 23

2<sup>nd</sup> QUARTER, 2013

NUMBER 2

## OUR DESCENT INTO SPIRITUAL ANARCHY

**T**YPICALLY the term “anarchy” is understood as *the absence of political authority or law*. Thankfully, for the sake of the Truth, our earlier brethren avoided the trappings of centralized, hierarchal politics that characterize Orthodox Christianity perceiving the great evils that such structure breeds within a religious community. Even without such centralized authority, remarkably most of our Christadelphian heritage/history cannot be described as one of *anarchy* but of a community of believing Bible students – though made up of varying personalities, cultural backgrounds, occupations, academic levels and geographic locations – who were by and large united upon the fundamental principles of the One Faith and were able to lovingly cooperate for its benefit. It was a community of many parts but all unified under the stated principles of God’s Word and collectively submissive to the invisible authority of the Christ Head; and collectively obedient to the Scriptural call to be “strangers and pilgrims” in relation to the present order of these Gentile times. This is not to say that all has been smooth, in that the 19<sup>th</sup> century revival of the Christ Body has been faced with many fierce challenges

and divisions throughout its history. But such challenges, as is the intent of all of the Father’s tests and trials upon His followers, tended to strengthen the uniting bonds of the true Believers rather than weaken and disintegrate.

But, another closely related and interesting definition of anarchy we found simply states – *“the absence of any guiding or uniting principle; disorder; chaos”*.

As we look at the culture and religions of the world around us, and as the world increasingly distances itself from and opposes any type of moral standard based upon Biblical principles, we certainly see an application of such a definition of anarchy. There certainly is disorder and chaos all around us as we see the principles of “freedom, liberty and fraternity” (so called) of the French Revolution come to fruition. It is a **“live and let live”** mentality with no recognized or allowed standard of conduct. Paul described what we see to the young Timothy as such: *“For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady (rash), highminded (conceited), lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof...”* (2<sup>nd</sup> Tim. 3:25). In the absence of any **recognized** guiding or uniting principle this is where you end up. And we wish to emphasize the phrase **“recognized guiding or uniting principles”**, in that the fact remains that there is a guiding and uniting principle that exists, and such is found by God’s commands in His Word; but mankind has chosen to reject it as mere superstition. Therefore the culture and society that we find ourselves in is absolute disorder or chaos. Without some kind of moral underpinning (even without the moral foundations that were associated with false-christianity, which did help to at least provide a sense of order and civil decency) all law and order (civil, criminal, political) will soon crumble itself – leading to **absolute** anarchy.

It can be said that there is somewhat of a guiding principal that most of the world is in fact united upon, and it is complete surrender to the desires and whims of the flesh. But, unification upon evil still does not lead to order – just anarchy. This is to be contrasted with the righteousness of God and true association with Him – 1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 14:33, *“For God is **not a God of confusion** (akatastasia – instability, disorder). As in all the congregations of the saints.”* (Diaglott rendering)

### A fundamental example

The essence of such chaos has been fully demonstrated before us more recently in the continued social acceptance and legal victories of the “gay rights movement” as well as their redefining of marriage. It has demonstrated the absolute confusion and disorder that exists in regard to basic morality and one of the most rudimentary and long held institutions of human existence and

social interaction (Gen. 2:21-25) . But in this age of spiritual anarchy, you can be “married” to whoever (or whatever) you want to be married to; you can identify your “sexual orientation” or gender any way or multitude of ways that you like despite the natural and unchangeable laws of nature; a child can have two “mommies or daddies” depending on the whims of those who they are unfortunate enough to be under the guardianship of such; etc., etc. The perversion of homosexuality has been with mankind all along this 6,000 year reign of sin’s flesh (The Sin Constitution/Dominion), but the rigor and fierce anger with which it has been promoted through modern media, the confusion that it has created in the very foundational structures of society (love, human relationships; child bearing and rearing, emotional stability, etc.) is without such wide-scaled precedent and exists as the antitype of what was only typified in the city of Sodom.

But the issue of marriage is only one aspect of the spiritual anarchy that is overrunning the society that we live in, but its destruction certainly is very telling and fundamental to understanding the overall characteristic of these times as was so explicitly detailed by the Spirit through the Apostle Paul. But, it all did not begin with “gay marriage”. The destruction of the definition of marriage goes back to a culture which became accepting of the chaos inducing affects of divorce, re-marriage, co-habitation/sexual relationships without marriage, one-parent families, abortion, etc. 20, 30, 40 years ago – the idea of “gay marriage” was an ABSURD idea at best. But 70 or 80 years ago, the acts of divorce and the other things in which we listed were viewed as scandalous or abominations by society in general. It does not mean that such things did not happen; it is just that society did not accept them as tolerable or allowable behavior. Instead of anarchy in social/civil behavior, there was some sense of acceptance of the guiding or unifying principles as founded in the basic moral commandments of God. As society began to modify, distance itself or altogether reject such commandments, the descent into anarchy was predictable. As whole generations of children are raised and continue to be raised under such corruption and confusion, the self-perpetuating cycle of chaos only continues to worsen. How much worse can it get? Until Christ’s Return, there is no limit to the depths of what the thinking and actions of the flesh can descend into.

### Anarchy and the Unamended Community

In considering this subject of “anarchy”, our main focus is not of the world at large. Though it is becoming increasingly difficult to live in, and though we should be grieved (as was Lot – 2<sup>nd</sup> Pet. 2:7) to the state of evil and turmoil, there is nothing that we can do or are allowed to do to change it until Christ returns. We are to stand as a light in contrast to it and we are to remain set apart from it, but we are not in a present position to change it as we are presently to be “resident foreigners” (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:11) in relationship to it (politically and socially).

Our concern in regard to this matter of “anarchy”, as related to the second definition we provided, is focused upon the Household of Christ – and we speak specifically of the Unamended Fellowship. As we take note of the landscape of what identifies itself as the Unamended Community today we have no choice but to describe such as a Community as one that has fallen into anarchy. Such an observation may be a source of offense to many, maybe even to you dear reader, as you consider our comments. But we contend that it is not possible to arrive at any other conclusion in relation to the sad state of a once thriving and Light bearing group that contended for the *faith once delivered unto the saints*.

In 1898, the Christadelphian Body experienced a traumatic and life-altering, spiritual earthquake over the Adamic Condemnation/Resurrectional Responsibility controversies; with division being created by those who set out to “amend” the Statement of Faith and make the issue of the resurrection to Judgment of unbaptized, “enlightened” individuals on one side, versus those who wished to stand where they always stood to not make it a fundamental issue or test of fellowship. (It is not our intent to here delve into all of the Atonement related issues that surrounded the division.) Our “Unamended” community came out of this controversy **NOT** as a newly formed group, but one that was not willing to go along with such an “amendment” and more importantly, also was holding firm on fundamental issues such as Adamic Condemnation, Covenant & The Resurrection, the Nature of man/Nature of Christ, Federal/Constitutional Relationship (in Adam or in Christ), and Racial Alienation.

### Our descent

The Unamended Community moved on. And, we again repeat the recognition that not all was smooth sailing. False teachers and teachings arose, personalities clashed, and foolish and ignorant things were done by failing creatures of the dust. But nonetheless – The Unamended Community remained steadfast upon guiding and uniting principles of the One Faith. Elders and leading brethren could be depended upon, but if they faltered they would also be challenged. But, as our Fellowship moved into the “modern” age, cracks began to appear. As early as the 1930’s, brethren began to strongly warn of the subtle and not-so-subtle influences of something they called “modernism”, which entailed the introduction of modern, liberalized academic reasoning into the mindset of the Believers, and the influence of materialism. Such influences were beginning to weaken spiritual resolve to stand by the uniting principles of the “old paths” – softening zeal and bending views on the vital importance of pure doctrine and the maintaining of clear and firm fellowship standards.

The Unamended Community moved on – through the challenges of a 2<sup>nd</sup> World War and the persecutions and trials that came through our collective stand on Conscientious Objection. But after the war, the seeds of change in the world that were sowed in the early 1900’s were put into overdrive. The world was changing fast, and the Brotherhood would not be far behind. A generation

was being raised in an education system that was becoming more rooted in humanistic/evolutionary philosophy rather than the nuts and bolts of reading, writing and math – attempting to mold HOW children think rather than giving them the tools to live. More and more young people (including Christadelphians) were going to college, subject to professors and classes that were promoting human wisdom, achievement and understanding to the rejection of unchanging, Bible-based principles. The inventions of this age were making everything exponentially easier – making life no longer about survival but about pleasure. Entertainment (movies, radio, television, and eventually computers) became central to our lives. We could and would become connected to this world 24/7 in one way, shape or form. The modern Christadelphian has been raised in this environment, has participated in it and has enjoyed it. Are we to assume that the changing world would have no influence on the Brotherhood?

During this time the matter of divorce, and of remarriage after divorce, became an issue within the Brotherhood, creating sharp divisions along ecclesial, regional and family lines. Sadly, trends of the world were having an impact on the Brotherhood. But, even with this, the Unamended community had not yet lost a sense of what defined the Community as “Unamended”.

In the 1970’s new and more insidious challenges arose. Some Christadelphians, not satisfied (more likely embarrassed) with the uncharismatic nature of Christadelphian belief and practice, but impressed with the ever evolving practices of the Churches; introduced more professional, organized and centralized efforts towards “outreach”, “missionary work”, “charity” and “seminar” training for individuals and ecclesias to help them cope with various life-issues. All such methods were to be adopted from the changing methods of the churches and business organizations. This was the rise of groups such as WCF and Operation Onesimus. In addition, though rising out of the Unamended ranks, their beliefs and sympathies were not directed towards the preservation of Unamended belief but the unification with the *Amended Christadelphians* and with the *Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith*. They openly viewed such platforms as a great opportunity to bring the various fellowships together by molding the young people, while ignoring and denying the existence of fundamental, doctrinal differences. Though there was widespread unwillingness to support their efforts, such efforts continued on and grew in their scope and influence.

The Unamended Community moved on into the 80’s and 90’s, but the road was becoming rockier. A younger generation was rising up, having been completely raised in the modern era. Unamended ecclesias and Bible Schools were shifting into opposing camps – with northern and eastern ecclesias (generally speaking) of the American Continent becoming more sympathetic and supportive of general liberalizing beliefs and practices, and “reunion” minded efforts (or at the very least more tolerant of such elements). While those brethren located in mid to lower sections of the continent held to more

conservative Unamended positions, and were extremely resistant to the liberalizing changes. Most of the Brethren in California and the far west were quickly and willingly surrendering themselves to liberal fellowship practices and absorption into the Amended community. The Scripturally sound and careful “Continental Reunion” efforts of the 50’s and 70’s had proven that the differences between Amended and Unamended were too fundamental to be ignored. But the liberalizing influences rooted and groomed in the culture of WCF & OO would not be deterred and pushed their own initiatives at “reunion”, claiming that the different fellowships were in fact “One Body” and should not be divided. But, “a little strength” was found and some brethren were stirred up to vocalize strong opposition, giving rise to the “*Concerned Brethren*” group. The tide was slowly turning against those who were committed to holding to the “old paths”, but during this time the resistance to such trends was able to hold off any community-wide acceptance of reunion efforts through print and voice.

The Unamended Community continued on, but things were changing more quickly as was the culture and mindset of the world at large. Bubbling under the surface were the young people, this writer being one of them during the 80’s and 90’s. We were a generation that had been raised in a culture that had lost any sense of “innocence”. What may have been viewed as evil in early days was no longer off limits. Christadelphian young people were fully blended into all that the world had to offer and we could be just as bad if not worse than our contemporaries in the world. “Separateness” from the world was nothing more than empty rhetoric, and certainly not a reality. Just because children were raised in large groups of other Christadelphian young people (as many thought was so important) certainly did little to help; and from our observation could prove to only provide opportunities for mutual experimentation and reinforcement of incorrect behavior – “*if other Christadelphians are doing it, it must be o.k.*” And, this was allowed by the parents and grandparents – but partly from just a complete lack of understanding or naivety (due to their own generation and upbringings) of how bad things really were and also due to their own softening views and tolerances of the changes happening in the world (and things are FAR MORE WORSE for the young people today than 20 or 30 years ago.) Many from my generation fell away into the world, but for those of us who were baptized – we still brought with us a great deal of baggage, having been fully immersed into the philosophies, mindset and activities of a humanistic world. We didn’t live our youth preparing for baptism, but rather (in varying degrees) enjoying our freedom before the perceived restrictions of baptism. Maybe we could forsake various “inappropriate” or evil activities by simple maturity and adult responsibility, but could we truly clear our heads of the humanistic world view that we had been educated, entertained under and had enjoyed, and that we now worked in and were still being entertained under?

Other serious matters were beginning to manifest themselves. Stark divisions were taking place over matters of prophetic interpretation. Though

there had always been disagreements over various prophetic details, fundamental aspects of prophetic understanding (such as Nebuchadnezzar's Image or alternate interpretations of the Apocalypse) were being experimented with, altered and confused. Camps and cliques were establishing themselves simply based upon one's prophetic outlook. And during this time, wholesale "reunion", even though being repeatedly attempted and denied, was taking its toll on individual brethren and individual ecclesias. Once staunch brethren in regard to Unamended understanding of the Atonement were "reevaluating" their views and adopting and promoting Amended doctrines within the Unamended Community - With some brethren simply going over to the Amended side. Others were becoming more tolerant of the WCF movement and the more evangelical/ecumenical approach to the practicing of faith, as groups such as WCF became much more polished and influential and their supporters and participants freely associated throughout the Unamended community.

Though no official divisions were coming about, brethren were finding themselves in **groups within groups** based upon differing views of the Marriage issue, prophecy, liberal/ecumenical mindset vs. more conservative "old paths" values, varying appreciations and views of the Atonement, which Bible Schools they supported or did not support, and divergent views on fellowship practices. And these were/are not issues that could simply be overlooked for the sake of harmony. One might find themselves in strong agreement with one group of brethren in one aspect of the Truth, but diametrically opposed to them in their views on something else. The presence of a unifying principle was being lost due to gradual rejection of the "old paths" and spiritual anarchy was becoming a reality. Though, what was superseding doctrinal unity for many was the desire for social unity and Laodicean apathy towards sound doctrine in belief AND practice, which circumnavigated the responsibility to resolve the various divisions arising in the Unamended Community and within families themselves. A "let's all be friends" and "who am I to judge?" mentality was starting to grow despite the need to deal with and resolve very serious issues – much like what we see in the world today.

But, the Unamended Community moved forward but far from standing for or being united on principal. "Unamended" simply because of lack of desire to accept the Amended position and associated restrictions, but hardly united as a group in and of itself. As the case of the evils of the world, the roots of spiritual/moral anarchy do not happen overnight, but began in gradual baby steps. Like watching a garden grow, it takes quite a bit of time for a seed to break through the ground and to grow into a fully mature plant, but it seems that almost overnight that the plant then provides a ripened fruit.

The last decade has proven to be quite remarkable as the fruit of humanistic/worldly thinking have fully ripened. The "perfect storm" was coming together – a humanistic and self-centered younger generation was

coming into positions of leadership that was not interested in preserving the efforts of our Pioneers, the old "stalwarts" of the Truth were dying off and many were growing weary of the continued need and responsibility to "*contend for the faith*". Another "reunion effort" reared its ugly head under the NASU label – the very essence of doctrinal compromise and capitulation to Amended error. It was also widely rejected, but it was as if this was the last gasp of resistant energy for the Unamended Community. The NASU carried forward, and instead of risking the rejection of Community wide-support, instead targeted specific ecclesias on both the Unamended and Amended sides under the UA08 banner – creating fellowship confusion and in reality a 3<sup>rd</sup> fellowship sandwiched between the Unamended and Amended. Out of this, bound together by the rise of the internet based social networks, have come growing numbers of "Christadelphians" and anything close to it, that are not interested in bridging/unity documents or Statements of Faith, and with a shared hatred for anything closely related to the "old paths" of Christadelphian belief and practice, claim that they are "doing unity" now; running roughshod over any set standards of fellowship practice or belief.

Drawing from a sweeping movement within mainstream churches to attack and discredit more traditional beliefs, values and practices under the charge of "Legalism" and "Judaizing" – From 1999 to 2000 a series of articles by David Levin appeared in the *Christadelphian Tidings* magazine under the title of "Legalism and Faith" and was later adapted to a book titled "*Legalism vs. Faith*". Building on this, in 2005, Kyle Tucker published his book, "*The Judaizers – Another Gospel*". Both efforts were attempts to paint traditional Christadelphian values, beliefs and practices as "legalism" and "Judaizing" and both books received acceptance and promotion within the Unamended community itself. But not only were traditional views and practices attacked; from Kyle Tucker (and further promotion by the Shofar magazine) we had new doctrines (old in regard to Orthodox Christianity) introduced into the Unamended Body, that undermined the MOST FUNDAMENTAL aspects of Bible Belief in regard to eternal life, the future Kingdom on earth, the Atonement along with a continuous stream of additional and profound error (and which we have dealt with repeatedly and at great length in the pages of the S.K. over the past 8 years).

It was observed from the onset of the "Legalism"/ "Judaizer" heresies that if the Unamended Community did not rise up with unified voice to oppose such doctrines that we would be finished as a viable community. The errors and attacks being thrown in the face of the "old paths" were so profoundly and easily discernible as apostate, that if this would not move the Unamended community as a whole to quick and decisive action then true zeal and absolute concern for the preservation of Truth were gone. We now stand some 8 years past the printing and promotion of the Tucker book, and to date there has been no widespread opposition mounted. A few individual ecclesias and individuals have taken firm stands, but no unified outcry was heard. When faced with

some of the most profound series of errors IN ITS HISTORY – the Unamended Community rolled over with hardly a whimper, not to be bothered from its Laodicean slumber.

With members of UA08 meetings still welcome at many Unamended Ecclesias and events throughout the Body (the Canadian Bible School itself having a UA08 member as a teacher this year); with the continued influence of WCF; with the continued influence of the rebellious, anti “old paths” movement encouraged by the “Legalism”/ “Judaizer” doctrines; with once “conservative” ecclesias not taking a clear and uncompromising stand; with once “conservative” ecclesias and Bible School tolerating if not embracing such influences because they simply “do not see a problem”; with the cries of “ecclesial autonomy” to excuse inaction; with brothers and sisters, who though not necessarily agreeing with such false doctrines or actions, nonetheless are all too willing to go to various Gatherings or Bible Schools that embrace or tolerate such things **AND FELLOWSHIP it themselves** without consequence; with brethren holding firm allegiance to those that they may share commonality with in a certain aspect of belief, but at the complete ignoring of errors that they may in fact hold; with many Brethren viewing those who are desperately trying to stand fast in the “old paths” as the ones that are really the source of problems and trouble within Unamended Christadelphia; with various long standing doctrinal differences and concerns being swept under the rug for the sake of peace; and with a growing number finding their fellowship in the spiritual sewage of Facebook – WE HAVE ARRIVED AT SPIRITUAL ANARCHY. Though, there are certain principles that do seem to unify many – they are united in their rejection of the “old paths”; they are united in their rejection of those who have cried out in warning (Amos 5:10); they are united in the desires to adapt their lives to standards that are more in line with the thinking of the flesh rather than the thinking of the spirit (one foot in the world and one foot in Christadelphia); they are united in their desire to preserve social and family ties – **even to the division and destruction of their own ecclesias**; they are united in their desire to “just let things work themselves out” and to “live and let live”; and they are united in their ignorance. But all of these “uniting” factors only lead to one place → *Spiritual Anarchy*. As in the days of the Judges – “**EVERY MAN DID WHAT WAS RIGHT IN HIS OWN EYES**” (Judges 21:25).

And, we are losing brethren at an alarming rate to these influences. Friends and allies in the Truth today may very well be enemies for the Truth’s sake tomorrow. **Yes, it has gotten that bad.** “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 10:12). And consider Jeremiah 2:13 – “For My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.”

## What does it mean to be “exclusively Unamended”?

Considering the state of chaos that characterizes the Unamended Community today, we are led to ask the question above. We have personally

used and hear it used by others the phrase “exclusively Unamended” to describe the remaining, “old paths” elements and practices of Unamended Christadelphia. And though we know what it personally means to us, we hear it used across a diverse spectrum of brethren and ecclesias who may claim such a thing, but apply it very differently. We would ask caution in its use, as the name “Christadelphian” has come to represent a wide array of appalling things and so too has the label of “Unamended Christadelphia”. As we proceed forward in attempting to continue as a Lightstand, clinging to the “old paths” in a dark world and out from among a very confused Unamended Community, we need to be clear and specific in how we label and define ourselves. We must explain ourselves as more than that which is opposed to Amended doctrines and Amended fellowship, but as a COMPLETE picture of Truth in all its glorious elements (what we stand for and what we stand against) – not disorder but as a shining example of order and certainty. The labels and names we are accustomed to using for ourselves are fast becoming emblems of confusion and we have to be prepared to stand apart from them, **WHILE HOLDING FAST** to the principles they once stood for.

## What can we do?

Avoid defeatism! This may seem ironic for us to say after all the negativity we have summarized in our preceding comments; but what is most important has not been lost. What is known as the “Unamended community” may be in chaos, but the Truth is still THE TRUTH and continues on with or without us. It still offers order, certainty and ultimately – SALVATION. And dear brothers and sisters – **NO ONE CAN TAKE THAT AWAY FROM US.....NO ONE**...except for our own selves. As the Scriptures exhort us – no one can “separate us from the love of Christ” and “the love of God” (Rom. 8:35-39). As the Apostles were asked by Christ when the multitudes fled from his flesh opposing doctrines – “Will ye also go away?” Peter’s simple, but profound answer – “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.”

We are only defeated when we view our success or our relationship to the Truth based upon strength in numbers or by our acceptance and appreciation by others. When we seek the praise of men rather than the praise of God (John 12:43), then we will most certainly feel defeated.

So what do we do, dear brethren? We **SET OUR FACES AS FLINT** (Isa. 50:7; Jer. 2:8,17-19; 15:19-21; Ezek. 8,9) and we carry on to the defense and promotion of THE TRUTH and the glorification of our HEAVENLY FATHER. Can we bring the Unamended Community out of chaos and back into order? - Probably not. Can we move forward, past and above the anarchy, “contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints”? – Absolutely, and we must!

A. Thomas

# OVERCOMING SIN

**I**N this installment of the process of overcoming sin, we would like to discuss the sins that may be committed in regards to our responsibility to watch and keep and guard the good deposit of the Truth that has been entrusted to the care of God's sons and daughters in this period before the time of the return of Christ. We have the same responsibility as we read 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 6:20-21 – *“O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.”* The word “keep” in verse 20 means to “guard the deposit”. That is a tremendous responsibility that requires a constant and committed alertness of the things that may negatively impact the Body of Christ. It requires continual prayer for guidance and direction. It requires strength, courage, wisdom, patience, and endurance. Many times it also requires a tough hide to reflect the barbs of those who chose to allow the Truth to be diluted with false doctrines. We believe that the types of sins that can be committed in this matter are noted below:

## National, Communal, Ecclesial Sins

- Teaching False Doctrine
- Tolerating, Supporting, Promoting, Allowing False Doctrine to be taught
- Tolerating, Supporting, Promoting, Allowing Immoral Acts to be committed by members of the Christ Body

As we think about these responsibilities, we find that there is a third type of an imputation process that is taught throughout the Scriptures. This is the imputed condemnation that we receive through the tolerance and support and wishing God Speed to those who continually walk in an immoral manner and continually teach false doctrines even after being scripturally counseled about the error of their ways. It is the understanding of this type of imputed condemnation that many brothers and sisters struggle with. We may agree with the imputed condemnation received because of our association with Adam, and we may agree with the imputed righteousness that we receive from our association with Christ. But, some cannot or will not grasp that the same concept applies to an imputed condemnation that we receive when we willingly and continually associate ourselves at the Table of the Lord with those who are immoral and/or with those who continually teach false doctrines, both which are abominations in the eyes of our Father. Some will say that they do not

believe in “Contamination by Association” or “Guilt by Association”; and it is well that they believe and say this because these phrases are not Scriptural concepts and should never be used by the members of the Body of Christ. We should **Get these phrases out of our vocabulary**. Christ associated with sinners and did not incur any condemnation or guilt because of this association. However, He taught them that they should repent. For those that didn't, like the Scribes and Pharisees, He pronounced judgments upon them.

## Imputed Condemnation

Although we believe that this concept of “Guilt or Contamination by Association” is not a scriptural term, there is a very important principle regarding associating through fellowship with those in whom we are not like minded on divine godly matters. It has been stated in writing and verbally that although Brother X may teach, support and tolerate false doctrine, he actually is a very nice person. What does it hurt to associate ourselves with these nice people? This reasoning is the thinking of the flesh. This is attributing honor to a person because of how they treat us as humans as opposed to how they treat the Word of God. In the entire scheme of things regarding salvation, which will be more important as we stand before the Judge of the whole earth – how we treat each other or how we treat the Word of God? One answer to this question is that both are important and critical. I think all would agree to that. However, here is the point that we need to understand. If we treat and handle the Word of God in the correct scriptural manner, then by default, we will treat each other in the correct scriptural manner. The reverse of that is not always true. From a humanistic perspective, there are many nice people in our lives that have no idea about the Truth in God's Word. We must realize that there are also nice brethren, from a humanistic perspective, that have turned their back on the truth. What does it hurt if we associate through fellowship with these brethren who are teaching, supporting or tolerating the teaching of false doctrine? What does it hurt if we associate through fellowship with those brethren who have different beliefs on basic fundamental doctrines than we do? The longer that we socialize and associate with brethren who are teaching false doctrine we will find that the differences between our fundamental beliefs will become less and less defined and less and less important. The more that we like someone, our human nature will tend to minimize the differences in our beliefs in order to be around those that we are comfortable with from a social perspective. The Scriptures teach us to be separate from those who do not or will not conform to the divine principles of Holy Truth. **This is a black and white area.** Do we associate with individuals because we are like minded on essential fundamental matters of Truth or are we associating with individuals just because we like them from a personal, social perspective? Brethren and young people, your answer may have a bearing on whether you will be standing on the right or left at the Judgment Seat of Christ.



Why is this concept so difficult for many to understand? What is it in our nature and in our minds that causes us to refuse the teaching of this scriptural principle? Is it because we actually enjoy the company of those in whom we are not like-minded? Is it because that we are more like-minded than we care to admit with these immoral individuals and the wolves in sheep clothing who are trying to teach false doctrines? Is it just because in our life filled with humanistic pride that we have decided that we are not going to let anyone tell us who we should and should not associate with? Is it because the individuals that are committing these acts that we should steer clear of are our own flesh and blood family members? We must remember that one of the first action steps that we should take in the process of overcoming sin is the recognition of sin. I believe that this recognition of the sin of toleration and support of false doctrines and immoral behavior is as hard for us to perform as it is to recognize our personal sins.

The scriptures are plentiful in their discussion of this concept of imputed condemnation due to the toleration and support of false doctrine and immoral acts. We should remember that where there is condemnation, there is sin and where there is unrepentant sin, we may face eternal death.

The following verses provide examples of the three principles of imputation that we have discussed: Numbers 16:26, Joshua 7:1-11, Joshua 22:20, 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 21:20, 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 5:27, 2<sup>nd</sup> John 10-11, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 5:6-7, Revelation 18:4, Revelation 2:12:17, Romans 1:28-32, Deuteronomy 24:16, Proverbs 13:20, 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:22, Proverbs 14:7, Proverbs 29:3, Proverbs 28:7, 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 3:14, Romans 4:11, Proverbs 24:21, Leviticus 17:4, Psalms 32:2, II Corinthians 5:19, James 2:23, Romans 5:13, Romans 4:22-23, Romans 5:19 and I Corinthians 1:30.

We wish to review a few of these many verses that teach us of these three types of imputation that are found in God's Word. All three of the imputations that we have considered in this series of articles are matters of constitution, status and reckoning in the eyes of the Father.

- **2<sup>nd</sup> John 10-11** – If we wish God Speed to those who are teaching error, then we are partakers of their sins.
- **Numbers 16:26** – This is a command to depart from associating with wicked men so that we are not consumed in their sins.
- **Joshua 7:1-11 and 22:20** – In this account of the sin of Achan, we are told in verse one that Israel had committed a trespass. In verse 11, we are told that Israel had sinned and transgressed against Yahweh's covenant. In Joshua 22:20, we are told that because of the specific sin of Achan, that wrath fell on the entire congregation of Israel.
- **Proverbs 13:20** – A companion of fools shall be destroyed
- **Proverbs 28:7** – He that is a companion of riotous men shameth his father.

- **1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:22** – Abstain from all appearances of evil
- **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 5:6** – A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:14 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 7:1** – In order to receive the blessings of the Father and be called a member of His spiritual family, we must not associate with those that manifest the ungodly characteristics in these verses. We must be separate.

Let us not become part of the body of brethren who believe, teach, support or tolerate these life threatening doctrines that have blasted the Unamended community over the last few years. Let us contend for the One Truth when necessary and do so without being contentious. When we contend and stand up for the Faith, let us remember that we are performing this action step in the process of overcoming sin for the honor and glory of Yahweh and not for our own individual honor.

When it comes to contending for the One Truth, we should remember these two principles:

1. To not contend when it is necessary and required is a sin. We ask our readers to look at Ezekiel 3:19 & 21; Jude 3.
2. To contend when necessary, but done in an incorrect scriptural manner is also a sin. Romans 12:17 and Matthew 7:12 are a couple of verses that speak to this concept.

Every brother and sister has probably failed at both of these principles at some point in their lives. What can we do to overcome the failure to do these two principles – to earnestly contend for the faith and to do so in a Christ like manner?

God's abhorrence of false doctrines or of anything that is in opposition to His Word is very evident throughout the Scriptures. In most chapters of the Bible, we probably can find the admonition to put away the ways of the fleshly and carnal mind and follow the way of Truth. God is a jealous God and wants His children to manifest the same jealous spirit for the purity of His word. We can look at the messages to the Seven Ecclesias in the Apocalypse to see the Ecclesial requirements to keep false doctrines out of the Ecclesia. The Word of God equates the things that are in opposition to the Word to leaven. We have to deal with any leaven within the Body. There are some Christadelphians that may think that the suggestion to deal with the leavened members within our Body is harsh and unloving.

## Is it unloving to try to help someone see the errors of their ways?

Is it unloving to be a shepherd over the flock of God and protect the flock from the wolves in sheep's clothing who we find in some Christadelphian organizations and Ecclesias that harbor individuals who teach false doctrine or

continues to distribute and promote things that are in opposition to the Word of God?

- Is it unloving to continue to teach to our Unamended Community that there is and always have been major doctrinal differences between the Unamended and Amended communities?
- Is it unloving to continue to teach that we must associate ourselves with those in whom we are like minded with and disassociate ourselves with those in whom we are not like minded with?
- Are we sinning when we try to provide counsel to a brother or sister who has strayed from the straight and narrow path?
- Are we sinning when we try to identify and name those who are teaching and promoting and distributing false doctrine or when we identify those who are allowing this to happen?
- Are we sinning when we try to teach our brethren about the correct doctrinal principles of atonement, covenant making, the nature of man, the nature of Christ, or any other first principle of faith that is found in our Statement of Faith?
- Are we sinning when we try to teach individuals about the principles of fellowship and dis-fellowship?

I contend that these things are not unloving and they are not sins. Granted, the way that we conduct ourselves in the performance of these actions may not be done in a Christ like manner. But that is a different sin.

As stated earlier, I believe that we have to overcome these Ecclesia sins that exist within our community today: National, Communal, Ecclesial Sins such as - *Teaching False Doctrine; Tolerating, Supporting, Promoting, Allowing False Doctrine to be taught; Tolerating, Supporting, Promoting, Allowing Immoral Acts to be committed by members of the Christ Body.*

I think the way to overcome these Ecclesia and Communal sins is to continue with strong classes on prophecy, doctrine and the correct way to walk in the Truth. All of us, as a collective Ecclesia, have to be watchmen on the walls of our Ecclesia and our Unamended Community. We must be able to quickly identify error and be able to state loudly and clearly the direction that the error is coming from. We have to correctly identify the true enemies of the Truth. I would define these enemies of God as any who are teaching or promoting anything in opposition to the doctrines of Truth or anyone who knowingly allows these things to occur. We have to strengthen the things that remain. We have to be true and honest to our Statement of Faith and the precious Biblical doctrines contained therein. We must use the scriptural weapons of the armor of God, identified in Ephesians 6, in our continual battles against the ways of the flesh, regardless if these ways are manifested through individual actions or Ecclesia actions. We must minimize and even try to eliminate any in-fighting between those who are still trying to maintain the old

paths of Truth. We must remember the condemnations and commendations that were given to the first century Ecclesias. We must be good stewards of the Truth that has been entrusted to our safe keeping. We must be able to leave this wonderful Truth to the remnant of the generations following us.

Brethren, we have such a great hope and a wonderful privilege to be able to come to the presence of our Heavenly Father in worship, praise and honor. Let us never, ever take this privilege for granted. We have a grand inheritance lying just outside our doors. Let us not disgrace this inheritance or waste it or give it away. Be ye strong and steadfast and hold on to that which we have. This should be in our thoughts every minute of the day. Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 states this concept very clearly – *“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”*

In these installments relating to the process of overcoming sin, we have focused a lot on two sins that may become the downfall of any brother or sister in Christ and the downfall of any Ecclesia in Christ. I personally believe that each and every one of us has problems controlling our tongue and the words that fall out of our mouth. On a personal basis, this one issue of the tongue has and will continually bring many strong brethren to the danger of being condemned at the Judgment Seat of Christ. We must ask ourselves “Why can’t we control our tongue?” If we are able to answer this question for ourselves and not others, we must answer in the most detailed way possible. It is not sufficient to say that we are under the influence of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life. Brethren, we are all under these influences. We must dig deep and discover why we as individuals have so many problems with this issue of the tongue. If we can control our tongue, we can control our whole body.

It is also the personal opinion of this writer that our Ecclesias are facing dangers of being caught up in the allures of the world and the temptations of those around us who have or who are currently departing from the one Truth. We find more and more of our Ecclesias straying away from our once strong position of defending the Truth and guarding the deposit that was once delivered to our trust. What is the status of Ecclesias today? We are exposed to the pulls of the Amended, and of those who seek re-union on un-Scriptural grounds and those who have already chosen to associate and fellowship with any group of individuals who call themselves Christadelphians. Why can we not stand strong in our faith and overcome the fleshly desire to support, tolerate and associate with those who are bringing false doctrine into our midst? Again, we must be very specific in answering this question. Is this a problem that we need to overcome, collectively and individually? Some will probably disagree and some will agree. As we think about the answer to this Ecclesial question, I think that the Serving brothers of every Ecclesia should think about the

tremendous responsibility that they have in this regard. The responsibility of the elders of any ecclesia is to protect the flock from any danger. They must provide teachers that speak sound principles of the Truth. They must protect the Ecclesia members from any influence of false doctrine and immorality. They must be watchmen and alert their Ecclesia brethren about any possible dangers that could wreck their faith or that could endanger the members of condemnation at the Judgment Seat.

Brethren, we realize the difficulty of overcoming these two sins relating to the inappropriate use of our tongue and to the lack of proper contending for the Truth. Do we have a choice? Of course we do. We always have choices that we have to make. We can continue to allow the curse of the tongue to rule our lives through our discussions, our words of the pen and our words on the internet. Or – we can look more closely at ourselves and uncover the specific problems of the flesh that are the causes of these foolish and unscriptural droppings from our mouth. We can continue to watch the Unamended Community be drawn toward the false re-union efforts, the false doctrines of brethren, and the false morality of the world. Or – we can be spiritually courageous and stand up against the wolves in sheep's clothing that are attacking God's Truth. On an individual basis, are you comfortable standing alongside an individual at the Memorial Table of the Lord that has different beliefs on fundamental principles of Truth? 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:58 exhorts in this manner – *“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”* In order to overcome sin, we must be doing the work of the Lord. Are we doing the work of the Lord when we wish God Speed to those who are teaching, promoting and tolerating false doctrine? Brethren, I firmly believe that these are questions that we must ask ourselves constantly. Are we doing the work of the Lord everyday and in every situation that we find ourselves in?

## The Mind of Christ

We would now like to address a very specific way in which we can overcome the sins that we have discussed in these articles. As stated at the very beginning of our discussion, the best way to overcome is not to commit the sin in the first place. Some may say that sin recognition and confession is the only way that we can overcome sin. As we have discussed earlier, these are important action steps in the process of cleansing sin. But, we must realize, the primary way to overcome sin is to not give into the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes or the pride of life - To not act when we face the opportunity to sin.

We realize that to change the mind of the flesh into the mind of Christ is a long, tedious, tiring process. But we must have continual growth in this area. We could describe the refusal to give into sin as the transformation of our mindset to the mind of Christ. In Philippians 2:5, we are told *“to let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus”*. The concept of being like-minded

with Christ is only applicable to those individuals who are scripturally “In Christ”. Those individuals who have made an everlasting covenant with Christ can only receive the blessings of being “In Christ”. To be in Christ and to be like minded with Christ means that our life is *“Christ Centered”* and not *“Self Centered”*. We must strive to develop the same character as that of Christ. How would we describe the character of our Master? The characteristics of love, mercy, grace, meekness may be the first thoughts that come to mind. We may also think of the characteristics of obedience, suffering, gentleness, and forgiveness, studious, steadfast, courageous, faithful, and self-sacrifice. We also read and understand that He rebuked when necessary and He was a constant teacher of God's Word. How often do we fail to properly manifest these divine qualities? As we think about these attributes of our Saviour and our inability to follow His example, our minds may go back to one of our first references in this series of articles - Romans 7:24-25, *“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin”*.

Our daily lives may be more about ourselves than it is about Christ. We should stop our mouths when we make statements such as “What about me? or I need this; or I want this; or I deserve this; or they made me so mad; or they offended me; or did you hear what they said to ME?” Our lives are probably more self-centered than we would care to admit. Do we constantly think of and try to constantly apply the self-sacrifice that Yahweh requires of us? We must learn to always be about the business of our Father in Heaven. Doing the Father's will is the only way that we can overcome our daily sins.

The Scriptures are full of admonitions to be of the same mind with Yahweh, Christ and with each other. The first step in the fulfillment of this command is to make sure that we are of the same mind as Christ. If each of us could development the mind of Christ, then by default, we would be of the same mind in our Ecclesias. Unfortunately, this side of the Kingdom, all of us will never be of the same mind 100% of the time. The troubles that appear among the sons and daughters of Yahweh are always caused because one or more individuals have failed to live up to the commandment to be of the same mind with Christ. Do we let our egos, our pride, our families, or our lack of Scriptural knowledge interfere with the requirement to focus on the attributes of Christ as our example?

Do we often complain about a brother or sister when in reality we are performing the same sinful act as our brother or sister is performing? Christ never did this. Do we often discuss things behind our brothers back and complain and murmur about others? Christ never did this. Do we often fail to recognize departures from God's Truth? Christ never did this. Do we often choose to ignore the things that are contrary to the Word of God? Christ never did this. Do we often treat our brethren with disrespect? Christ never did this.



Do we choose to allow the allures of the world to pull us away from the Yahweh's Truth? Christ never did this. Do we often manifest a lack of spiritual courage to stand up for the Truth? Christ never did this. We could go on and on with these comparisons. The point is that we should order and structure our lives so that we put aside the "old man" that lies within each of us and keep our garments of salvation clean and unspotted as much as we can in these days of probation.

Our considerations of the process of overcoming sin may be a very depressing subject. It should make us be very appreciative of the knowledge that we have a great High Priest, touched with the feelings of our infirmities and who is now our Mediator to Yahweh. We have such a wonderful and grand inheritance that will be delivered to those who follow Paul's advice in I Corinthians 15:58. In order to receive these glorious promises, we must always remember the process of overcoming sin and that our primary requirements in this process are the acts of sin recognition, proper confession, and true repentance.

We would like to summarize our thoughts with these short statements that hopefully will help all to overcome the sins that so easily beset us.

- Love the Lord our God with all of our heart, mind and soul.
- In the Agape sense of the Love, we should love our neighbor as our self.
- Study to show thyself approved of God
- Control Our tongue
- Keep the doctrine pure
- Stay alert to signs of the times that signal the soon return of our Master.
- Be spiritually strong and courageous at all times
- Fight the good fight of faith.
- Pray without ceasing.
- Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. – Philippians 4:8

We will close these discussions of overcoming sin with the words of Truth found in the following verses. **1<sup>st</sup> John 5:4** – "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." **Revelation 2:7** – "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the ecclesias; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." **Revelation 2:11** – "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the ecclesias; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." **Revelation 2:17** – "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the ecclesias; To him that

overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." **Revelation 2:26** – "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations." **Revelation 3:5** – "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." **Revelation 3:12** – "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name." **Revelation 3:21** – "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." **Revelation 21:7** – "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

B. Henderson

## PRINCIPLES OF FELLOWSHIP AT THE LORD'S TABLE

In these evil days, when there is so much coming to pass that is wrong, and when among ourselves, as the Brethren of Christ, there are not only disagreements and contentions, but many yieldings to "the thinking of the flesh", we have arrived at a time when we need to "watch our steps" as never before. The evils appearing amongst ourselves in the form of disharmony and divisions, in large and small ecclesias, everywhere in the world, and it is not hard to see how these sad results come about...

What is the table of the Lord? Can we say that any table on which is bread and wine and is located in the usual place in a church building, and is used a communion table by the communicants of just any sect of professing believers of Christ, is in fact the Lord's table? By no means, and for various reasons.

**First** – Such provision for eating bread and drinking wine – if we are to have the real table of the Lord, must have been provided and used only by those who "know and believe the truth" 1<sup>st</sup> Tim. 4:3

**Second** – Those who partake at the table must be free from every form of heresy, and must have no connection with those who hold false views regarding the origin, work, life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose death is being commemorated. In short, there must be nothing enter that service that "loveth or maketh a lie" Rev. 21:27.

John W. Peake, excerpts from "The Lord's Table",  
The Christadelphian Advocate, May/June, 1933

# UNDERSTANDING THESE TIMES

*The 3<sup>rd</sup> Part conclusion of "Behind Closed Doors"*

**F**OR the past 2000 years historical Jewry has been relegated to the land of Shinar, amongst the Gentile nations where she has survived as God's Witness under the harshest of conditions. This is described in Ezekiel 34 and sets the stage for the nation of Israel down to the present in preparation for Christ's return. Verse 2... *"Woe to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks?"* Verse 5... *"And they were scattered because there is no shepherd (Christ was crucified); and they became food to all the beast of the field, when they were scattered."*

**We leave the nation of Israel in this shepherd-less condition,** although now in her own land, still fending off the ravenous beasts of the field, reeling to and fro under the directives of her own dubious shepherds and the distant "handlers of the horse-bridles" in Rev. 14:20, who try to manipulate her course. **Has the Gentile Ecclesia fared any better?** As a "Great geo-political Earthquake", the French Revolution solidified Humanistic principles and attitudes that had been in the earth since the beginning of time. **It has had tremendous influence upon our end times.**

The days of Noah witnessed man whose "every imagination" (planned wickedness) was only evil continually. In Gen. 6:11-12 we are told that the earth was corrupt and that violence was an accompanying by-product. Luke 17:26, makes the connection to the end times... *"as it was in the days of Noah so shall it be in the days of the Son of man."*

Proceeding the Flood is reference to Cain, and later Lamech, and transcending the Flood the god-less empire building of Nimrod and Asshur which led to Babel, the earliest monument to man. All the great civilizations of men touching upon the Israel of God as defined in Daniels Image, were all most humanistic in their makeup. It was under the Greek civilization that Humanism was defined. Man thinking on his own without his Hebrew God which by then he had abandoned. Thinking "outside the box", and casting off all restraints, human reasoning



The Humanist Symbol

was left to prevail. Rather than depending utterly upon a Deity as the Hebrews' were commanded, Humanism generated much personal and national pride in man's thinking and in his achievements, especially as raw paganism became more sophisticated. Greek humanism, a trust in human capability and celebration of human achievement, was a unique and powerful contribution to Western civilization in 300- 400 B.C., its pioneer philosophers being Plato and Aristotle.

In a nutshell this explosion of human thinking on education, democracy, art, music, literature, oratory, government, morality, situational ethics and athletics, to name a few, was well developed by the day of Christ so that the apostle Paul could say in Col. 2:8 - *"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."*

**The First Great Earthquake** as referenced in Revelation 6:12-15 saw the ascent of Constantine in 312 AD and the establishment of the Roman Catholic Church at the expense of lesser Christian groups including the faithful remnant. This all played out upon the backdrop of Greeko-Roman human expression with all moral inhibitions removed. Although the Roman Catholic Church continued to morph over the next prophetic 1260 day/years the "little horn" with eyes and a mouth continued to blaspheme Yahweh. Likewise, the Roman Empire, after 476 A.D., transitioned into the Holy Roman Empire, where the union of church and state was described like this in Rev. 13:11 - *"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb and he spoke like a dragon."*

**The Second Great Earthquake** as referenced in Revelation 11:13 saw the French Revolution burst forth in 1792, releasing the pent-up chaffing of the masses under Roman Catholic oppression and all of the liberal desires kindled under the previous one hundred years known as the Age of Enlightenment. The Napoleonic Wars brought the Holy Roman Empire to its end in 1806, only to enter its False Prophet phase. Up until this time, the focus of Brethren was this Harlot System, which by then had been exposed by the "church reformers" of the Middle Ages. The violence of the French Revolution solidified and released all of the tenants of liberal, human thinking that had enjoyed free license under the Roman and Greek civilizations.

This horrendous, political, social and religious upheaval has influenced our western civilization more than we can ever know. Bible students were to slowly learn that there was another enemy to be feared but first it had to be understood! **There has been an elephant in the room for the past two hundred years!** These influences are succinctly described in Revelation 16:13: *"And I saw three unclean spirits, like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet."* These demonic teachings are to permeate the entire world (habitual) especially within the arenas of emphasis just mentioned. These teachings and ideologies will serve to

gather the Western Nations to the battle of Armageddon. **Brethren, we are right here now, at the very end of the Sixth Vial.**

### So what do we see?

We learn from 1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 12:32 that observant thinking is not an attribute of all brethren. When King David was able to solidify his reign finally at Hebron, there was an outpouring of “mighty men” who came to embrace him including 200 “children of Issachar” with leadership talent. *“And of the children of Issachar, who were men who had understanding (Strong’s #998) of the times, to know (#3045) what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred; and all their brethren were under their command.”* “Understanding” is rendered: *“to separate mentally, be cunning, to be informed, to have intelligence, to instruct.”* To “know” is rendered: *“to ascertain by seeing, observation, recognition”*. In the context of 1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 12, the other thousands who joined David were men of war; in contrast, these 200 were leaders and strategists who were astute and informed...necessary for leadership in any organization, including our Ecclesia’s.

The French Revolution is the watershed for the last half of the Apocalypse and the discernment of these last days, including an informed look into our Ecclesia’s. In the early 1800’s we witnessed the rise of the “isms” – *Darwinism, Communism, Socialism, Fascism, Humanism and the great social experiment known as Democracy.* Humanism emerged as the victor of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in and through its medium of Democracy, which has been defined as “rule by the people”. It is under this banner that the familiar cry of the French Revolution...*Liberty, Equality and Fraternity* has come to total fruition, especially in America. The last two presidential elections and the bitter in-fighting displayed, has revealed how truly corrupt the model of Democracy has become. As in the earlier discussion of Ezekiel 8, we were given a look into the national heart of Israel on the eve of the first “overturning.”

Today, the national heart of American Society contains all of the wickedness imaginable and Humanism has totally leavened these times. In this government is found avowed communists, socialists, homosexuals, whormongers, adulterers, liars, truce breakers, haters of Israel, thieves, fierce arrogance, blasphemers and corruption of a degree never seen in this country before. Democracy is “rule by the people”; this President was elected by 47% of the liberal masses; surprisingly, 92% of Jewry voted for this President as well.



As a society becomes more God-less – and that was the design of the French Revolution, replacing religion with the God of Reason and human experience – a society will only unravel. Groups like the *American Humanist Association* are not humanists just in the sense that they have an interest in the humanities or that they value man over nature. In their self-definition, **God does not exist**, and it is a destructive illusion to believe in Him. The whole thrust of the Humanist Manifesto written in 1933 was to deny the belief in God and to assert that man was entirely on his own to achieve the world and existence of his dreams.



As liberalism, and its more recent name, *progressivism* has come into play in the last fifty years, the adjective “secular” has been added to humanism so that we have now secular humanism. Secular, from the Latin “*saeculum*” means time or age. To call one a secular humanist means that he is completely time-bound, totally a product of this age, a creature of the here and now with no vision of eternity. Thus the past election unleashed an urgency of “needs” and concerns that became key talking points and concerns of the masses who voted for the entitlement agenda of a bigger government.

### Education

The agenda of present-day secular humanism centers upon several planks that have been well orchestrated and hit hard. One is EDUCATION. Billions of dollars have been given to education to fund everything from pre-schools, to curriculums on women’s rights, to sex education in the grade schools, to the rights of same sex couples to name but a few. Test scores have not risen; validation has been vigorously opposed as students continue to lag in the sciences and in many instances do not even graduate.

Meanwhile, a liberal **humanist agenda** has been vigorously pushed so that, with the support of a very liberal and powerful teachers union, the public education system in America is beyond repair. Darwin’s *Theory of Evolution* over the past 200 years, has expanded out of the animal realm and is regarded as the engine that drives all social and political change. The ideology of Thomas More’s book, *Utopia*, published in 1516 have today been incorporated in the ideology of a “Global Village.” We are to commit our young people to “the system.” John Dewey (1859-1952) was a most influential American philosopher, especially in the field of education. As the main author of the first Humanist Manifesto, Dewey wrote extensively on keeping religion out of schools of what he called “false biases.” That has been effectively accomplished.

### Toleration

Another Humanist plank is TOLERATION. Situational ethics dictates that individuals have their rights to explore their own values within a vast web of



societal self-expression without dogmatic or authoritarian religions that put guilt trips on people and that limit their expression and growth. This gives rise to the constant contention over **rights**. Freedom of speech, freedom to protest or to demonstrate, immigrant rights, freedom to enjoy sex at any age and with whom ever, gun rights, rights of animals, etc., as long as we do not impinge on the rights and pleasure of one another. This has sparked a huge division among the ranks of women and the populace in general on their rights to have an abortion for whatever reason. Since *Rowe vs. Wade* was decided by the U.S. Supreme Court, 54 million lives have been terminated in the name of women's rights. We are sickened by the Canaanite worship of Moloch and the child sacrifices dropped through the grates, how about 54 million in the guise of Democracy!

Scripturally, the only right we have, if in Adam, is the right to die. If in covenant, we have the right to anticipate resurrection and a fair judgment, and during our sojourn, the precious mediator-ship of our Lord and merciful and loving providence from his Father.

## Science

Another Humanist plank is SCIENCE. As "*knowledge has increased and men run to and fro*," at a hectic competitive pace, evolution into every sphere has become mind boggling. Fueled by the conviction that man can solve any problem (because God is out of the equation), we commit billions to medical research for stem-cell research, cancer cures, gene mapping, seed genetics, livestock strains, space exploration, computer driven robotics to name just a few; the accomplishments are mind boggling and indeed quite impressive. **But we must not forget that at the core is "man can solve it" and that God is irrelevant.**

## Environmentalism

ENVIRONMENTALISM has become a hot topic as it is thought to be within the realm of man to fix or to preserve. To guard and to protect the earth has become another religion in itself, when as in the Goya Theory, the earth is regarded as a living entity. Global warming (and cooling), that is caused by man, an entanglement of politics to say the least, looms as a giant "money pit" to drain humanity and to expose their foolishness when this is truly God's realm to adjust or tweak.

## Politics

Lastly, POLITICS as a Humanistic plank, has been a powerful medium to propagate all of the above facets and agendas as was demonstrated by the success of the French Revolution, in sweeping God aside and in the enthronement of the *God of Reason* and the outbreak of Human expression. The three Frog-like spirits are now truly like demons.

## A Winding Down

The past election has given us a look into the corruption and divisiveness of democracy, which is now at its lowest ebb with both parties, and an uninformed populace fractured and at odds. Politicians are driven by greed and function to preserve their own God-less agendas. The U.S. president now governs as if he was the Wizard of Oz, behind a curtain and free to pursue his own agenda. Ephesians 6:12 addresses this clearly: "*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*"

At the end of every major dispensation we have seen society wind down. That was the case approaching the Flood; that was true approaching the First Overturning of Israel by the Babylonians; that was true approaching 70AD; it was true of Rome at the rise of Constantine, and it was true on the eve of the French Revolution. These times are no different now on the eve of the **Third Great Earthquake** referenced in Revelation 16:18. This also corresponds to the Third Overturning of Ezek.21:27, only this great upheaval will feature a literal world shaking earthquake as well as a religious and political earthquake, that will result in the leveling of the "*great mountain*" in Zechariah 4:7. The nation of Israel, as in the other previous "*overturnings*", will feel the judgment of Yahweh in addition to the world and its wicked populace. It is no coincidence that the feet of Daniel's Image in Dan 2:34 are *part of iron and part of clay* which represents the humanism and the demonic teachings and influences of the Babylonish Harlot system, which will quickly become a great world empire or federation as the "peoples, and multitudes and nations and tongues" of Rev. 17:15. The Kingdom of Men is thus represented as standing up to oppose Christ on this fragile base of human design and apostasy only to be toppled by Christ, the Stone power.

Left unchecked this Sin System of Humanity would destroy the earth. That was the case in Genesis 6:11-12, "*And God looked upon the earth and behold it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.*" This state is found at the very end time and is referenced in Revelation 19:2, "*For true and righteous are his judgments; for He hath judged the great harlot, who did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.*" "Corrupt" is rendered "*to spoil, to ruin, to wither, to destroy*". These ungodly destroyers of the earth will themselves be destroyed. (Rev. 11:18)

## So what about Christadelphia?

It is difficult to live in these times and to be immune from these outside forces; especially if not clued in. Christadelphian expositors have repeatedly said that these Laodicean times are the most difficult to live in. The enemy is so many-faceted and so smooth and so subtle that our Scriptural principles can easily be compromised. Six thousand years later, man has so much to say for

himself, and of himself. He imagines himself to be supremely important and God to be irrelevant. Since Eden, man imagines himself to be as God, knowing good and evil, just as the serpent suggested he could be. “Sin” is a word we seldom hear today. Things are no longer black or white, today we have “options”.

Stress Points in livestock management is a way of approaching problems within a herd. The awareness of stress points is important, especially when there is illness within the herd (think ecclesia). Stress points may be: *drought, resulting in a drop in nutrition; it may be in a particular disease requiring a rush of antibiotic treatment to specific animals only; it may be from predators outside the flock that are especially aggressive that must be dealt with; consistently bad weather resulting in a low barometer* is an example also. When several of these factors collide, problems start to manifest themselves. **This is true in our ecclesias.**

To prevent things from spreading, there is a concerted effort to improve the health, nutrition and environment to eliminate as many “stress points” as possible and as quickly as possible. Livestock are rotated to other pastures, diet is changed, antibiotics may be administered (think appropriate Scripture and counseling by competent brethren). **Look into our ecclesia’s with this model in mind, after-all we are compared to sheep!**

If Matt. 18 becomes necessary, keeps the process moving. The objective is resolution and reclamation, even the final stage. Dis-fellowship has its place, less false doctrine or errant behavior should leaven the whole ecclesia as did the words of Hymenaeus and Philetus, and “*overthrow the faith of some.*”

Tolerance, can be an excuse for not taking action that is unpleasant, so is denial. It is often disguised as love which can become a real guilt trip, and lead to much indecision. Is it *phileo* or friendship based or is it *agape* which is rooted and grounded in doing the will of Yahweh? In our ecclesias if we constantly remind ourselves “whom do we serve,” these decisions are easier to make.

## So, how have so many of our ecclesias fallen into disarray?

Remember back in Ezekiel 12:22, when Yahweh says: “*Son of man, what is that proverb that you have in the land of Israel, saying, The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth?*” Jesus likewise in the Olivet Prophecy stated: that the evil servant shall say in his heart, “*my Lord delayeth his coming.*” Peter warns of this attitude of mind among the Jewish brethren as the coming of 70AD loomed on the political horizon. “*Where is the promise of his coming?*”

For our ecclesias to entertain the old apostasy of “kingdom now”, Christ is king now, and that we enjoy a snippet of eternal life now”, (other than a hope)

plays right into Humanist thinking (and freedoms) that most religions have long embraced. They say “*Our elders have become too rigid.*” *Statements of Faith are too rigid and restrictive; Bridging Documents such as the BASF, CGAF, NASU, and UAO8 after all, accommodate more brethren at the memorial service. Christadelphian’s aren’t the only ones with the Truth.*

Drawing from Ezekiel, it takes two ingredients to facilitate ecclesial drift...(stress points):

1. **False prophets**, teachers with their own agenda...
2. **An unhealthy congregation** that serves as a medium or culture plate. Together the situation is ripe for trouble. Without an unsound populace with itching ears, it is difficult for false teachers to gain traction.

Humanism dictates that man can have it now, design it, enjoy it, modify it; this is his evolutionary right and is the spirit of Democracy. The creature rules over the Creator. Scripture dictates that man is the one that must conform to God’s criteria because He is the absolute. The arrogance of humanity will soon be eliminated.

## Conclusion

We are on the eve of the 3<sup>rd</sup> “overturning” as described in Ezekiel 21:27. This also coincides with the 3<sup>rd</sup> “great earthquake” of Revelation 16:18 ; that earthquake will also engulf Israel and will be cataclysmic in scope. We have considered a few of the “stress points” proceeding the previous overturnings – they all have many similarities. Our ecclesias are not immune from these influences. Ephesians 2:2 addresses the prevailing scene, “*In times past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience.*”

Sojourning with vision is critical to instill in our young people. A sojourner is a “resident alien” whose kingdom is not of this age, yet is an intense Hope. With this consideration of history we in no way wish to minimize the apostate Religious System that has permeated Daniel’s Forth Beast as the “*little horn*” and which emerges as the Harlot of the Apocalypse. **This article has focused on the prevailing malaise of humanity, “the prince of the power of the air,”** which blankets everything. It is no coincidence that legalized marijuana is sweeping this country resulting in fuzzy thinking and subtle brain damage to our youth. We have a new Pope who is a Jesuit, the “black ops” arm of the Roman Church! We have the Russian Gog carving out his stance in the Middle East. And at this printing, we have another “reunion” effort brewing and targeting young Christadelphia.

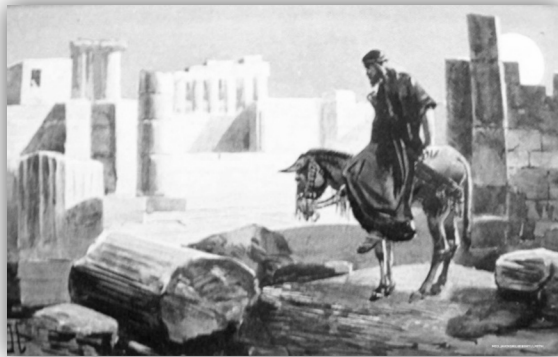
In these last days we desperately need men of Issachar who understand the times,...who know what to do, ...and who can stand in the gaps.

Don Northey

# LESSONS FROM THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

*"Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them." 4:9*

**T**HE book of Nehemiah, written in the estimation of most chroniclers in 444 B.C. at least seventy years after the completion of the Second Temple, is presented as a journal of this man who identifies himself as being cupbearer to the Persian king. It is a relatively short book, able to be read from beginning to end in an hour or so. Positioned between the book of Ezra, which deals with the rebuilding of the Temple, and the exciting account of Esther saving her people, Nehemiah's account of rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem could seem rather mundane. But we know nothing in Scripture is mundane. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:" (2Timothy 3:16). It is necessary then to look more deeply into the book of Nehemiah to ascertain the lessons it contains. Within this book can be found lessons on various aspects of prayer, on the need for perseverance, on dealing with those who oppose us and the word of Truth, and on keeping the Sabbath Day holy.



## A Man of Action/A Man of Prayer

Nehemiah is seen as a man of action. Whether it is approaching the king for permission to depart, managing the monumental task of rebuilding the destroyed wall, or dealing with those opposed to the task, Nehemiah faces the problem squarely and takes the necessary steps to solve it. He does not wait to

get agreement from others regarding his plan, nor does he wait to see what the popular position would be. Nehemiah doesn't wait; he acts.

But more than a man of action, Nehemiah is seen as a man of prayer. The actions recorded in his journal are always supported by his prayers to Yahweh. Nehemiah is seen in prayer eleven times: 1: 5-11; 2:4; 4:4-5; 4:9; 5:19; 6:9, 14; 13: 14, 22, 29, 31.

The longest prayer in the book of Nehemiah occurs in the first chapter and offers many lessons in how prayer should be conducted. His first reaction on receiving bad news is to pray, which should be our first response to any circumstance we face. Next, note Nehemiah's preparation: he wept, he mourned, he fasted - **and then** he prayed. From the month of Kislev (corresponding to our November/December) to the month of Nisan (corresponding to our March/April), Nehemiah "prepared" to pray. For three months after receiving the news that the wall of Jerusalem was broken down and its gates burned with fire, he wept, mourned, fasted and prayed before he ever spoke to the king. This same fervor should be shown in our prayers and they should not be filled with empty words or trite phrases. The Apostle James reinforces this same idea in his epistle (James 5: 13-20). Our prayers and concern for others should show the same fervor as seen in Nehemiah.

In viewing the prayer in Chapter One, many similarities can be seen with Daniel's prayer in Daniel 9: 4-19 which was spoken about a hundred years prior to Nehemiah's. The pattern in both follows the format of acknowledgement of Yahweh's position and power, a confession of sins (in both cases of the people of Israel), a thanksgiving for Yahweh's mercy and only at the last, the request or supplication. This pattern can be made into the following acronym:

Acknowledgement  
Confession  
Thanksgiving  
Supplication

Note that supplication is the last and least part of the prayers of these two faithful servants. So it should be in our own prayers.

In analyzing these prayers, it should be noted that both men (as well as many other prophets) identified with God in His sorrow over man's sins. This godly sorrow is also seen in Paul's letter to the Romans (9: 2-4; 10: 1-2) and 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 7:10: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." shows us the result of this godly sorrow. One of the most poignant passages in Scripture is Jesus' sorrow over the attitude of those in Jerusalem: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say,



*Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*" (Luke 13:34- 35). We too must share in the godly sorrow over man's sins, particularly in the brotherhood.

The following table presents a parallel of these prayers and in both is seen that man's sins become theirs, as shown by the editorial "we". They identified themselves with the sins of the people (Neh. 1: 6-7; Dan. 9: 4-6). We are all guilty of sin (1<sup>st</sup> John 1: 8) and should pray not only for ourselves, but for others especially those in the brotherhood who are falling away from the standards and doctrines Yahweh has established. The same instruction is seen in the Lord's Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5: 44; 6: 12) and in Luke 6: 28.

NEHEMIAH	DANIEL
O, LORD, God of heaven, the great and awesome God,	O, LORD, the great and awesome God,
Who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and obey his commands	Who keeps his covenant of love with all who love him and obey his commands
We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees, and laws you gave your servant Moses.	We have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws.
Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations, but if you return to men and obey my commands, then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name.'	...the men of Judah and the people of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far, in all the countries where you have scattered us because of our unfaithfulness to you....Therefore the curses and sworn judgments written in the Law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out on us....You have fulfilled the words spoken against us and against our rulers by bringing upon us this great disaster.
They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand.	Now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of Egypt with a mighty hand and who made for yourself a name that endure to this day....
O LORD, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name	Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servant....Give ear, O God, and hear....We do not make request of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy
Give your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man	O LORD, listen! O LORD, forgive! O LORD, hear and act! For your sake, O my God, do not delay because your city and your people bear your name.

Paul shows the Galatians and us the reason for sharing in others' sins. "*Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*" (Galatians 6:2). Throughout Scripture we see that men involved in the salvation of others suffer greatly. Joseph had tried to follow the commands of Yahweh (unlike his brothers), yet it was he who was sold into slavery and later thrown into prison (Gen. 37-40). But, as he assured his brothers: "...*God did send me before you to preserve life.*" (Gen. 45:5). Jeremiah, because he spoke out against the sins of the people and about their coming destruction, was beaten and put into stocks (Jer. 20: 1-2), and later lowered into a cistern where he sank into the mud (Jer. 38: 1-6). Ezekiel spent over a year lying on his left side (390 days) and his right side (40 days) to bear the sin of the people (Ez. 4: 4-8). Paul catalogued his sufferings in the well-known passage in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 11: 23-28. Of course, the greatest suffering and sacrifice for others was shown to us by our Master in submitting willingly to the cross of crucifixion. Whatever small sacrifices or suffering we are called on to endure are nothing compared to these illustrations.

Another aspect seen in these prayers is praying with God's purpose in mind. They stress the promise of forgiveness (Neh. 1: 8-9, Deut. 28: 63-67). The name by which Nehemiah addresses God shows his confidence that God would fulfill the promises and that He was working through the Elohim or selected men. Having knowledge of God recognizes that punishment is deserved for sins and that the sinner must show a penitent spirit. Overcoming sin requires recognition, confession, repentance and THEN forgiveness will come. A man of prayer includes himself in the petition even if he has not committed that particular sin. Unlike the Pharisees who did not seem to see the sin in themselves, we must see ourselves as part of the greater Brotherhood and pray for others as we would pray for ourselves.

Nehemiah shows us that we must combine prayer and action: "*Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.*" (Neh. 4: 9). We must be involved in our prayers. "*Prayer is cooperating with God. It does not leave everything to Him, nor does it ignore His help.*" (H.P. Mansfield, Making Prayer Powerful, p. 37) It is not enough to just speak the words; we must be prepared to carry out our requests with Yahweh's help (James 2: 14-18). If we want to help our brother with spiritual or physical needs, we must pray, then act.

All important decisions should be preceded by prayer; prayer is always possible regardless of the circumstances. We must always feel as if God is near. Prayer should be part of our very being, and be available to us all the day, not just at specific times (morning and evening).

Our prayers should be natural, not formal and cold. Nehemiah is often seen in short, one sentence prayers called ejaculatory (Latin for *swift darts*) prayers. In Chapter Thirteen, we see him four times in this type of prayer. Prayers do not have to be lengthy. We should be able to approach Yahweh at any time of

the day or night with a prayer of thanksgiving or a request for help. Nehemiah shows us the meaning of Paul's admonition to be instant in prayer. In Neh. 2: 4, the king asks him a question, Nehemiah prays and then answers. Prayer is a silent, personal thing, but easy for one who lives constantly as being in God's presence. He's always there (Eph. 6:18; I Thess. 5: 17). Prayers should reflect our respectful relationship with Yahweh, not the casual conversational tone that some religions encourage; but also not a formal, perfunctory tone with no feeling. "Prayer is not a matter of merely closing the eyes and using the tongue, but of coming humbly into the august presence of the great Creator, the King of Heaven." (H.P. Mansfield, Making Prayer Powerful, p. 19). It is to sustain us in trial (Neh. 6: 9; Psa. 37: 39-40).

For our prayer to be effective, our way of life must reflect the importance of God in it. Do we give Him the best part of each day or only the part left over at the end of the day? Do we assume a prayerful position (on our knees or standing or sitting with head bowed)? Do we think about our prayers or just repeat trite phrases? Our way of life will always fall short, but it is the recognition of this fact that leads us to Christ through whom we may seek forgiveness following our confession and repentance. Look to King Hezekiah's illness as an example (Isa. 38: 2- 3). The debate is NOT whether Hezekiah did good in those extra fifteen years. It is the fact that he was given them that is important. The story of Abraham also demonstrates this in that he was "accounted" righteous, not because of any works, but because of his complete trust in God. It is trying even when we fail, that righteousness is accomplished (Psa. 37: 23). Keeping sight of Christ or Elohim over our shoulder, observing all our words and deeds, helps to keep us on the right path. Finally we must always remember that our prayers should reflect the will of God and His purpose with His creation of which we are a small part. Christ's example in the garden must always be our guide. "Not my will, but Thine be done" will help us to order our actions, our words, and our thoughts to comply with His will.

Finally, Nehemiah teaches, as did David, that music can be prayers (Neh. 12: 46). Many of our hymns are based on Psalms or other passages of Scripture. We should sing these hymns to the best of our ability with a heart full of joy, acknowledging His Power, His Mercy and His Grace, remembering His Promises and praising Him. They should NOT be used as a cover for arriving late to the meeting or for putting finishing touches on the upcoming service.

Nehemiah is a man of prayer who is spontaneous in his communion with God, for God is never far from him. All his actions are preceded by prayer and the people around him are aware that Nehemiah's life is permeated with God. He sees God in every small occurrence in life and acknowledges it. He tries to see God's way in everything in life - bad or good, personal or in the brotherhood. (*To be concluded next issue.*)

*Submitted by one of our readers*

# STAND FAST

*An address given at the Mt. Sherman  
Unamended Christadelphian Gathering  
September, 2012*

**T**HE Scripture selected by the Mt Sherman Ecclesia as a theme for this gathering is 2<sup>nd</sup> Thess. 2: 15-17. And is one of many throughout our Bible that admonishes us to look to the old teaching, the old ways, the old paths upon which the faithful from all ages were to rely on for guidance, in seeking and serving Yahweh.

The theme passage reads, "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."

Before considering the theme verses, let's consider Chapter 1 of Second Thessalonians. In this second Epistle the Apostle Paul was writing to his brethren in Christ at the Ecclesia in Thessalonica. Praising them for their love one toward another, their patience, and faith exhibited during the tribulations, and persecutions they were forced to endure from powers outside their community of faith. Giving them the assurance that their endurance of these sufferings was not in vain; but was sure and plain evidence of the righteousness of God's judgment in choosing them to manifest his name in the world, and to assure them that God would recompense those who were of the type that troubled them: "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his holy Angels".

In the second chapter Paul is admonishing them to show the same perseverance when they are confronted by the enemy from within their Community of Faith. For there were going to be false teachers arise from among those who claimed to share the same faith as they. Please consider Chapter 2: 1-12.

The spirit of apostasy was mightily at work in the Ecclesias of the world not long after the ascension of Jesus to the right hand of the Father in heaven, and it continued to assert itself until the mystery of iniquity, and that man of sin was indeed finally revealed. That same spirit of apostasy continues to assert itself

today, and the children of God must be on their toes to expose it.

This enemy of the child of God is much more dangerous than any enemy who could inflict physical persecution on the believers of that age; or any age (though in many instances they did physically harm people who were much more righteous than themselves), for this enemy had the power to steal a person's salvation!

The attack was subtle, seemingly innocuous to many, but Man's nature being as it is would reveal its weaknesses. Some would readily accept these false doctrines because they appealed to the fleshly way of thinking. It provided them with a visible Icon to worship. It allowed them to hold to pagan practices, and made the new religion easier to embrace.

Some would abhor the introduction of false precepts and doctrines into the Gospel they had received, and for it they paid a severe price – Physically suffering violence, and even death. Some though not liking its introduction feared the power wielded by those of authority, and did nothing to expose nor exterminate the error. They tolerated its inclusion into the worship service of their individual Ecclesia's. In time they would come to accept the false teachings, and then at last were found to embrace them as truth. The adversary had definitely succeeded in harming these more than those they slew with the sword, for they did steal their salvation.

This was the concern of the Apostle Paul when he penned the words chosen as a theme for this gathering. He desperately desired his Brethren to hold fast to the doctrines they had learned from God's word, and had received from him and the other Apostles, for they were the truth based upon sound interpretation of the prophets of old time; given to them, (the Apostles) by Jesus The Christ himself. The threat was real in Paul's day, and brethren, we know it still exists today. We needn't fear physical persecution, but we can expect to be shunned as a result of our standing our ground on doctrinal matters.

## The power of God's Word

The word of Yahweh is the most powerful force that has ever existed. By it all that our eye can survey was created, and continues to be sustained. The Psalmist declared in Psalm 33, *"By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as a heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was; he commanded, and it stood fast."*

The Apostle John wrote in John 1:1 *"In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God"*. The first chapter of Genesis establishes this statement as truth. Genesis 1:1 states *"In the beginning God, created the heaven and the earth"*. He was before the beginning; else He could not have created; and He was responsible for the heaven and the earth coming

into existence. We then are given the details in Genesis 1 of how all things came to be as we know them. Each new day of the creation week beginning with, *"And God said"*, and ending with *"and it was so"*. God's word and His being cannot be separated, for the one confirms the other. Yahweh speaks, and that which He speaks is. And because we view the wonders of His creation, and witness the fulfillment of His recorded word, we know Yahweh exists, and that He is the only true God.

Through the narrative of the Hebrew Scriptures, man from the time of Moses on has been informed of God's purpose with the earth, and of man's responsibilities toward that purpose, and to the Creator. All the law and the Prophets were caused to be recorded that a remnant of God's people might learn righteousness in order to properly serve, and worship their creator.

In 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 1: 19-21 *"We have also a more sure word of prophesy; where unto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, (the darkness of a man's mind can be illuminated if they take heed to that sure word of God), until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophesy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophesy came not in old time by the will of man: But holy men of God spake as they were moved by the holy spirit."*

Looking back to John 1 he states further of the word in verse 2 *"The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; (God through his word created everything), and without him (without God, or his word) was not any thing made that was made. In him (that is in his person, and his word) was life; and the life (that physical creation which was a clear manifest of his word) was the light of men. (the light of God's word through the manifestation of creation was intended to illuminate the minds of men, and bring them unto him.) And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."* The illuminating brilliance of God's perfect word did shine in the darkness of the decaying Mosaic order, but few of that age were able to comprehend the brilliance of that light. Later it was manifest in the person of Jesus the Christ, but again they didn't comprehend it. As a result they killed the only begotten son of God.

The brightness of God's word is still actively illuminating the minds of some in these dark times. Though many are called, (or are drawn to his word, for they do perceive the Bible as his word), there are but few who are able to comprehend or accept its message of truth.

John the baptizer was sent of God to bear witness of a new manifestation of the Light or word of Yahweh to the Jewish people. The true light, in order that all men through him; (that is through this new manifestation of illumination to the minds of men); might believe, but the Apostle says, *"he came unto his own, and his own received him not"*. We know he is speaking of Jesus, and we know Jesus was roundly rejected by the main stream religious leaders of his age.

Some people did receive him, and the Apostle John says of them *“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the son's of God, even to them that believe on his name. Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of GOD.”* The Apostle John further states *“And the word ( that life giving, illuminating manifestation of God's power to bring men unto himself), was made flesh, ( or was manifested in the person of the man Jesus) and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth”.*

How wondrous are the works of our God. He manifests himself openly though the Elohim. He made His will known through inspiration, visions and dreams to selected individuals whom He declared to be righteous. These were responsible for the word of Yahweh being preserved for the ages through the written word.

He chose the descendants of His friend Abraham through Isaac, and Jacob to be a peculiar people unto Himself. They were to be witnesses both to His existence, and to the veracity of His holy word. He gave them their name “Israel”, (prince with God), He gave them the law of commandments, and priesthood too instruct them in righteousness; with ceremonies, and rituals of sacrifice designed to expose to themselves, their exceedingly sinful condition and nature, and above all their need for redemption.

Unfortunately most thought the law was the means to the end; that righteousness could be achieved by offering sacrifice, because when sacrifice was given blood was shed, thus atonement was provided according to the letter of the law in their eyes. They failed to recognize that they weren't actually keeping the law, they continued in sin - this being shown by the fact that sacrifice was continually required. They chose to live by the letter of the law – the keeping of the ordinance's – not recognizing, nor realizing the spiritual intent of the law, and it's ordinances. This happens when man relies on his own fleshly thinking instead of seriously considering and praying for enlightenment to the spiritual intent of God's word. Therefore even today strange and unsound propositions and proposals are presented as one's idea of truth. And it's up to us as faithful servants to compare those proposals to the sound words of truth provided for our instruction, by Yahweh, Jesus and his Apostles; always comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

God revealed through the law that full forgiveness, and atonement for sin and iniquity would only be achieved through the shedding of blood, and that of a sacrificial victim of the same fallen species, though being personally innocent of a crime of sin. He revealed to Moses the pattern of the Tabernacle and all its furniture as to how they were to be constructed, and of what materials they were to be constructed of. He gave instruction as to how each piece of furniture was to be used in the Tabernacle service.

From our vantage point of today, with the writings of the New Testament

Apostles, and diligent study by our pioneer brethren, and ourselves, we have been shown that everything connected with the Tabernacle – its fixtures, and its services – typified some aspect of the work of One extremely important individual. Few who would live under the Law would be able to comprehend these important facts, though some would. When God would raise up a prophet to reprove the two kingdoms as they strayed from his precepts those in authority would reject the message, and would seek to kill the messenger. Though God would have all His creation to submit to His will, and be saved, it is apparent that His word was preserved for the perfection of just a remnant.

## The incessant influence of falsehood

The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah both struggled throughout their history because of the influence of false teachers, and prophets, and **for their longing to worship with their neighbors.** Not all the people were guilty of apostasy, but sufficient were to warrant the destruction of their kingdoms. The frightening judgments of Yahweh are about to be poured out once again this time upon the kingdoms, and peoples of this age. Many in these nations think they are good upstanding disciples of Christ, and are sure to be rewarded. Their cry will be *“Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?”* But to them Jesus says, *“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”* (Matt. 7)

For the past 170+ years our Christadelphian community has been bombarded with incessant attempts to influence our spiritual thoughts, by people with a “better idea”. It has caused numerous divisions in Christadelphia, and ideas are still being proposed today that corrupt the sound Scriptural doctrinal teachings of the Law, the Prophets, our Master and his Apostles; and what **we** know are the correct doctrinal principles laid down in our Christadelphian Unamended statement of faith. Doctrinal principals, I say, which are supported by the sureness of God's perfect word. Yet, divisions are on the increase. I used to marvel at the words of the Master when I read *“never the less when the son of man cometh will he find faith in the earth?”* I thought Christadelphians have it, so it must still be in the earth when he comes. But, as these last days unfold before our eyes I now can see the reason for the question.

Because the northern tribes forsook God, God brought the Assyrians down to utterly destroy their Kingdom. Many in Israel, the 10 tribe Kingdom; who sought to serve only Yahweh were able to escape to the land, but the ten tribe kingdom has ever since ceased to exist. Soon after the Kingdom of Judah, following the same path as her sister kingdom, received the same punishment and were led captive into Babylon for seventy years. But even in the exile to Babylon, Yahweh continued to communicate to His people providing guidance through His righteous prophets. And after the seventy years were expired, He



allowed Judah to return to their land, too rebuild the ruins of their temple, and to live as a separate people though no longer to be the dominate kingdom they once were.

### **The Word made flesh**

By the time the Word was made flesh and dwelt among them whom the Apostle John spoke of in chapter 1; Judah was under full Roman occupation. The fourth Gentile world dominion spoken of in Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, was a historical fact. The influence of false worship, and political ambition's gained from Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Greek, and Roman occupation corrupted the Jewish religious system. And the leaders in Israel were completely corrupted, to the point where Judah was going to fall a second time. This time the destruction would be devastating: their Temple would be broken down and burned again, and Israel's people would be scattered throughout the earth and suffer for their transgressions against God, His word, and His son. But that judgment would not come until all had been fulfilled that was written in the Law and the Prophets concerning the first advent of the one they failed to recognize who walked among them, and whom they put to death.

Jesus came to them meek and lowly but with a beautiful message intended to give them hope of a reward of life eternal. Many embraced the Lord and his message, and as John recorded in chapter 1:12,13 *"as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the son's of God."* Fleshly thinking cannot bring men to Christ. The word of God is what calls us. Those who received Jesus at his first advent being Jewish were born into a newness of life because they recognized that Jesus was manifesting the word and will of Yahweh. He told those of his day who believed on him, and us through the writings of his Apostles, *"I am the way the truth and the life no man cometh unto the father but by me."*

Jesus was the perfect living example and manifestation of God's word in the flesh, and is the sole authority to which one must go when seeking the old paths, and the old ways. Fully knowledgeable of all Yahweh's precious word he taught his Apostles, and his Hebrew followers all that was necessary for one to gain eternal salvation; bestowing upon his Apostles a portion of the Holy Spirit as a token of the authority that he had given to them that they should speak his words on his behalf.

### **The Bible record**

True to the charge Jesus had given his Apostles, they immediately set out to preach his Gospel to all creatures in the known world (*kosmos*). By this time the Law, and the Prophets had already been recorded in books or scrolls, and were available for the Apostles for use to confirm Christ's Gospel message. The Apostles own words were caused to be recorded as well making, it possible for the doctrines of the Gospel of Christ to spread even further into the world, as relating to distance and time.

Many Jew's, and Gentiles would believe the Apostles doctrine, and

embraced the Gospel of Christ. Numerous Ecclesias were established among the gentile nations in the first century. But even then it was a struggle for Paul and the others to keep the purity of the truth they had preached from being corrupted. It became necessary for Peter, Paul, and others to visit, and write letters/epistles to the brethren in distant Ecclesia's admonishing, encouraging, and correcting them in order that their calling, and election might be sure. These too were collected, and recorded and were passed down through the ages to us.

So the Law, The Prophets, the Gospels, and the epistles of the Apostles were collected and recorded into a compilation of 66 Books known throughout the world as the Bible. It is the only source from which a correct understanding of God's word, plan and purpose for the earth and man upon it can be derived, as it has been for hundreds of years. It is available in almost every language on earth, and able to be studied in the privacy of one's own home in most countries. A Bible can be found in nearly every so called "Christian" home in the United States, but it's rarely studied, and if it is studied its message is made to fit preconceived conclusions. Multitudes calling themselves Christians of the common era have made themselves rich teaching from its pages a message that is very appealing to the thinking of the flesh, and have drawn to themselves millions upon millions of followers having itching ears. For these so called religious leaders formulate their message to incorporate many of the Pagan beliefs that are familiar, and appealing to their hearers. But in no way do their doctrines resemble the Gospel message delivered by Christ and his Apostles, and it appears this is the way the masses want it to be, for they pay their false guides well to perpetuate the lies. As a result, when the Lord himself appears in his Glory they will not know who he is, and their rejection of him will be to their peril – Just as his rejection by his brethren at his first advent was to the Jewish commonwealth.

### **A continual witness**

There is no question in my mind that God has reserved for himself from every age, and generation a remnant who are fit to be numbered among the children of God. The last mass spiritual awakening occurred from the late 1700's (about 1792) to the late 1800's. People all across this nation, moved by the excitement created by Protestant evangelical missionaries, suddenly took a serious interest in things pertaining to God. I firmly believe that in the mid 1800's during this awakening God used a man named John Thomas as an essential tool to revive the True Gospel message taught by Christ, and his Apostles in these last days of gentile times. He too sought for the meaning of life from God's Holy word, and we dear brethren are the beneficiaries of his work in the Lord. I am not saying Bro. Thomas was inspired. He was, however, blessed with an intellect and a passion for truth; and had an ability to communicate to others his findings, and thus became a tool that Yahweh saw fit to use in the last days of gentile times to call from among these gentiles *a people for His name*.

The essential principles of the truth Dr. Thomas was able to glean from his intense, and purposeful study of the Holy Scriptures were formulated, and published in Birmingham, England in 1877, and were known then as the Birmingham Christadelphian statement of faith. These extremely important Doctrines were laid out and supported by irrefutable scriptural proof, and were printed to express to all who would be interested the basis of belief that must be accepted if one truly desires to serve God, and lay hold on eternal life. These were not John Thomas' requirements but God's, and the proof was given by references from God's recorded word. It was necessary at that period in time to have this statement of faith as a tool to refute the blasphemous teachings of both Catholic and protestant churchology. For many, debates and evening town lectures were being held both in Britain, and in the U.S to persuade the populace of the correctness of their "Christian" view point concerning spiritual matters.

A minor multitude of intelligent, thinking people who took the time to study these principals set down in this statement of faith, and the time to examine the scriptural references provided to support those principals; and (who ruminated upon them prayerfully mulling them around in their minds) came to the obvious conclusion that this statement of faith does indeed correctly represent the doctrines that make up the Gospel as it is presented in the Law, the Prophets, and the teachings of both Jesus and his Apostles found within the pages of their own Bible. Dr. Thomas presented his findings not to tell people what to believe, but to show what he believed and why; in doing so he taught us how to study the word of God to gain knowledge, understanding, and ultimately wisdom to conduct our lives in conformity to God's word.

Those beliefs as set forth in that document were accepted as the basis upon which the Christadelphian fellowship would stand. And for many years it did stand the test, keeping out false teaching that were so prevalent in other denominations. Christadelphians were united in the one hope so beautifully presented, and expressed in such simple terms.

## An Amendment

But in time division did come to the Christadelphian community. Someone came up with an idea, an idea that should not have had such an impact on the community. Not everyone accepted this new idea.\* They felt it was not strongly supported by scripture, but was of minimal importance to the Gospel of Christ

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\* Though the Resurrectional Responsibility of unbaptized rejecters of the Word was not a new idea (Bro. Thomas having believed it); forcing it as a doctrine of fundamental value and making it a community-wide test of fellowship was in fact new to the Christadelphian Body. And, bringing the so called "Enlightened Rejecter" out of the grave to the Judgment Seat of Christ, upon the same basis as the Household, was in opposition to the principal of resurrection through covenant. Connected to this issue, it cannot be ignored that errors and confusion surrounding the matter of "Adamic Condemnation" was truly at the root of the controversies of the 1890's. [S.K.]

and should not therefore be used as a test of fellowship. But those who locked onto this new idea felt quite differently about its importance, and decided to alter, or amend the original statement of faith making this new proposal an obstacle to prohibit fellowship with those who disagreed with it among Christadelphians.

A seemingly insignificant error of thought, an erroneous idea, split Christadelphia. The Apostle Paul said a "*little leaven, leaveneth the whole lump*". This truly is the case as it pertains to the community who thought it necessary to amend the Birmingham Christadelphian statement of faith. Error acts like a mold, it begins as a small spot perhaps not even detectable to the eye, but if left to do what it's good at doing, it will corrupt the whole substance of its host. Since the original division many errors of significant doctrinal importance have been propagated in that amended community. Proclamations that do alter those things Jesus and his Apostles taught, and significantly changed the Gospel message. Other splits have taken place since the original division, and yet all want to lay claim on the name Christadelphian.

Paul also wrote in Romans 9:6 "*For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.*" In like manner, I feel not all of Christadelphia are Christadelphians. We regret that there is division. We are very concerned for their spiritual welfare as we should be for all those around us who know not Christ. There could be nothing greater than to unite and share all the same beliefs. But brethren, unity will never occur unless we who do not hold to the original Birmingham Christadelphian statement of faith, renounce it, and accept the Amended position. Their argument might make sense to the thinking of flesh, but does it agree with the word of God?

The Un-amended community today is being portrayed as responsible for the division continuing. Some say our statements are almost the same, and it would make it so much better if we would just accept this bridging document, gloss over the differences and focus on the things we have in common, and fellowship with them under their amended statement of faith. You know with this way of thinking, why don't we just focus on the things we have in common with the rest of Churchology, gloss over our differences and unite all "Christians" as one body in Christ? How absurd! But I'm afraid we are beginning to see moves in this direction. We didn't make the divide in the Christadelphian community, and those who have a clear understanding of all the facts realize there never was a need to amend the original statement to begin with; which amendment has given rise to other ideas which absolutely cannot be considered compatible with the old paths laid down by the Prophets, the Apostles, and our Lord.

Today we find ourselves more in the minority than ever before, because some Ecclesias who still claim to be Un-amended, and some of the amended have accepted this bridging document (i.e., NASU/UA08 – S.K.), and openly fellowship with one another though requiring that the Amended statement of

faith be the basis of fellowship. So as predicted, another fellowship of people who want to call themselves Christadelphians has come into being.

Unfortunately this has led to once strong un-amended Ecclesias calling on brethren who continue to claim they are un-amended, though accepting the U08 proposal, and though they are breaking bread under the Amended statement of faith in their own Ecclesia's; (with which error has clearly been found to exist); but these once strong Un-amended Ecclesias sequester these brethren as speakers and teachers at their Ecclesial functions - with the disclaimer that we can't hold them accountable because of who they associate with. I was taught that you are known by the company you keep. They may be sound brethren, but they have compromised their loyalty to their stated position, and for what? They think to unite the body of Christ's Ecclesia. Well it is good for brethren to dwell in unity, but not unity at any cost. The fellowship we must concentrate on is our individual fellowship with the Father and His Son. And, that fellowship is based upon our understanding and uncompromising adherence to God's word, to the will of our Master, and especially to the will of our Heavenly Father. The true body of Christ will never be divided. Those who change the Word of God to suit their own desires are not of the Body and are unfit to unite with unless they change their position. And, we must look closely at ourselves first as well as at others to confirm that we are indeed in that straight and narrow way that leads unto life, and that we are indeed part of the body of Christ based upon God's sound word.

### Consequences of standing fast

It is extremely difficult to take a stand in spiritual matters especially if it will impact, or has impacted our relationship with those we love, and respect. More often than not it will strain friend and family relationships, but it must be viewed as another test of our faith. We must choose to follow the admonition of our Master, and his Father, provided for our instruction in righteousness found only in the word of God. There is no room for emotional ties that can separate us from Christ. This is an unfortunate circumstance predicted 2000 years ago. Jesus says to his disciples in Matt. 10: 34-40, *"Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. A man's foes shall be they of his own household. 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 cross, 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. He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me."*

We may think it wonderful to rejoice in regaining fellowship with friends and family by simply negating the doctrinal differences that have held us apart. We might even convince ourselves that we have done Christ a great service by

uniting the diverse Christadelphians to make one supposed body of believers. The doctrines we embrace define whether we belong to Christ or not. Service to Christ should not and cannot be influenced by emotional ties to family or friends. We must accept our circumstances in these matters and follow only the teachings of Christ. For if we don't we are not worthy of him. We may find it wonderful in this life to accept erring members in fellowship, but are we endangering our hope of eternal life? Jesus said we are.

It is a sad state of affairs too in these last days that there is a self-appointed *"foundation"* claiming the Christadelphian name – propagating, and promoting false teachings. Some of which teachings come from within the Un-amended community. So we not only need to be wary of those who don't know us, but also of those who do. The day is fast approaching when all evil will be exposed, and will be dealt with properly.

### Concluding thoughts

I said earlier, few living under the Law of Moses were able to comprehend its hidden messages, and so brought condemnation upon themselves. When we think about it; how many of us would have come to the conclusions that we hold so dear and that are essential for salvation on our own? Man takes life for granted. We dwell among a sea of living creatures. Why are we allowed to experience our particular consciousness? God could have just as easily made any of us a dog, a cat, a cow, a bird, or a fish. But He permitted us to experience life as the highest form of His mortal creation. He blessed us with an intellect to reason and seek Him out. He provided His word, and His son as examples of what He requires of His faithful servants, and extended the invitation to come unto him and receive salvation.

We as Christadelphians approached life, and worship differently from the majority of those around us. Though using the same Scriptures we arrive at different conclusions than they concerning salvation, and the way one should live their lives. That is until recently it seems. But I think if we look back and review the history of our individual lives and how we were influenced by our loved ones, and the friends we've come to love in the truth, we will find the hand of God molding, shaping, and directing circumstances bringing us to where we are today. *"Many are called but few are chosen"*, we are told. There is absolutely no doubt that those who claim to be Christadelphians are attracted to the Gospel message, but not all will remain faithful to the end. Our God has made it possible for us to be among the chosen, but we must not lean to our own understanding. Faithfulness to Yahweh is absolutely essential.

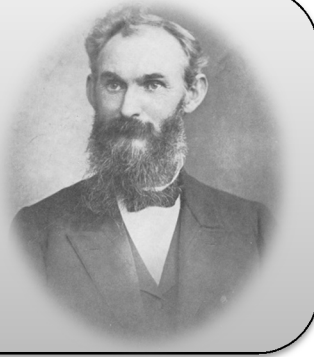
We of the Un-amended community have been blessed with the Truth of the gospel of Christ. We have accepted the invitation to come unto God through baptism in to his son, and we will be held accountable for our own actions, and personal beliefs. We will be called to stand before Christ when he comes to redeem his people, and re-establish the Kingdom of his Father on earth. And,

we will we be found acceptable, or unacceptable for a place in that glorious kingdom based upon our adherence to God's Holy Word.

It is the responsibility of each and every one of us to search the Scriptures, and determine if what we are being told is indeed the truth whether from within , or without our community of faith. If it is found to be wanting, and cannot be confirmed in the Law, the Prophets, and the instruction left by our Lord and his Apostles: then we must have nothing to do with it, or with its messenger. Isaiah proclaimed in chapter 8, verse 19, 20 – “*Should not a people seek unto their God? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them.*”

Terry Smith

## CONFIRMATION OF THE COVENANTS OF PROMISE



**T**HE fall of our first parents incurred the penalty of death, upon the principle that “the wages of sin is death.” God in his goodness extended mercy, yet there must be a vindication, as it were, of His own justice before He could grant the world’s redemption. Sin had caused all the trouble. God cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance. His justice requires the death of the sinner, while His mercy provides means of remission of sin and purification of the sinner in a way to spare the sinner and yet not defeat justice. Only Divine wisdom can blend together mercy and justice. If the penalty on our first parents had been inflicted without any merciful provision, all would have forever been lost, but redemption from under the penalty of the law by sacrifice was arranged for, and in it we have Christ “*as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world*” (Rev. 13: 8), and it was shown in the beginning that through Him redemption would take place of what had been lost by Adam the first. God therefore, predicated His covenant with man upon the sacrifice for sin, by which alone man’s restoration to favor could be effected. In the very nature of the case, then, a covenant provided by God for fallen man demands a sacrifice which will admit of reconciliation and atonement between God who is pure and man who is sinful, and this must take

place before the covenants of promise could be realized. Hence the Apostle Paul shows that all that pertained to the covenant depended on Christ as the covenant sacrifice. In the Authorized Version we have a very unhappy translation of Heb. 9: 16-18; but the Diaglott and other translations remove the difficulty. The Emphatic Diaglott renders the passage as follows: “*For where a covenant exists, the death of that which has ratified it is necessary to be produced; because a covenant is firm over dead victims, since it is never valid when that which ratifies it is alive. Hence not even the first has been instituted without blood*” (Heb. 9: 16-18). Here we see that a covenant is of no force while the covenant sacrifice, that which ratifies it, is alive, which means that the covenants of promise were of no force without the death of Christ, the real covenant sacrifice.

### Purification by covenant sacrifice

The Hebrew word for covenant (*berith*) means to purify or cleanse. It implies a purification or a purifier, because in all God’s covenants with man, sin and sinfulness exist on man’s side. Since covenants are intended to bring man into reconciliation with God and fit him for the everlasting inheritance promised, and since this cannot be done without purification through sacrifice, *berith* is used not only for the covenant itself, but for the sacrifice which confirms the covenant. When Moses said, “Behold, *the blood of the covenant* which the Lord hath made with you” (Ex. 24: 8), he meant the blood of the victim slain as a covenant sacrifice. The prophet Isaiah says, “*Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages*” (chap. 49: 8). This is a prophecy of Christ, and to give Him for a covenant was to give Him as a sacrifice, or a covenant sacrifice. By the words, “*By the blood of the covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water*” (Zech. 9: 11) is meant the blood of the victim whose death must take place to bring the covenant into force.

It will be remembered that when Abraham was commanded to offer sacrifices he was to divide some of the victims in the midst. This manner of making a covenant is referred to by the prophet Jeremiah thus, “And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant, which they had made before me, when they *cut the calf in twain and passed between the parts thereof*” (Jer. 34:18). The ancient custom among the Persians, and other nations, no doubt, had their origin in God’s manner of allowing man to enter into covenant relation with him. The custom was, as indicated by Jeremiah, to divide the victim and the covenanting parties “*passed between the parts.*” In this way, in covenants between God and men, man, who is a sinner and under justice without mercy, deserves death, may be said to have passed into the death of the victim, or to have died sacrificially or representatively, admitting of atonement.

Thomas Williams, from *The World’s Redemption*, pp. 80,81



## ANNOUNCEMENT

The Christadelphian National Service Committee (CNSC) has prepared a 64 page booklet, titled: “A Suggested Sunday School Curriculum to Teach the Christadelphian Position on Conscientious Objection”, April, 2013. The Purpose of the booklet is to provide a uniform curriculum to be taught to Unamended Christadelphian Brothers and Sunday School Students and to the Brotherhood-at-large. In addition, the revised CD 5 was issued in May, 2013. The booklet/CD 5 set will be provided at no cost to all 14 through 20 year old males plus one for a teacher and one for each Ecclesial Library in the U. S. per listing in the 2012 Ecclesial Directory. We also encourage members to obtain the booklet/CD-5 set for your own class or individual study and future reference/guide. The Booklet has ten sections. One of which is a “Typical Letter” that an individual might send to a “Draft Board”, should that be required in the future. The Booklet is on CD 5 in electronic format/PDF. The booklet/CD-5 set can be purchased from the CNSC for a total cost of \$3.00 including mailing in USA. Mailing cost per set will be reduced depending upon multiple sets per package. We encourage our Canadian Brethren to order the booklets, but we recognize that Canada has its own Standing Committee, which serves the Canadian Brotherhood as CNSC serves the Brotherhood in the USA. The Booklets and CD 5 can be obtained from the undersigned, whose mailing address is on page 41 in the 2012 Ecclesial Directory.

### Contents

- Introduction
- The Scriptural Basis of Our Beliefs
- The Position of Believers during the First 300 Years AD and through the Centuries.
- Since the American Civil War: The Stand of Christadelphians in the USA, Canada, England, Germany, Australia and New Zealand.
- It is Imperative that Behavior be Guided by Scripture
- Suggested Steps to Comply with U. S. Selective Service Registration Requirements
- Selective Service Regulations in the USA
- Suggested Guidelines and Typical Letter for Christadelphians to Mail or Present to a Draft Board Summons.
- A Draft Board Hearing: Probable Questions Which May Be Asked in Cross-Examination.
- Footnotes
- References

Thank You!

In Our Common Spiritual Hope of Israel  
Harold Thomas, for the CNSC

## - EDITORIAL FLYLEAF -

**Supreme Court Strikes Down “DOMA”** - The U.S. Supreme Court’s decision to overrule the *Defense of Marriage Act* as well as to uphold the ban against California’s Proposition 8 capped off a banner year for the widening scope of the homosexual agenda within the U.S. Though the decision did not legalize “gay marriage” (an oxymoron) nationwide, it did open up the way for “gay marriage” proponents to attempt to overturn similar laws that are held by many individual states. Not only did the decision open up the way for the widening scope of gay marriage, the majority opinion written by Justice Kennedy forcefully asserted that opposition to “gay marriage” **was rooted in hatred** and that “gay couples” deserved the “same dignity” as heterosexual couples. The decision casts the proponents of traditional marriage as morally reprobate and now on the defensive. Added to this, Pope Francis recently came out saying “Who am I to judge gay people.”

As we await the return of our Master, the aggressive advance of the gay agenda will no doubt have an impact on those of the Household – in schools, in the workplace and within our ecclesias. We have already seen its initial push into Christadelphia as well through “Gay Christadelphian” websites, and the “coming out” of a young member of the Amended community (Caleb Lloyd) who wrote the booklet “Growing Up Christadelphian – And Gay”, which was originally intended for the young people and with the full support of his Christadelphian parents. With the “who am I to judge?” philosophy well entrenched within Christadelphia as well, the groundwork has been laid for its eventual acceptance and tolerance throughout Christadelphia.

**2013 Canadian Bible School** – This year’s Canadian Bible School included one of its teachers who is a member of a UA08 ecclesia (Shawn Moynihan – Guelph). Already having a WCF board member and UA08 meeting attendee as its superintendent (Alan Ghent), and though making passing reference to the BUSF as its “guideline” for teachers and fellowship on its website – how can any Unamended brethren, in good conscience, attend and fellowship? How do supposedly conservative Unamended ecclesias tolerate its support by some of their own members? This is yet another example that there are divergent views in our Community of what being “Unamended” means. Other adult teachers included – Bill Yake (Arlington), David Stanley (Richmond-Chapel), Richard Harrison (Mountain Grove), Ian Cude (San Antonio), and Arthur Sankey (Denver).

**Egypt and the Middle East** - The chaos in Egypt has been remarkable to watch, and seems to clearly tie in with the prophetic words of Isaiah 19. It is a nation at war with itself, which is a precursor to their invasion by a “cruel lord”, which we believe to be the eventual invasion of Egypt by the Russian/Gogian forces (Daniel 11:42,43.) Yahweh willing, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter S.K. we hope to bring more focus to prophetic issues as we see highly significant developments continually unfolding before our eyes.