

F.R. Shuttleworth, *The Christadelphian*, May, 1880

The Bible is largely a book of synonyms, since it employs such an interesting and edifying variety of literal and figurative language in describing numerous aspects of the same thing. Our present illustration is confined to the various ways in which immortality is spoken of, viz: -

Alive for evermore (Rev. 1:18)
 Adoption, The (Rev. 8:23)
 Awakening in the Divine likeness (Ps. 17:15)
 Ascending to the Father (John 20:17)
 Building of God (2 Cor. 5:1)
 Born of the Spirit (John 3:6-8)
 Begotten from the dead (Acts 13:33)
 Bread of life (John 6:48,58)
 Bread of God (John 6:32)
 Better resurrection (Heb. 11:35)
 Clothed upon (2 Cor. 5:2)
 Can die no more (Luke 20:36)
 Changed in a moment (1 Cor. 15:51,52)
 Crown of life (Jas. 1:12)
 Children of the resurrection (Luke 20:36)
 Crown of righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8)
 Delivered from the bondage of corruption (Rom. 8:21)
 Divine nature (1 Pet. 1:4)
 Death abolished (2 Tim. 1:10; Rev. 21:4)
 Death swallowed up (Isa. 25:8; 1 Cor. 15:54)
 Everlasting name (Isa 61:5)
 Endless life (Heb. 7:16)
 Everlasting life (Dan. 12:2; Rom. 6:22)
 Eternal life (John 10:28; Jude 21)
 Eternal house (2 Cor. 5:1)
 Ever abiding (1 John 2:17; Ps 61:7; 15:1)
 Ever enduring (Ps. 72:17; 89:29)
 Everlasting possession (Gen. 17:8)
 Equal to the angels (Luke 20:36)
 Exempt from second death (Rev. 2:11)
 Eternal glory (1 Pet. 1:10)
 Eternity (Isa. 67:15)
 Fashioned like Christ (Phil. 3:21)
 First resurrection (Rev. 20:6)
 Glorious body (Phil. 3:21)
 Grace of life (1 Pet. 3:7)
 Go no more out (Rev. 3:12)
 Heart live for ever (Ps. 22:16)
 Hidden manna (Rev. 2:17; Col. 3:3)
 Immortality (2 Tim 1:10; 1 Cor 15:54)
 Incorruption (1 Cor 15:42,50,52,54)
 Incorruptible inheritance (1 Pet. 1:4)

Image of the heavenly (1 Cor. 15:49)
 Inheritance for ever (Ps. 37:18)
 Justified in spirit (1 Tim. 3:16; Rom. 1:4)
 Justification of life (Rom. 5:18)
 Knowing the power of Christ's resurrection (Phil. 3:10)
 Living bread (John 6:51)
 Live for ever (John 6:51,58)
 Long life (Ps. 91:16; Prov. 3:2)
 Length of days (Ps 21:4; Prov. 3:16)
 Life in self (John 5:26)
 Life for evermore (Ps. 133:3)
 Life which is to come (1 Tim. 4:8)
 Life abundantly (John 10:10)
 Live together with Christ (1 Thes. 5:10)
 Mortality swallowed up of life (2 Cor 5:4)
 Made alive (1 Cor. 15:22)
 Manifestation of sons (Rom. 8:19)
 Morning dew (Ps. 110:3; Is. 26:19)
 Never die (John 11:26)
 Never see death (John 8:51)
 New name (Rev. 2:17; 3:12)
 Never be removed (Prov. 10:30)
 No more to return to corruption (Acts 13:34)
 Prolonged days (Isa. 53:10)
 Perfected for evermore (Heb. 7:28)
 Planted in the likeness of Christ's resurrection (Rom. 6:5)
 Path of life (Ps. 16:11)
 Redemption of the body (Rom. 8:23)
 Redeemed from death (Hos. 13:14)
 Renewal of strength (Isa. 14:31)
 Spiritual body (1 Cor. 15:44)
 Spiritual quickening (1 Cor. 15:45)
 Spirit reaping (Gal. 6:8)
 Saved from death (Heb. 5:7)
 Tree of life (Rev. 2:7)
 Unfailing years (Heb. 1:12; Ps. 102:27)
 Unwithering leaf (Ps. 1:3)
 Vail destroyed (Isa. 25:7)
 Water of life (Rev. 21:6)
 Ways of life (John 2:28)

(Courtesy of bro. Adam Kuipers)

THE SANCTUARY~KEEPER



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

ISRAEL'S NEW NEIGHBOR

Also

Jeremiah's Day & Our Day

**The Tragic End to the Kingdom of Saul & The Establishment
of the Kingdom of David**

Three Names of Jerusalem

Communication

From Darkness to Light

"The Spirit of Elijah" or The Spirit of Eli?

Thoughts Gleaned from "The Law of Moses"

Doctrinal Synonyms for Immortality - 1880

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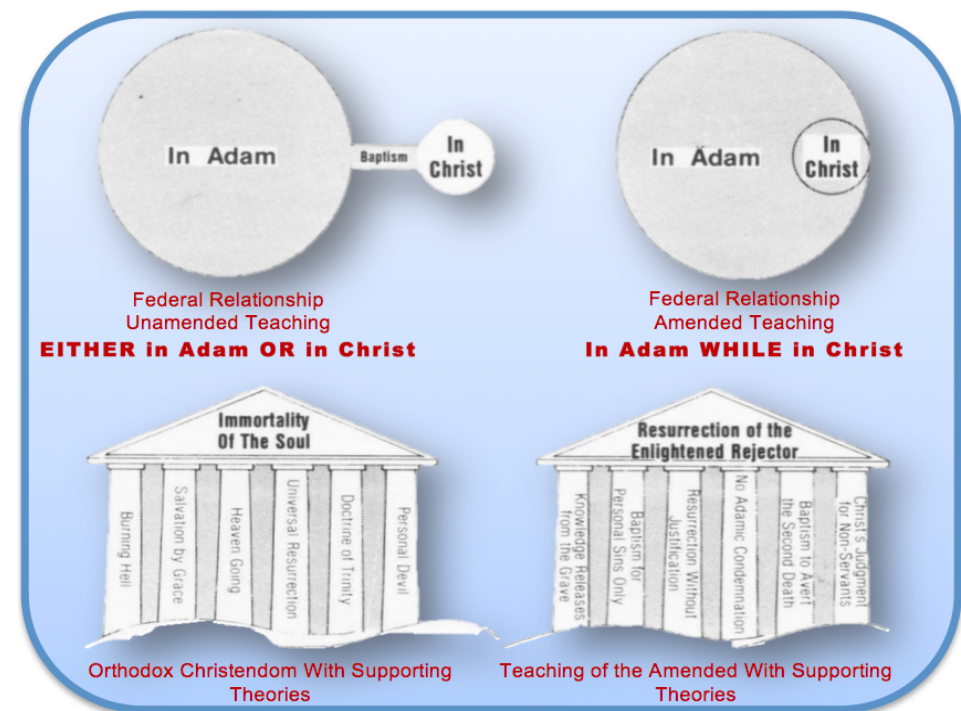
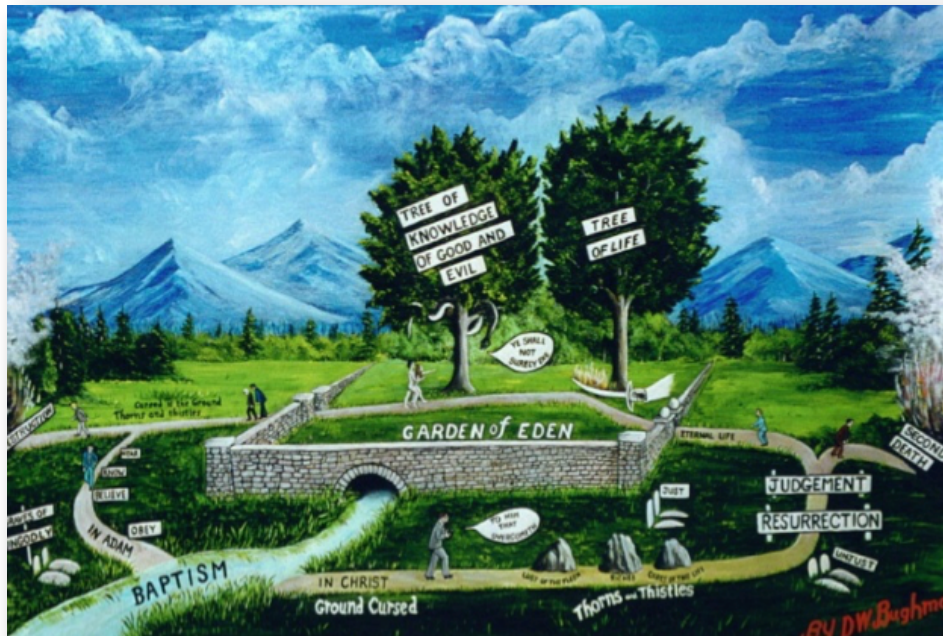
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Front Cover: Sunrise over the Dead Sea. Photo: sis. Faith Gini

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THE ORIGIN AND EXTENT OF THE KINGDOM OF MEN

In taking a general survey of the contents of the Book of Daniel, it may be seen that two great powers are the principal subject 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 present constituted, is at hand. (Elpis Israel, preface)



THE SANCTUARY – KEEPER

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

*“Ye shall keep the charge of the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar”
Num. 18:5*

*“Ye are...an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices.”
1 Peter 2:5*

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

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JEREMIAH'S DAY & OUR DAY PART 2

Reading: Jeremiah 6: 11-19

Therefore I am full of the fury of the LORD; I am weary with holding in: I will pour it out upon the children abroad, and upon the assembly of young men together: for even the husband with the wife shall be taken, the aged with him that is full of days. And their houses shall be turned unto others, with their fields and wives together: for I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD. For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given



to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD. Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein. Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Harken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken. Therefore hear, ye nations, and know, O congregation, what is among them. Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.

IN Judges 21:25 we find... *“There was No King in Israel so every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”* Reading from Jeremiah 10:23, *“O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.”* These are all very important parts, and as stated in our previous installment, it is obvious our times are very similar to Israel’s in Jeremiah’s day. Disaster for the world is close at hand; with the signs of the times spelling out that our Lord is at the Door. We know that His coming will bring a *‘time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time.’* (Dan 12:1).

In the Brotherhood, the Truth of the Scriptures has run a course of 150 years since it resurfaced in Dr. Thomas day. Now we might say the spirit of our Pioneers is fading out. Earnest contention for the One Faith now sounds a little ridiculous in these “enlightened” times and liberal-minded days. If we work very hard and stand up for what is Scripturally correct then we risk our popularity.

We hear of how hard work and study, edifying weekly classes in the things of the word are steadily being replaced by social evenings of food, music, and ‘videos.’ All the while a striving for respectability in preaching is fast blurring the sharp line of demarcation that should exist in our minds between the world and the things of the Truth.

The history of a nation, or a movement, can roughly be divided into three main periods. First, the period of the pioneers, when foundations are laid down and principles set forth – The path of action is clearly defined, the issues are all fundamental. At that stage, obstacles are so great, difficulties so immense, that little time can be spared for anything other than essentials. The mind and spirit of such a time is that of ‘no compromise,’ because now the demarcation between enemy and friend is unmistakable. We see that our community entered that stage about 150 years ago.

But pioneering days don't last forever. A movement establishes itself or else goes out of existence. After the initial work has begun, it would then enter the second stage. There is time for things other than the essentials. It is the period of consolidation, when the principles established in the early days are given form and substance. Now with proper wisdom and guidance, a nation or a movement reaches its greatest heights, and exercises its greatest influence, during this stage.

A stage of decline

The period of consolidation is inevitably followed by a third stage – that of decline, when, as in Jeremiah's time, the need for walking in the 'old paths' is not so apparent. The line of demarcation becomes obscure; the complete dedication demanded in the early days now seems a little fanatical; the outspoken opposition that was once pronounced and relied upon now seems a bit ridiculous. Even a more liberal outlook is urged in the attitude of some toward those who are in opposition or resist the clearly defined paths, originally built by their pioneers. Desire for respectability, comfort and ease takes the place of hard work and constant effort.

Is this a by-product of the democratic society we live in, with its rights and amendments? – The threefold cry of the original frog-like spirits i.e. Liberty, Equality & Fraternity. This spirit or teaching (doctrine) has had far reaching effects from the revolutionary wars in America and France, even to this day and time when we see Socialistic countries adopting more Democratic values.

DEMOCRACY – “a: government by the people; especially: rule of the majority b: a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections.

Where is our Creator in all this? In the systems of men supreme power is vested in MAN and not Yahweh – whether democratic or despotic. Our Master has warned that the world and our Ecclesia would drift into such a state. He declared in Matthew 24:37-51 – *“But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also*

ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The days of Noah were days of decline; both for the world and the ecclesia (Gen 6:1-3). They witnessed a spirit of tolerance, which proved fatal and ended in disaster.

The prophets and the Apostles both warn that this will be repeated in the 'latter days', or days just prior to the Return of our Lord. 2nd Pet 2:1-3 – *"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."*

"Our Most Dangerous Enemies"

"The greatest and most dangerous enemies to Christ are those who pretend to be His friends, but are not faithful to His doctrine; and they are unfaithful who, from any motives of personal interest would weaken the point of doctrine, or soften it for the gratification of their natural feelings, or for fear of hurting the feelings of the enemy, and so affecting their popularity with them." Taken from the *Herald Of the Kingdom of the Coming Age*, John Thomas 1864

The "old paths"

What did Jeremiah do about the situation in his day? He lived during a critical period in Jewish history. Conditions inside the nation were like a slow outgoing tide. Spiritual values had been discarded, the pure worship of the Lord was corrupted in many ways, and although the people might have said, *'the Lord lives,'* their actions revealed their insincerity. So Jeremiah says-*'surely they swear falsely.'* (5:2) Jeremiah saw his people at the crossroads. He knew that the measure of their iniquity was so great that the Almighty God would no longer be turned from His anger. God had told Jeremiah *'pray not thou for this people, neither lift up thy cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me, for I*

will not hear thee.’ (7:16) Things had gone too far. So he lifts up his voice in warning. He speaks of things that they could do, to the end that the few who had ears to hear might listen.

His message is this, *‘stand ye in the ways and see’* (6:16), but then he goes on to say *‘ask for the old paths, where is the good way and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.’*

Let’s define *‘old paths.’* The original text is rendered *‘ancient paths’* giving the connotation that generations have relied upon original precepts laid down as a foundation. 1st Cor 3:10-13 – *“According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is.”*

And, Ephesians 2:19-22 – *“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”*

So in defining the “Old Paths,” we understand that these are not just traditions, these are first principles. These are Scriptural Truths which can be substantiated by building *precept upon precept, line upon line* and concluded with a continuous doctrine or teaching which is understood as chief principles of the Gospel of Salvation. The keys we might say to the *good news and glad tidings concerning the Kingdom of God and The Name of Jesus Christ*. This is termed the one True Faith. “*The Good Way*,” Jeremiah says by seeking this and relying upon it “*ye shall find rest for your souls.*”

“Rest”

Let’s look into this for a moment. What is this rest and what are we resting from? How does our soul rest? Let’s consider Matt. 11:28-30, *“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”*

Here in these verses, rest is contingent upon learning of Christ. The word “rest” in Matthew comes from a word meaning “to refresh.” The word rest in Jeremiah comes from a word meaning “a resting place.”

Both of these together give us the impression of not only the Kingdom as a resting place, but also a time of refreshing and rejuvenation for all of God’s creation. Mankind, by seeking this path and not one of humanistic or modernized

thinking, is bound to come upon the way that leads to life everlasting – The millennial rest promised, the rest hoped for by the faithful for generations.

“Rest for your souls” speaks to us of a day when mankind will find rest from the works of the flesh. All that we see and hear of in the evil days we live in will “not be remembered nor come into mind.”

In the future there will no longer be a pleading for the people to follow the old paths. There will be a voice which says, ‘this is the way walk ye in it.’



There will no longer be divisions among brethren or Fellowship issues among Ecclesia's. Truly, it is a time to anticipate with joy, the very idea can sustain us and give us hope just as it did in Jeremiah's day. We have an inheritance just as Jeremiah did.

By the grace of God we will see the land of Israel elevated to its glory, as Jerusalem becomes the center of the whole earth. Jeremiah loved this land

which Moses said was *“a land which the Lord thy God careth for.”* The prophet said; *“For these things I weep: mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water. . . Zion spreadeth forth her hands, and there is none to comfort her.”* (Lam 1:16-17)

So, as we study in Jeremiah of the evil and wickedness that enveloped the land in his day; as we read of war, bloodshed and desolation; as we think about Jerusalem in our day as *“a cup of trembling unto all the people round about. . . a burdensome stone for all people.”* (Zech. 12:2-3); let us, like Jeremiah, put our hope in the day when the land and God's people will be cleansed and restored to beauty.

Concluding thoughts

After we've considered all that Jeremiah has left for us to learn, as well as 2nd Timothy and 2nd Peter, we see that responsibility therefore lies upon each one of us, so far as we are able, to echo the call of Jeremiah. We must encourage our Brethren and Sisters, we must encourage one another to revert to the beliefs and practices of our Pioneers. We, like them, are *“those called to be saints”*. We must strive to let their uncompromising attitude towards the world and their unceasing contention for the Faith, find an echo in us today.

This can only be accomplished by a growing familiarity with the Word of Truth. Then, despite troubles around us, we will find strength to be knit together and so even now, *"find rest for your souls,"* as in Jer. 6:16.

Let us pray daily for that time to come, looking forward to the blessings that will flow. We need to conjure up a sense of urgency – hold fast (firmly) that which thou hast.

Let us focus on the joy that will be ours; the solemn assemblies, the Sabbaths, the feast days, all men walking in the fear and the knowledge of our God, the beauty and holiness which comes only from Divine Law and judgments. Thus shall the Glory of the LORD fill the Land.

Our Final thought – The message from Is 27:6, *"He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root; Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the World with fruit."*

John Bouma

"No Peace Without Purity" **Robert Roberts, 1892, Christadelphian**

Search the scriptures and see if the thoughts in these paragraphs are in harmony with the Truth. If so, then search thine own heart and see if thou are in harmony therewith.

The Truth can beget and bring forth only love and obedience in and from the heart, if permitted to do its perfect work. False views may abide in an ecclesia under concealment, but no ecclesia can harbor them when once they become known, or are open, with becoming a partaker therewith.

The Lord is the cleanser of his own Household, it is true, but it is in the matter of secret sins and doctrines and personal character, since the ecclesia must purge itself of OPEN sins whether in doctrine or practice; for if the ecclesia fails to purge itself thereof, it is living in sin before the Lord. Whoever sees his brother walking in sinful ways and hideth the matter in his heart hath sin lying at the door of his own heart.

The character formed in this life must be in complete harmony with the order of things in the eternal world, else unalloyed love and joy and peace could not fill the heart and mind in the presence of a pure God. The Lord looks at the heart, and the heart that is right in His sight can rejoice before Him for:

"A broken and contrite heart the Lord will not despise." - Since He – *"...looks to him who is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at His Word"* (Isaiah 66:2).

There can be no contrition of heart where chastisement is not patiently borne, and evil ways forsaken. Whoever rebels at the chastisement of the Lord may well tremble when called to the judgment of His Household.

There can be no ecclesial peace where purity does not precede the peace. There can be no ecclesial purity where the bond of love does not bind every heart with sound doctrine and fellowship.

ISRAEL'S NEW NEIGHBOR



WHEN one reviews the various “current event” commentaries over the course of the last 10, 20, 50 or even 100 plus years that have appeared in various Christadelphian periodicals (including this magazine) or in lectures, it is interesting to note that numerous events, political elections, conflicts and statements on the world stage, that may have seemed significant at the time, have passed into obscurity with what would appear as having little long-term impact or significance. Leaders have come and gone and wars have been won and lost – yet time seems to march carelessly on.

It is important to remember that what may appear important now, may or may not have a meaningful impact on future events, especially as they relate to the fulfillment of revealed Prophecy. That is why it is extremely important never to interpret prophecy through the eye of current events – prophecy is an established certainty with a clear end in view, current events are not. We look at various arenas of the world and events surrounding them due to our understanding of the key players that are pointed to by the Prophets: The Papacy, Europe, Russia, the Middle East and last, but certainly not least – The Jews and the pre-adventual establishment of a portion of Jewry in the Land. Believers have always had a keen interest in the politics, words and actions that surround these elements in our constant expectation of the Great Crisis that all such entities will be involved with at the Advent of our Lord. Even though we should be keenly interested, what catches our attention in the news may or may not be of any real importance in the larger scheme of the workings of the Elohim. Other more subtle developments, lacking a degree of drama, might pass our attention. Some developments cry out as unmistakable signposts of prophetic expectation, while many other news items can be delegated to mistaken but excusable enthusiasm for anything that seemingly heralds the fulfillment of God’s Plan and Purpose.

An unmistakable signpost

With all of that said, we strongly believe that the recent activities of Russia in Syria are some of those unmistakable signposts that carry **profound** significance and which indicates a dramatic development in Russia's impending prophetic role as The King of the North; The Latter Day Assyrian; Gog; and the standing up of Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Image. Russia, long understood by Believers as the prophesied head of a massive confederacy invading Israel in the Last Days (Ezekiel 38, 39; Joel 2,3; Daniel 11), is now building an impressive offensive and occupying force right on Israel's northern border. While the world's attention is distracted by "radical Islam", Believers should be able to perceive that the "sure word of prophecy" allows us to see a much bigger picture and infinitely more significant development growing before our eyes in relation to the End Times.

Russia has its largest military presence in the region since World War II, with the most current reports claiming that Putin is planning to send at least 150,000 soldiers to Syria. And as the U.S. has quietly diminished its naval presence in the Middle East, Russia has exponentially increased its activity in the region. As of the writing of this article, Russia is the largest foreign navy in the Mediterranean.

As our readers know, this dramatic move by Russia into Syria has been under the guise of defeating the threat of ISIS once and for all. But, interestingly enough, Russia's early military actions have not been against ISIS targets, but against Syrian rebels fighting against Bashir Assad's government. The early intent has been to neutralize the Syrian rebels in order to prop up Assad – a Russian ally. This has also involved an increased military presence by the Iranians in cooperation with Russia and Assad. However, Syria has already imploded upon itself, resembling nothing of itself as a former formidable foe against Israel. Between the results of a self-destructing civil war (which has killed more than 250,000 people), millions fleeing to Europe and impressive territorial gains by ISIS – Assad's Syria is in shambles.

Upon these ruins, we see Russia re-asserting a foothold in the Middle East for the first time since the end of the Cold War. But unlike the Cold War, there is no longer a strong counter-presence by the United States. Make no mistake about it - Russia is now **THE POWER** in the Middle East. They have the weaponry, the will and growing world support to assert their influence in the region.

With the recent bombing of a Russian airliner over the Sinai and the mass-attack in Paris, more attention is being turned to ISIS. France (prophetically termed "Gomer" and a member of the Gogian confederacy – Ezekiel 38:6) has joined forces with Russia, after finding very little tangible support from the U.S. Administration to escalate efforts against ISIS. By default, France, a member of NATO, has been forced into the arms of an all too willing Russia. Much of the world, now seeing Russia as a military champion, are setting aside any previous

inhibitions which they have had about Putin and are putting their support behind him as a “hero” of civilization and “Christianity”. As Russia continues to build its Image Empire (Daniel 2), this change of perception and support towards Russia away from what is perceived as a weak and incompetent West is of no small significance!

Israel’s new reality

Keeping in view the devastating effects that the Russian aggressor will eventually have upon Israel as foretold by the Prophets, the present situation is not one that lacks immediate bearing on Israel. The ability of Israel to instigate military airstrikes into Lebanon and parts of Syria to disrupt the transfer of advanced weaponry to the Shiite Hezbollah militant group has been greatly hampered. Russia now owns the skies to Israel’s north, infinitely increasing the chances of an accidental encounter between Israeli and Russian fighter jets. It is quite ironic that Israel has had to reach out to the Russians with the objective of coordinating operations to avoid a conflict. The remarkable reality of the matter is that Israel is partially at Russia’s mercy in its continued efforts to defend its own national interests and security.



Hydrocarbons!

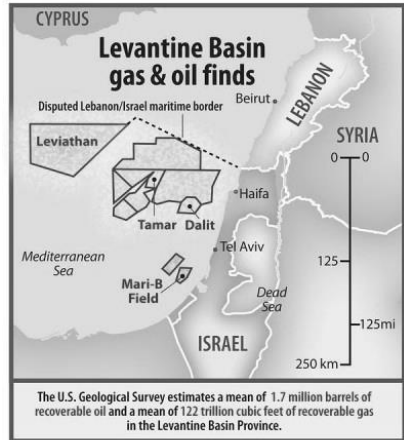
With Russia’s new role in the Middle East, we must not lose sight of the matter of the massive energy resources now within Russia’s reach. Hydrocarbons represent some 30% of Russia’s gross domestic product (GDP). But with the current energy war between OPEC and non-OPEC nations, there is a glut of consumable fuels on the market – driving the cost of oil per barrel to record lows. Some are predicting prices of \$20 per barrel in the near future. Russia needs \$98 or higher to produce a profit. So, despite Russia’s continued military expansion and influence the country is on the fast track to bankruptcy. This makes Russia extremely dangerous.

What options do they have? Somehow, they need to put greater pressure upon or seize control of competing energy markets. Attempts are already being made to move fuel commerce away from employing the “Petrodollar”, which uses the U.S. dollar as the exclusive basis for the buying and selling of oil with Saudi Arabia – thus forcing the world’s oil money to flow through the Federal Reserve. This is a deal that Saudi Arabia has had with the U.S. since 1973, in exchange for weapons and protection of their oil fields from neighboring nations. Russia and China have made moves away from the U.S. Dollar, which will eventually have a devastating impact on the United States’ economy and its ability to drive the world’s economy.

With Russia now an imposing and intimidating influence in the Middle East and the U.S. becoming an increasingly unreliable friend and source of defense to Saudi Arabia – the oil producing Persian Gulf States have become ever more vulnerable to Russian objectives. As Russia continues to expand and strengthen its presence and influence in the region, the pressures of oil producing countries and consumers to cower to Russian demands will only intensify.

Israel has already been under pressure by Russia to allow Gazprom to develop its newly discovered natural gas fields in the Mediterranean. Russia has offered “protection” for the natural gas fields from unfriendly countries if Israel will agree to a partnership with Russia. This has put Israel in a very precarious position as the U.S. Company – Noble Energy – found the Leviathan field. With Russia now sitting as Israel’s northern neighbor – who do they risk offending?

With a massive natural gas field having been discovered off the shore of Egypt, this provides another opportunity for Russia as well.



Development of the latter-day King of the North & latter day Assyrian

So what does this have to do with Bible prophecy? Russia’s new position in Syria is a dramatic move in the direction of Russia asserting itself as the latter day “King of the North” and latter day “Assyrian”. ISIS will no doubt be an ongoing issue as it provides Russia with the excuse to remain in the region. But it is Russia’s presence in that region that is of great prophetic import.

The 11th chapter of Daniel outlines in great detail the historical struggle between the Northern and Southern divisions of Alexander’s Grecian Empire after Alexander’s death and the four-part division among his generals. Why is focus placed upon the northern and southern divisions? It is because **1)** the Jewish people would be stuck in the middle of their rivalries and would often be the victims of their exploits against each other and **2)** the development of the Grecian northern kingdom into the eastern portion of the Roman Empire has a direct relationship to the character and territory of the Latter Day aggressor against Israel. (It is also connected with what is outlined in Daniel 8 – the development of Roman military power in the east, and the eventual Russian power, out of the remains of the Grecian Empire – the “little horn” of the Goat.)

Russia itself, both in its religious and cultural roots is the offspring of the developments found in this Greco-Roman region: A territory under the Seleucids, that

stretched from modern day Istanbul (Constantinople) through the ancient lands of Assyria to the eastern borders of modern day Iran (Persia). When the Romans took over the Seleucid region, the extent of their territory did not extend as far east, but they retained power over the heart of the Seleucid dominion – throughout Asia minor and down through Syria and Judea.

Once Constantine rose to power, the military and civil strength of the Roman Empire was transferred from Rome to Constantinople. The Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire did not fall until 1453 to the Ottomans, but this resulted in the transfer of the Eastern/Greek religious and cultural center to Russia. Russia historically and presently sees itself as the defender of this Greco-Roman-Byzantine heritage in its faith and culture, and has a keen interest in its' historical territory.

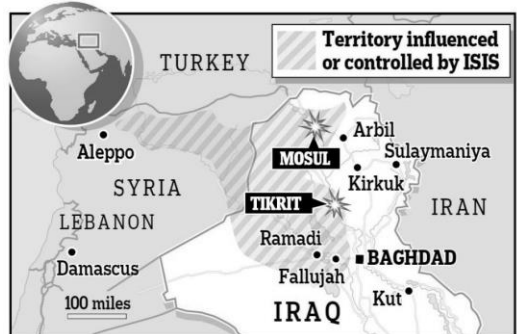


Russia's modern day encroachment into the Syrian area is one of extreme interest to us, as this puts Russia closer to taking on the mantle of the latter day "King of the North" (Dan. 11:40-45). It

has not yet seized Istanbul/Constantinople, and before it overruns Israel in full force as the "King of the North", it must take the city as its own. But, its present foot-in-the-door position in Syria seems to be a strong start.

In regard to the Russia's fight against ISIS, it should be noted that ISIS has presently secured a portion of what was once was the Assyrian Empire, along the Euphrates River. This was a territory that was once a part of the original King of the North's dominion. Hence, the territory of the historical King of the North and the Assyrian are one and the same.

Bro. Thomas states in *Exposition of Daniel*, p. 78 – "This blending of the Romano-Greek power with the Assyrian is the reason why the Little Horn of the Goat is presented as coming out of one of its four horns. They occupy one and the same territory; that is, where the Seleucidian dynasty once ruled, the Little Horn's dynasties afterwards ruled; and where the Little Horn's present dynasty rules, a Russian dynasty from the north will probably be enthroned; so that when this form of things obtains, the northern horn and the Little Horn will be



*blended into **one power**, still Constantinopolitan, but with a Russian instead of an Ottoman for its chief."*

The Russian/Gogian invader is described as the King of the North in Daniel 11:40-45. He is briefly described as the "Assyrian" in Micah 5:5 and who, in regard to Israel, is spoken of as treading "in our palaces." But the Gogian invader's territory as "King of the North" will not be limited to the Seleucid/Assyrian domains. His full extent is revealed in Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Image – a dominion that extends the full breadth of the gold, silver, bronze, and iron elements. This will be a horrific and oppressive power that Russia will have formed. As Daniel 8:25 indicates in regard to the rise of this power – *"And through his policy also he shall cause craft (deceit) to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace (marg. – by their prosperity, or careless security) shall destroy many..."* But the verse does not end there – *"he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes (i.e., The Messiah); but he shall be broken without hand."*

Russia has made an historic move in its current Syrian expedition. How long it will take for additional developments to unfold, we cannot tell. As bro. Thomas wrote in the 5th Volume of Eureka – **"The Deity is never in a hurry, but deliberate, effective, sure (p. 38)."**

A. Thomas

Russia's Double Headed Eagle

From Wikipedia:

*"The double-headed eagle...is most commonly associated with the **Byzantine Empire**, the Holy Roman Empire, the Serbian Empire, the Russian Empire and their successor states. In Byzantine heraldry, the heads represented the Emperor having authority over both secular and religious matters. **It also signified the dominance of the Byzantine Emperors over both East and West.** In the Holy Roman Empire's heraldry, it represented the church and the state."*

"The double-headed eagle was a main element of the coat of arms of the Russian Empire, modified in various ways from the reign of Ivan III (1462-1505) onwards, with the shape of the eagle getting its definite Russian form during the reign of Peter the Great (1682-1725). It continued in Russian use until abolished (being identified with Tsarist rule) with the Russian Revolution in 1917; it was restored in 1993..."

Comment: Russia is soon to reassert the Byzantine dominance over Eastern and Western Europe, along with all other territories that are included in the Image Empire of Dan. 2 – the combined territories of the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian and Roman empires. That the lines between church and state will also be blurred, there can be no doubt. Symbols do matter. – S.K.



THREE NAMES OF JERUSALEM



ACCORDING to the Scriptures, Jerusalem has had three names:

1) Salem, actually *Shalem* (Gen 14:18) = covenant of peace. The root *shelem*, is used as another word for sacrifice for alliance or a peace offering, fellowship between God and his servants, with a sacred meal as a special feature. All of the above very well describes the place in which the Messiah's sacrifice was to take place. His institution of the memorial of the bread and wine in Jerusalem is no coincidence or new idea and Paul points out the connection in Hebrews chapter 7. This great sacrifice establishing the covenant in Salem/Jerusalem was something that Abraham was allowed to 'see' through the eye of prophecy: "*your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and was glad*" (John 8:56)

2) Jebus, this Canaanite name of Jerusalem carries the meaning of *bos*, to trample or tread down (BDB pg. 100: 947). The same root is the very one used to describe Jerusalem being "trodden down", i.e. to desecrate the most holy by the Gentiles as in Jeremiah 12:10: "*Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard, they have trodden my portion underfoot...*" This is the same word, recorded in Greek in Messiah's prophecy concerning Jerusalem, Luke 21:24:

"and Jerusalem shall be **trodden down** by the Gentiles (nations) until the times of the Gentiles (nations) be fulfilled."

3) Jerusalem, Yeru-sha-layim, either *possession* or *City* (Uru) of *Shalem* (see above). But this form has a suffix that doubles the word that is familiar in Semitic languages but doesn't exist in English except with the prefix: *bi*, like the words, bicycle, biannual etc. In Hebrew many double body parts have this: hands = *yad-ayim*, eyes = *a-nayim*, ears = *oz-nayim*, legs, feet = *reg-layim*. So the connotation here is that there are two Jerusalems: in Joshua's day it was divided, probably the upper part where the Temple Mount and the Old City (the Upper City in the Roman period where Solomon's palace was built) and the City of David, which lay southward and below. The upper part was controlled by the Jebusites (Jebus) who were only driven out and the city united under David (2nd Sam. 5:6-8).

This feature of a divided Jerusalem has been revived now, in the latter days, with Jerusalem being divided between East and West Jerusalem with a Gentile population in the eastern side including the Old City and whose Muslim authorities in effect control the Temple Mount (treading it down) even though this area was liberated and placed under the control of Israel in 1967. Control of East Jerusalem is at the heart to the debate and demands of the Gentile nations, including the United States, in their insistence that it be given to the Palestinians, i.e. Gentile control.

There is yet another important aspect of this division of Jerusalem: the border between the tribe of Benjamin and the tribe of Judah ran right through the same area, with Jebus having been allotted to Benjamin and the City of David belonging to Judah. Benjamin's claim was delayed for generations until David's conquest of Jebus.

Behind this geographical situation there is a spiritual application: Benjamin represents the bride while Judah represents the Messiah. Jebus, the Gentile power, divided Benjamin from Judah. The elimination of the current Jebus will be nothing short of the wedding feast at the establishment of the Kingdom Age.

Then a "new thing" will be created in the earth, a woman (the bride) shall encompass a man (Messiah), (Jer. 31:21), in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2 - "And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from Yahweh, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband."). By implication, Benjamin/the bride, the servants of Yahweh are the rightful owners of Jerusalem.

A communication from someone of the Household



THE TRAGIC END TO THE KINGDOM OF SAUL & THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF DAVID



Reading: 1 Sam. 28:4-8; 18-19; 1 Sam. 31:1-8

THE first three kings of Israel, Saul, David and Solomon, pattern the transition of power and order of things from Israel after the flesh, under the present democracy of man's choosing, to Israel after the Spirit, or the Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. We must take note, however, that throughout this transition of power from Saul to David, that David took no pleasure in Saul's demise and smote the self-proclaimed slayer of Saul. Likewise, Messiah will take no pleasure in the judgment to befall natural Israel in the latter days and will smite the Gogian spoiler, the latter day Amalekite, to the ground. The belligerent invasion of Israel by the Gentiles of the latter days, as with the invasion by the Philistines against Saul and the Amalekite who took credit for Saul's death, will raise the ire and fury of Yahweh against all His enemies and He will set His throne in Zion and proclaim His Word to the ends of the earth.

David, writing poetically in 2 Samuel chapter 1 about the tragic downfall of Israel at Mt. Gilboa, may provide prophetic insight into Messiah's view of things at the time of the end, when the state of Israel meets the northern invader

valiantly upon the field of battle, and yet is swept away before a confederacy of nations with overwhelming force.

“Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites...” (2 Sam. 1:1).

We need to keep in mind at this verse that Amalek was the first nation to attack Israel when they came out of Egypt under Moses, and the fact that the Kings of the Amalekites were titled Agag, the prototypical “Gog,” as the name is rendered in some translations. Several chapters earlier David smote the Amalekites following their invasion of Ziklag, where David’s family was living.

“...and David had abode two days in Ziklag; It came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance. And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped. And David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also” (2 Sam. 1:1-4).

Let’s compare this tragic scene with the testimony of the prophets:

“And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army: And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes” (Ezekiel 38:15-16).

“Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand; A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them” (Joel 2:1-3).

“Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle” (Zech. 14:1-3).

Returning to the account in 2nd Samuel:

*“And David said unto the young man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead? And the young man that told him said, As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here am I. And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, **I am an Amalekite**” (2 Sam. 1:5-8).*

Thus, the self-acclaimed slayer of Saul was an Amalekite. Similarly The Gogian Host, the latter day Amalekite and Agagite, the enemy of the Jews (Esther 3:10) will claim victory over Israel when the palatial tents of the spoiler are spread upon the temple mount. *“And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him” (Dan. 11:45).*

The geography surrounding this tragic event is significant. Gilboa means *ruin* or *heap*. This is an appropriate description of the desolation of Israel by the future northern invader – the latter day Amalekite. We would also note that the whole event transpires in the valley near Megiddo, thus a foreshadowing of Armageddon. Let us continue our comparison of the account in 2nd Samuel and Saul’s demise with Ezekiel’s vision of Armageddon.



Mt. Gilboa, overlooking the Valley of Jezreel

“He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me. So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen” (2 Sam. 1:9).

Compare Ezekiel 37:1-3: *“The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest.”*

“...and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord. Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him” (2 Sam. 1:10-11).

Compare Ezekiel 38:18-19: *“And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, that my fury shall come up in my face. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel.”*

“...And they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword” (2 Sam. 1:12).

Compare Ezekiel 39:23: *“And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword.”*

“And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence art thou? And he answered, I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite. And David said unto him, How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD'S anointed? And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him that he died. And David said unto him, Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD'S anointed” (2 Sam. 1:13-16).

Compare Matthew 27:4-5 and Ezekiel 38:21-23: *“Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.” (Matt. 27:4-5). “And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: every man's sword shall be against his brother. And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the LORD” (Ezek. 38:21-23).*

“And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son: (Also he bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow: behold, it is written in the book of Jasher)” (2 Sam. 1:17-18).

David ascends to power

From this point forward, David takes the reins of power of the fledgling nation, and he would thereafter teach Judah to be a man of war for the coming

overthrow of his enemies even as Messiah will do also at his return, when a remnant of both Judah and Ephraim will become as weapons in the hands of their Messiah:

“Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee; When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man. And the LORD shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord GOD shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south” (Zech. 9:12-14).

“Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats: for the LORD of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle. Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together. And they shall be as mighty men, which tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle: and they shall fight, because the LORD is with them, and the riders on horses shall be confounded” (Zech. 10:3-5).

Now we would ask that the reader pay particular attention to these following words of David as representative of Messiah and his brethren when the tiny nation of Israel is overwhelmed by its enemies, even the kings of the earth:

“The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen! Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings:...” (2 Sam. 1:19-21).

Immediately, David draws a picture of the aftermath of the field of battle. It is a picture wherein is no dew or rain, it is very dry and completely fruitless in its conclusion. Once again, this would appear to be related to Ezekiel’s prophecy of the dry bones; bones that have been scattered and lay in utter ruin: *“...then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts” (Ezek. 37:11).*

Returning to 2 Samuel 1:

“... for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil. From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions...” (2 Sam. 1:21-23).

We see here that Israel, represented in Saul and Jonathan, despite the overwhelming multitude of armies which they will oppose, will fight valiantly for the land and will exact a high price for their defeat – *Jonathan turned not back – Saul returned not empty*. David laments, as we believe Messiah will also, for this necessary evil that has taken place.

“Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel. How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!” (2 Sam 1:24-27).

This is a tragic end no doubt. We must understand, however, that Yahweh has purposed that the Nation after the flesh, represented by Saul, which cannot continue in transgression – must give way to the nation after the spirit in its warrior phase represented by David and finally, Solomon. This is the order of things spoken of by the prophets. Though all these things are purposed by Yahweh, we suggest that this parable of Saul shows us the song of lamentation that will be in Messiah’s heart due to the fact that the very nation brought into being by Yahweh’s hand, and with great promise, has to fall before the Gentiles so that their reliance upon the arm of flesh can be completely removed. Thus, a remnant, in utter distress and facing national extinction, will finally turn to Yahweh as their true deliverer.

“And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God” (Zech. 13:9).

This is a necessary part of Yahweh’s plan that a remnant might be saved to form the nucleus of the Kingdom of God upon the Throne of David and that the name of Yahweh and of Jesus might be glorified.

*“In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, **that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem**, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof **by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning**”* (Isa. 4:2-4).

Conclusion

As we each contemplate the prospect of our Lord’s appearing and these great and tragic events of which the prophets have spoken, let us humble ourselves

before the mighty God of Israel. To each of us has been revealed through the Word, the deep and hidden secrets concerning the destiny of the nations, the coming of the Son of God to rule upon the earth with great power and glory, and the restoration of the kingdom to Israel beneath the scepter of Messiah, the greater than David.

Meanwhile, we watch carefully as the world in its willful ignorance runs headlong to destruction. The European public opinion is growing increasingly fervent in its anti-Israel bias: “Boycott Israel,” “Return to the terms of the armistice borders of 1948,” “force a settlement,” “Impose a ‘final solution’.” This is the vocabulary of a forgetful Europe today. While they are too leaderless and embroiled in economic uncertainty to make use of this sentiment themselves, the Russian Autocrat will “clay” them together and lead them on, by constraint if necessary, to their doom (Hab. 2:6).

The west is not far behind in their iniquity. Yet, in the end and due to no righteousness of their own, they will be humbled (Psa. 48:7; Isa. 2:11-17) and bent to the use of the Messiah (Psa. 72:10; Isa. 60:9). This great day of God Almighty has nearly arrived in order to bring the career of the kingdom of Saul to a close, as it were, and to usher in the reign of the greater than David and a completely new scene upon the earth: Russian power destroyed; Papal Europe dethroned and made a lake of fire for the wicked; the media gods and political pundits apostatizing through the earth, silenced; Israel humbled, redeemed and exalted above all nations, and the rest greatly humbled by fiery judgments so that they may be taught the righteousness of Yahweh.

This will be the new order of reality about to enter the world stage upon the Advent of Jesus. The world is too caught up in its own narcissistic self worship of social media, pop-culture and “political speak” to notice the catastrophe which is billowing like a great thundercloud over their heads, about to unleash upon their unsuspecting lives with Messianic hail the weight of a talent (Rev. 16:21). The world’s diet consists of the things of the flesh, which renders them entirely blind to the future. May each of us, to the rather, be busily preparing ourselves with the reading, studying, meditating and manifesting of the Word that we might not be caught unawares, that we might be worthy to partake of the glory, honor and power reserved for the faithful of all ages, to reign with Christ in his kingdom over the earth, God willing.

A. B. Bryan



COMMUNICATION

A lecture delivered at the 2015 Clinton Study Weekend

AS we should by now all know, the theme or subject of this study weekend is, *“Strengthen the things that remain”*, taken from Revelation 3:2 - “Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.”

“Strengthen”, from Strong’s G4741, carries the meaning of *to turn resolutely in a certain direction, to fix, to steadfastly set*. The Hebrew counterpart happens to be H2388 and carries the meaning of *to fasten upon, cure, repair, be urgent, withstand*; and is used so in Ezekiel 34:16.

“I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.”

The Lord Jesus Christ uses the word strengthen as he speaks to his disciples as recorded in Luke 22:32 - *“But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”*

We have heard already this weekend, exhortations on our reading and study, upholding the fundamentals of the Truth, on love, and on patience and longsuffering. It is now my lot to consider the subject of communication.

Communication; the word is used in the Authorized Version 7 times, twice in the Old Testament.

- 2nd Sam. 3:17 - *“And Abner had communication with the elders of Israel, saying, Ye sought for David in times past to be king over you.”* It is H1697 and carries the meaning in this reference as speaking or the spoken word.
- Abner therefore gave a short speech exhorting the people to support the king. 2nd Kings 9:11 - *“Then Jehu came forth to the servants of his lord: and one said unto him, Is all well? wherefore came this mad fellow to thee? And he said unto them, Ye know the man, and his communication.”* It is H7879 and carries the meaning in this reference as a musing. You might say that the servant said to Jehu, “you know the man, how he rambles on so”.

In the New Testament, communication is translated from the Greek word *logos* in three places, and carries the meaning of a subject or discourse or account, G3056.

- Mat 5:37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.
- Luke 24:17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?
- Eph 4:29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

The apostle Paul uses the word *aischrologia*, which carries the meaning of vile conversation. Col 3:8 – *“But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.”*

He uses the word *koinonia*, which carries the meaning of participation, social intercourse or communion, Philemon 1:6 – *“That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.”*

Lastly, the apostle, in his letter to the Corinthians uses the word *homilia* which carries the meaning of companionship or company. 1st Cor 15:33 – *“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”*

We mention these so that you will know, in addressing the subject of communication, there are several avenues in which one might go to comment on the subject. In the context of our theme, there should be no doubt as to what the correct course should be. Jude tells us that it is our lot to ***“earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints”***. (That faith, by the way, is consistently referred to by Bro. Thomas Williams as “THE TRUTH”, all capital letters.)

That faith fell under serious attack with the rise and domination of the Papal system. Over the course of many centuries, while there has always been a remnant, the TRUTH fell into virtual obscurity until John Thomas, facing death in a violent sea, and for the first time, facing also the uncertainty of what would become of himself, vowed that if he should escape this event of extreme peril, to not rest until he found out the truth of the matter.

Bro. Thomas, while still in his internship, involved himself, in a casual sort of way, in things of a religious bent when he wrote an answer to an article on “The Materiality of Man, and The immortality of the Soul, and the Vital Principle”. This effort convinced the Doctor that he knew next to nothing about the subject and ultimately, at that point of extreme peril, decided two things: The first, that if he should be thrust into the deep, he would sink beneath the waves with these words upon his lips, “Lord have mercy upon me”. The second, that if he should make it safely to shore, he would not rest until he found out the truth of the matter, that being, what happens to a man when he dies.

Well, he did survive that experience and he did live up to that vow. Thus began a revival of the truth in these latter days. A revival, I might add, which we fully endorse and believe as “THE TRUTH” that was once delivered unto the saints. Jude also says we need “to earnestly contend”, which, I think, brings us to our considerations this morning.

In these last days of Gentile times, THE TRUTH, and by default, the conservative Unamended position has come under extreme scrutiny and criticism. We have been labeled as un-loving and extremists. There have been defections and there has been an intense push for reunion. There has been abandonment of the Unamended Statement of Faith and there has been a blending across fellowship lines with reckless abandon. Having therefore stated our opinion of the current state of our community, what then are we to do?

To teach diligently

The children of Israel, in order to retain favor of Yahweh, were told in Deut. 6:3, *“Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do, that it may be well with thee”*, and then in verses 6 through 9:

“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.”

Adam Clarke makes this comment; *“to teach diligently is from a Hebrew word ‘shanan’ which carries the meaning to repeat or do a thing over and over again, hence to whet or sharpen an instrument, which is done by constant friction or grinding.”*

God’s testimonies are to be taught to our children and the utmost diligence must be used to make them understand those testimonies. Mr. Clarke goes on to say, *“thou shalt have religion at home, on the way to and from, and thou shalt begin and end the day with God, and thus religion will be the great business of thy life”*.

Let me add or change two things to Adam Clarke’s commentary. First, not only to our children, but let this also be an admonition to adults as well; and secondly, let’s substitute THE TRUTH for his word “religion”. Mr. Clarke’s sentence would therefore read, ***“thou shalt have the truth at home, on the way to and from, and thou shalt begin and end the day with God, and thus “THE TRUTH” will be the great business of our life”***.

This thought is verified by the prophet Malachi. In chapter 3, verse 16 we read, *“Then they that feared Yahweh, spake often one to another: and Yahweh hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared Yahweh and that thought upon His name.”*

There are several ideas presented in these words penned by Malachi. Speaking often one to another carries the meaning of reflecting on what was in their hearts. In Proverbs it is written, *"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he"*.

The second idea presented is, as a faithful remnant, they conversed one with another for a very good reason. The remnant was not alone in the rebuilding process. There were some there that had no real interest in carrying on the work of rebuilding. They, the two groups, no longer had much in common. The attitude between the two groups towards the principles of THE TRUTH was so different that there was no true fellowship between them. Oh, some may have had a social connection; but spiritual – no. It would appear from the text that by the time Malachi rose up to speak, the faithful remnant had become more or less isolated from the majority. No doubt the remnant had tried, like Malachi, to restore their brethren to the way of the Truth, but had been repelled and renounced. Sound familiar?

The remnant in Malachi's time must have felt there was no door left open to them but to strive to maintain their own integrity before Yahweh; to try and manifest lives of spiritual holiness and devotion to the things of Deity, for which things they had a wholehearted love, the result of clear understanding and commitment.

Now, you might ask, *'what of those lost sheep, those confused, or those proverbial fence-sitters?'* There are choices. I like to think that most choices have insignificant results, but there are choices that have profound results. From a very early age, there are choices - do right or do wrong. Yes there still are choices to be made and the wrong choice might lead one to eternal damnation. There is no grey area, there just can't be. A gulf has been created and one must make the decision. Whose side am I on?

Joshua, speaking to the people just before he died, *"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve Yahweh."*

Malachi lived and wrote during the time of the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple. He was sent to restore a sense of urgency unto the people. Nehemiah had returned to Persia and in his absence, belief and practice had deteriorated dramatically. It was Malachi's lot, to stir up the peoples' hearts to repent and in the eventuality of that not happening, prepare for judgment.

Malachi had a small following and so the appeal, "speak often one to another". That's really where we are today. We are but a small remnant of the unamended community and because we are a scattered remnant at that, we have challenges different from what faced Malachi. The likelihood we have of convincing that portion of mainstream Unamended Christadelphia, for lack of a better word, to change and come over to our way of thinking, is extremely unlikely.

Contending earnestly

Let's go back to a reference we made earlier.

Jude 1:3,4 *"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."*

The key part of verse 4 is the phrase, *"certain men who crept in unawares"*. This suggests from within or unexpectedly. Another, no less important phrase is, *"who were before of old ordained to this condemnation"*. We read in Luke 18:8 *"Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"* Rotherham and others suggest it be read, "The faith". I agree. Jesus, speaking in his parable of the wedding feast, makes the comment, *"many are called but few are chosen"*. I think it is obvious that, 1) interest in things divine fades in some individuals. 2) Because grievous wolves abound in the spiritual world as well as the natural, some will be led astray.

Even Daniel, writing almost a half a millennium before Christ, said, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt".

The point is, in this current age, we should not be surprised that the state of the community is in such need of repair. Our lot in this dilemma is not a pleasant one, but extremely necessary. We must contend earnestly for the Faith.

Communication - Fraternization

We mentioned that there were several different directions we could go in considering this subject. Communication, the word, carries the meaning of "to speak" as in 'the Word of God' and a companion or secondary meaning of social intercourse, as in fellowship or companionship using as one common denominator, the Word of God as in speaking often of the TRUTH, one to another.

The other, less appropriate meaning is, as we mentioned, keeping company of a less desirable sort. That would be with those who do not speak often one to another of THE TRUTH, but rather speak either of error or foolishness. That, I submit brethren, is no option! Do not even consider it!!!

We made mention earlier and we repeat again these words of Jesus, *"Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"* Considering that we are virtually at this time, the time of our Lord's Second Advent, these words therefore, should be of very special interest to us.

When this passage is quoted in our hearing do we take notice? Do we immediately think to ourselves of some other group, some small ecclesia in some other part of the country, or do we notice that when one finger is pointing out, three others are pointing in?

Most Christadelphians my age grew up referring to the Christadelphian Statement of Faith, a little pamphlet published by the Christadelphian Advocate when it was published in Quincy, Massachusetts. It stood as a document that accurately summarized the Unamended position for a good many years. In 1986, Brother Jim Stanton re-published that pamphlet with what he called some clarifications. They were not changes so much as footnotes that made the statement more clearly understood. In 1997, the Advocate Publishing Committee re-printed the original Christadelphian Statement of Faith published by Robert Roberts in 1877. These three pamphlets, however you want to view them, stand in opposition to the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith – a copy from 1898.

Now, not wanting to go completely off track, it needs to be said now, that these two opposite points of view, our statement of faith and the amended statement of faith are just that, TWO OPPOSITE points of view. We are Unamended Christadelphians and, I am sad to say, there are some who are having a difficult time trying to grasp that concept!

Do we have the same understanding on certain passages of scripture? Do we have the same understanding on certain basic doctrines? Do we have the same understanding of our nature and the original nature of our Lord and Master? All legitimate questions but the answers define the differences between the two groups. They do, they really do.

Having said that, we ask another question. Should we, Unamended Christadelphians, entertain any ideas of fraternization? The short answer is NO! The long answer: there have been several serious attempts to resolve the simpler issues. However, they have resulted in more difficult ones to resolve. There have been more recent attempts with similar results but with one glaring difference. The more recent attempts have implored the masses to consider the social aspects instead of the doctrinal.

The love that we manifest for the TRUTH, that was once delivered unto the saints, in my humble opinion, is being endangered by those who fraternize with errorists, and those who fraternize with those who fraternize with errorists. Please do not assume I am preaching guilt by association, because I am not. But I am saying that for the sake of consistency, we must draw a line in the sand and stand behind it. Show strength of conviction because we have THE TRUTH and now is the time to serve Yahweh and preserve that which was committed to our trust. There is no middle ground; there is no gray area. The truth of the matter is accurately summarized in the Unamended Statement of Faith and should be reverently upheld. Speaking often one with another unfortunately sometimes also means contending, and so, just as Jude exhorted, EARNESTLY CONTEND.

Our lessons

To earnestly contend is a struggle. Young people in school are now presented with challenges that were never even dreamed about when I was in school. Adults in the workplace, private and public sectors are presented with challenges to their spiritual balance that were unheard of just a few short years ago. Now, even in the ecclesia our spiritual balance is under attack. Can we take some lessons from the Scriptures?

In the Books of Kings and Chronicles are recorded the histories of the kings of Israel and Judah. From 1 Kings 14 through 2 Kings 17, we read of the sorry efforts of Kings Jeroboam to Hoshea, who led the northern kingdom, and encouraged abhorrent practices and idol worship, copying the surrounding Gentile nations. Similarly, from Rehoboam in 1 Kings 12 to Zedekiah in 2 Kings 25, the kings of Judah flip flopped as to what was right and what was wrong. In Deuteronomy, chapter 30 we read:

“And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day.” ... “See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.” (vv. 6,7,8,15,16)

But then we read, in verses 17-19:

But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live...”

These words, written so very long ago to natural Israel, do they not have any impact upon us? The kings of Judah present a history of backsliding efforts and half-hearted attempts to do that which they thought was right. This backsliding of natural Israel is to be found repeatedly in the Divine history recorded by their prophets and scribes. 2nd Kings 17: 13 to 15 speaks volumes of the long suffering of God towards them –

“Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep

my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them, that they should not do like them."

I think, to put all this in perspective, we need to look at the example of the third king of Judah, Asa, son of Abijah. He reigned over Judah for 41 years and was king in Jerusalem during the reigns of 8 kings of Israel; Jeroboam, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Tibni, Omri, and Ahab. Asa feared God and we read, 1st Kings 15:11-13, *"And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did David his father. And he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made. And also Maachah his mother, even her he removed from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove; and Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt it by the brook Kidron."*

But, we read in the next verse, *"But the high places were not removed: nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the LORD all his days."*

The high places, what are we told about them? In Leviticus 26:30 Yahweh told Israel that He would destroy all their high places, and the same admonition was given in Deuteronomy 12:2.

Now in contrast to Asa, we read of Jehosaphat in 2 Chronicles 17:5 *"his heart was lifted up in the ways of the LORD: moreover he took away the high places and groves out of Judah."* Now what was the significant difference between Asa and Jehosaphat? Asa was a good king, his heart was right before God, and he did almost everything necessary to continue in the ways of David several generations before him. The bottom line, when we consider the life and works of Asa, king of Judah, is that he did not finish the job!

Communication and falsehood

Albert Hall, writing in his book *From Eden to Eden*, had this to say, "Shall we find 'THE FAITH' (Luke 18:8)? The 'ONE FAITH' (Eph 4:5). 'The FAITH once for all delivered unto the saints' (Jude 3). That ONE FAITH, of which Paul wrote, 'continue in the faith grounded and settled, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel'". Brother Hall, repeats the warning Paul made to the elders of the ecclesia at Ephesus, *"Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears (Acts 20:30-31)."*

Then Bro. Hall quotes Paul's letter to the Corinthians; *"For such are false teachers, apostles, deceitful workers transforming themselves."* From 1st Timothy 4:1 he quotes, *"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in latter times*

some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.” From 2nd Timothy 4:3 he quotes, “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the TRUTH.”

Brother Hall then comments, “that even while Paul continued to preach the gospel of Christ, there were false teachers in abundance.” What about now? Unfortunately, there are in abundance teachers, leading some, maybe many, astray.

Communication and controversy

We mentioned earlier that to contend earnestly carries the meaning of a struggle and that a struggle usually carries the stigma of contention or controversy. Should we avoid controversy? Can we avoid controversy? Thomas Williams addresses this very subject in the pages of the Christadelphian Advocate. He writes:

“Now, brethren, with all due respect to your complaints and your desire to have no controversy, we are convinced by scripture, by experience, and by stubborn facts which force themselves daily before us, that no paper can do its duty in these evil days without controversy, without constantly contending and endeavoring to put down error.” April, 1905

The same goes, I submit, for exhortation. He then goes on to say, “*Any paper that will try to keep free from contention will be compelled to proceed upon the principle of “good lord and good devil,” and such a paper will be a hypocrite.*”

Human nature is the same now in the 21st century as it was when Christ taught the multitudes, and the apostles contended with the Jewish leaders in the synagogues. Brother Williams concludes this thought, based upon the letters he received complaining about too much controversy in the pages of the Advocate. “*Let me say in conclusion, you deceive yourselves if you think a paper on behalf of the TRUTH, against existing and constantly arising errors without and within, can be faithfully conducted without controversy.*”

To this we humbly submit, to strengthen the things that remain, to earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints and to speak often one to another is to keep constantly before our eyes, God’s Word. Malachi writes, “*And Yahweh hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared Yahweh, and that thought upon his name.*”

Our Laodicean time

There is one more aspect of communication as to strengthening the things that remain we wish to comment on.

The apostle John, while exiled on the Isle of Patmos, was given messages as to ‘things that are’. The Seven Letters to the seven Ecclesias of Asia were personal messages, some of commendation, some of condemnation. In Eureka, Brother Thomas suggests that the messages not only describe the Ecclesias as they existed in AD 96, but that they appear to represent epochs of Ecclesial activity. That puts the message to Laodicea as representative of these last days before Christ returns.

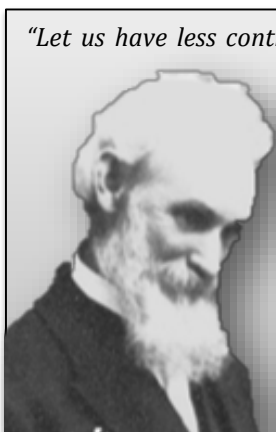
We read in chapter 3:15 of the Apocalypse, regarding Laodicea, which was one of two ecclesias that received no commendation whatsoever from Christ. *“I know thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would that thou were cold OR hot.”* They were lukewarm and in danger of being spued out of his mouth. Bro. Roberts, in an article out of Seasons of Comfort titled, “The Day of the Lord”, comments – *“this shows the possibility of a community thinking well of itself but being wretched before the Lord.”*

These messages were communicated us-ward. We live in the Laodicean period of ecclesial activity. By speaking often one to another about these things, essential lifesaving truths, we strengthen two things:

1. Each other
2. Our resolve to do the right thing

If we do this, because Yahweh hears us, our names will be written in the book of remembrance, for good.

Herb Thomas



“Let us have less controversy, and more building up among ourselves.”

That sounds pleasingly as a suggestion – a proposition; but it will not work; it positively refuses to be reduced to practice. It is self-contradictory, since there cannot be a “building up” without an “earnest contention for the faith once delivered to the saints,” and this “contention” is only another name for “controversy.” Were the saints built up in apostolic times? They were, and that, too, by fighting hard battles, by “contention,” by “controversy.”

Thomas Williams, “Complaints About Controversy

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT



June 10

My Dear Mother:

I told my wife today of the conclusion I have come to on the subject of holiness. She thinks I have allowed myself to come too much under the influence of "that man Evans," as she expresses it. "What will you say to Mr. Kennedy's experience," she demanded; "do you mean to say he has been laboring under a delusion for twenty years?" I confess that I hardly knew what to say in reply. I do not like to think he has been deluded. I certainly believe he has felt just as he claims to have felt, but what caused the feelings? Well, if I am to be guided entirely by the Bible, I suppose the question of how this or that man feels or has felt ought not to have much weight.

My wife feels very bad because I have invited Mr. Evans to our house. She says she "knows" he will draw me away from our church into his horrid little sect." Well, if he can show me any truth I am bound to receive it, for Jesus said, "The truth shall make you free."

I hardly know what to do now about attending our holiness meeting as I no longer believe in the doctrine. I hear that very few of our Methodist ministers now believe in it; at least, they do not preach it, and some of them are openly opposed to it. I think I will stay from the meeting, and if any one asks me about it I will explain. I suppose Mr. Kennedy will feel very bad, but what else can I do under the circumstances?

June 15

I was surprised today to learn that Mr. Evans has made a convert of a Catholic young man who works in our shop. He came to this country from Ireland only a few months ago, and seems to be quite intelligent.

I asked him at the first opportunity if it was true that he had renounced Romanism and become a Christadelphian. He looked up with a bright smile and quickly replied, "O yes, indeed, and I am very glad that my eyes have been opened and that I have come to a knowledge of the truth." "Of course it was all right for you to leave Rome," said I, "but why become a Christadelphian? Why not have joined some other Protestant denomination? I should think it would be much pleasanter for you."

"I might just as well have stayed in Rome," he replied, "for I could never see much real difference between them." His reply nettled me a little and I said

somewhat sharply, "I guess you don't know much about the Protestant religion or you would not make any such statement as that."

"I did not mean to offend you," he replied pleasantly, "but I think I can substantiate what I have said. What are the fundamental doctrines of the Roman church? First, it teaches the immortality of the soul, and upon that doctrine are built the theories of hell, heaven and purgatory."

"Protestants repudiate purgatory, but there is just as much proof for the existence of purgatory as there is for the theories of heaven and hell-going, and that is just none at all. Then there is the doctrine of the Trinity, the personality of the devil, eternal torment and the burning up of the earth at the coming of Christ. These fundamental doctrines of Rome are accepted by nearly all Protestant sects, so you see there is not much difference after all except on minor matters."

"Well, at least we are not so foolish as to speak of the Virgin Mary as the 'mother of God,'" I replied, "neither do we believe in the invocation of saints." "Quite true," he replied, "but that is because you do not carry your theories to their logical conclusion. Now you must admit that your creed teaches that 'God became man in the womb of the blessed virgin,' and that 'two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man.' Now if Christ was 'very God' as well as 'very man' it is perfectly logical to speak of Mary as 'the mother of God.' Now in regard to the invocation of saints: you know that both Catholics and Protestants believe that the dead are perfectly conscious of what is going on in this world, and if Protestants think it is right to ask good men to pray for them in this life, why not continue to invoke their prayers after they have passed into the spirit world? This is all that Catholics profess to do and I do not see why Protestants should object to the practice from their point of view."

I really did not know what to say in reply as I remembered what our pastor remarked to me on one occasion. He said, "I believe that my mother is in heaven and that she is just as much interested in me and prays for me as much or more than she did while here." That remark struck me at the time as very peculiar, but it seems to be consistent enough with the theory that the dead are conscious. I must look this matter up so that I shall be better posted on the subject. I feel rather humiliated that a young Irishman who has never read the Bible till recently should get the better of me in an argument when I have had the Bible in my hands all my life.

June 19

My Dear Mother:

Mr. Evans visited me at my house last evening for the purpose of having a talk on the teachings of the Bible. He began by asking me if belief of the gospel is necessary to salvation. Of course, I replied at once in the affirmative, and then he asked me to tell him what the gospel is. You will be surprised, as I was, to find that I could give him no definite answer to that simple question. I certainly thought I knew what the gospel was, but when I tried to answer his

question I found that my ideas on that question were very vague. My first thought was to answer that the gospel is the Bible, or the word of God, but I reflected that the word gospel means "good news" or "glad tidings," and that there are many things contained in God's Word which cannot be called good news in any sense. After some hesitation I replied that the gospel consists of the facts that Jesus Christ has died for us that our sins might be forgiven so that we might go to Jesus when we die and reign with him forever in heaven.

Mr. Evans did not ask any more questions, but opened his Bible and proceeded to show that my idea of the gospel was unscriptural.

He quoted from Luke 9:2,6, to show that Jesus, in the beginning of his ministry, sent out his disciples to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick, and, as a matter of fact, they went and preached the gospel; showing that "the gospel" and "the kingdom of God are synonymous terms.

Then he referred me to Luke 18:32-34, where Jesus tells his disciples about his approaching death and resurrection, and showed that his disciples "understood none of these things, and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things that were spoken."

"If the facts concerning the death and resurrection of Christ constitute the gospel," reasoned Mr. Evans, "how is it that the disciples were sent to preach the gospel at the first, and knew nothing at all about it some time afterward? It is true that these facts were afterwards proclaimed as an essential element of the gospel message, but, primarily, the gospel is good news or glad tidings of the kingdom of God." "What do you understand by the kingdom of God?" I asked. "The kingdom of Israel restored," he replied. "Do you mean to tell me," I cried, "that the old Israelitish kingdom, consisting of the literal twelve tribes of Israel is to be restored as it was before?" "it is not I that say it, but the holy prophets and apostles who spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit," he replied, and then he began quoting from all parts of the Bible to prove his position. To say that I was "astonished at his doctrine" would be putting it mildly. It is perfectly wonderful, the knowledge of the Scriptures that man has. How I wish you could have heard him.

I noted down all the passages he quoted, and I will try to give you an idea of what he said. To show that the Israelitish nation was the kingdom of God when it existed in Canaan he quoted Exod. 19:5,6; 1st Chron. 29:23; 28:5; 1st Sam. 8:7. In these passages occur the following phrases which apply to Israel: "A peculiar treasure unto me;" "A kingdom of priests and a holy nation;" "Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord;" "Sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel;" "They have rejected me (the Lord) that I should not reign over them." The present overthrow and dispersion of the kingdom of Israel was on account of their sins and was foretold by their prophets. Not only so but their restoration was also just as plainly prophesied. Please look up the following texts: Deut. 4:27; 29:29; Ezek. 21:25-27; 2nd Sam. 7:10, 12-16, 24; Psa. 89:34-37; Jer. 31:10; Ezek. 37:whole chapter; Micah 4:6,7; Isa. 18:7; Jer. 33:7-11.

From these references we learn that the Israelites were to be "scattered and peeled," and become a "reproach and a byword and a hissing among all

nations.” *Their kingdom was to be “overturned until he come whose right it is and I will give it him,” saith the Lord. God promised David that his throne and kingdom should be established forever and always endure like the sun and moon throughout all generations. David recognized that the children of Israel were included in this covenant, for he said, “thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee forever, and thou Lord art become their God.” It was shown by Mr. Evans that this covenant with David could not be fulfilled unless the children of Israel were restored to their own land under the rulership of Jesus Christ who was a descendant of David and heir to this throne. See Luke 1:31-33. By looking up all the passages referred to you will see there is to be an actual restoration of the Israelites, and the Virgin Mary was told that her son should be great, and that the Lord God would give unto him the throne of his father David, and that he should reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there should be no end.*

When Mr. Evans took his departure my mind was in a complete whirl. What he said seems plain enough but it is so radically different from my former ideas that I hardly know what to think. I always supposed the kingdom of God meant heaven, or the Christian church, or something of that nature, in fact, my ideas on the subject were so vague that I hardly know now what I did think. I shall never rest satisfied now until I know the truth on this subject.

*My wife feels very uneasy over the situation. She doesn't like to have Mr. Evans come here, though she tried to treat him courteously. “Why can't you be satisfied with your own belief?” she said. I heartily wish I could, but I feel that I **must** know the truth whatever the result may be. I may not feel so happy as I did when I thought I was entirely sanctified, but it is better to be right than to be happy. Perhaps the happiness will come with a more perfect knowledge of God's mind and purpose.*

June 23

My Dear Mother:

I had a short talk with Mr. Steele today, after the Bible class. I asked him what he thought of the Christadelphians and their teachings. He looked up quickly and replied, “I don't want anything to do with them.” “Do you know anything about their ideas?” I asked, “Not very much, but I know all I want to about them,” he replied. “I came in contact with them in a neighboring city a few years ago,” he continued, “and one of them loaned me a book called “Christendom Astray.” I read two or three chapters and then found that its teachings were getting a complete hold on my mind. I could also see that it was leading me directly away from the teachings of our church, so I returned the book and refused to hear anything more on the subject. I would not more read their books or allow them to talk to me than I would harbor a serpent in my house. I tell you it is dangerous doctrine and I have often wished there were some way by which they could be legally restrained from carrying on their abominable work.”

I saw that he was getting quite excited, so I thought it best not to tell him of Mr. Evans' visit to my home. If the Christadelphian doctrines are so dangerous I

do not see any need of getting excited and talking about legal suppression. If their teaching is not of God it will come to naught, and this country is free for all religions so long as they do not violate the laws of the land. The Christadelphians appear to be a poor, harmless, hard-working class of people, whose only fault seems to be that they consider themselves to be right and everybody else to be wrong on the subject of religion. If their ideas are so foolish why cannot the clergy come out publicly and expose their errors? Mr. Steele is a good man but I do not like to hear him denounce people so severely when he has to admit that he knows very little about them.

I hear that Mr. Evans has succeeded in making several converts, and that they have organized a church (or ecclesia, as they call it), and have hired a small hall for the purpose of holding meetings for the "public proclamation of the truth," as Mr. Evans expresses it. Well, I admire their courage, but doubt if they will accomplish much. (To be continued)

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



The Rainbowed Angel of Revelation 10

"In the tenth chapter of the Apocalypse are set forth these seen of Ezekiel, Daniel, and John, as the rainbowed Angel. He is herein ready for action - the strong and mighty warrior prepared for combat with the Man-Image seen by Nebuchadnezzar in his dream. Here, then, are two men, representing two belligerent powers - the one, that of the Kingdom of Men; the other, that of the Kingdom of the Deity. Nebuchadnezzar's Image was the aggregation into one symbolic man, of a multitude of powers contemporary with many generations; so this one powerful Angel is an aggregation into One Body, named Yahweh TZ'VAOTH, of all saints accounted worthy of cooperation with the Lord Jesus in the execution of "the judgment written." "Judgment," says Daniel, "was given to the saints;" and this Rainbowed Angel is their symbol, representing their aspect in the possession of judicial power, and ready to "destroy them who corrupt the earth" (ch. 11:18)." Eureka, Vol. 3, p. 172

SPIRIT OF ELIJAH” or THE SPIRIT OF ELI?

THIS past June a booklet titled “*The Spirit of Elijah*”, written by bro. Jim Millay, was sent out to the various ecclesial secretaries to be shared with their ecclesias, and was later to be advertised in the August issue of the Advocate. It is a booklet that attempts to address the perceived troubles tearing the Unamended community apart, and suggests various solutions for addressing such problems.

We have studied the booklet in full (63 pages), and while there are isolated elements and statements that we can agree with – the basic premise, conclusions and overall applications of bro. Millay’s message we find critically flawed with serious misrepresentations of certain realities. The work itself is a revealing example of where Unamended Christadelphia has gone wrong in recent years, and the great divide that exists today. It reveals a philosophical approach to the application of the Truth that should be very quickly perceived as not being in keeping with the true spirit of Elijah, or the “old paths”: *the spirit of uncompromising zeal and dedication to the honor of, and obedience to Yahweh no matter what the consequence*. Rather, we believe, it is very much in line with and more appropriately comparable with the spirit of Eli: *an example of spiritual compromise for the sake of peace, leading to spiritual weakness and uncertainty, allowing the worship of God to become a matter of disdain to the people*.

We would prefer to leave this matter alone, as we find no exhortive value in dissecting this booklet. However, it is something that needs to be addressed as an undermining influence of The Truth in both belief and application. Due to the series of issues found in almost every page of this booklet, it is only practical to try to point out some of the more over-arching arguments and comments.

“Prelude”

Bro. Millay begins his booklet with an admission that “we” (and we perceive he means the Unamended Community) “*have in many ways corrupted the way of the Lord; we are also much in the need of repentance in order that we might be a people prepared for that great and terrible day of the Lord* (p.4).” To this blunt statement we find no disagreement. The spiritual corruption of the Household, on both a personal and community wide level, is such that we ALL must take on the life or death act of self-examination to evaluate if we are truly “walking in the way”. But, as bro. Millay further develops his argument, it is

quickly noted that we greatly differ with him in regard to the nature of the problems that we face as well as their solutions.

Premise

The author builds his argument upon the premise of the last two verses of the book of Malachi which reads – *“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.”* Luke 1:17 is also referenced where further information is – *“to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”*

Bro. Millay bases his thoughts on his definition of the divide that exists between the two classes, namely, *“the children”* and *“the fathers”*. He attempts to draw a parallel between the Children of Israel during Christ’s first appearance and during our own day by noting that the descendants of Abraham, which he labels *“the children”*, refused to see or hear (Matthew 13:15); and that their leaders (*“the fathers”*), *“were so steeped in their own traditions and a “letter of the law” mentality that they led the mobs of the children to reject and crucify their Messiah (p.6).”*

Although we must not be ignorant or dismissive of the critical mistakes made by the Children of Israel during both the ministry John the Baptist and the 1st appearance of the Messiah; we must be able to properly discern and apply those lessons. Bro. Millay attempts to build his entire thesis regarding the problems in the Household today by drawing a direct parallel between the Israelite generation who existed at the first coming of the Messiah, and what he claims, *“We expect to be the generation living at his second coming.”* But, the author ignores other EXTREMELY important teachings and parallels throughout the Scriptures that teach us of the nature and operation of apostasy, liberalism, ecumenicalism and Laodecianism which have constantly led Israelites and Gentiles away from the ONE FAITH throughout the ages, and that are IN FACT compromising the Unamended Community today.

“The Fathers” & “The Children”

Quoting from p. 7 – bro. Millay lays out what he perceives to be the *“principal points of contention”* between the *“fathers and the children in this twenty first century”*.

- *“The fathers are struggling to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints (Jude 1:3) and their methods of contention can be a stumbling block for the children.”*
- *“The children are seeking a better way to demonstrate their love for God and their neighbor but their style of liberality can be a source of displeasure to the fathers and a stumbling block for themselves.”*

Both of these observations are based upon patently false assumptions. There is only ONE TRUE STANDARD TO WHICH WE MUST ADHERE – “the old paths” – no matter if one is of the “father” or “children” class. The breakdown in the Unamended Community is evidence that neither the “fathers” are truly contending, or are the “children” demonstrating a love for God. If “the traditions” – as referenced by the Apostle Paul – are not followed, then there is a major breakdown in spiritual understanding.

- In regard to the “fathers” – there has been a serious breakdown in the “contending” that bro. Millay claims has been going on. If there has been any failure in the “methods of contention” it has been the TOTAL LACK of contention in many quarters. **It includes the “fathers” not adhering to the standards and principles of THEIR “fathers”** – stalwart brethren of old. As once “children” themselves, they have forsaken the methods of their spiritual fathers, and have corrupted the “old paths”, providing a laxness for “the children” that have put “the children” – and all believers, no matter their spiritual status – in jeopardy.
- The “children”, by their liberality, are NOT demonstrating “their love for God and their neighbor”. Love can only be demonstrated through obedience to God’s commands (John 14:15), not merely by “good” but misled intentions. There has been a general rebellion among Christadelphians in these last days to the perceived rigidity and spiritual surety that characterized early brethren. The old methods of contention are viewed as “outdated”, too “unloving” or not keeping up with the churches or times. Such is evidence of the influence of the world and the growing wave of humanistic thinking and exposure thereto – not evidence that the methods of contending (where true “contention” is actually taking place) are to blame. As in the time of the Judges, many are reduced to doing “that which is right in their own eyes”, with one opinion viewed as good as another.

Bro. Millay goes on to state (p. 10), “*We should accept the possibility, perhaps even the probability, that our brother is not always wrong and we are not always right.*” Here we have the humanistic words of an uncertain sound - confusion. The Truth is an unmovable and certain matter. It should not be a case of approaching issues based upon assumptions of good or evil of our fellow brethren, but simply, “what are the facts?” As has been quoted many times – “Facts are stubborn things.” The facts of the Truth and its application have been long established. The only question is whether we are walking in its Way. The fact of the matter is, we must be certain and we must be unmovable upon its principles. Does it mean that we believe that we can execute the Truth without flaw? – Of course not. But there are modern, liberalistic approaches/applications to “The Truth” in these last days that are clearly in error and are to be flatly rejected. At the same time we must be unmovable upon the “traditions” (both in belief and practice) that are Scripturally tried and true, and *not carried about by*

every wind of doctrine (Eph. 4:14). If we are not confident in such traditions, then there is clearly a problem with our understanding and wisdom. To be firm and unmovable in one's beliefs is wrongly viewed as a sign of pride, as later implied by bro. Millay. But the reality is, that it takes a great deal of humility to shun the impulses and affections of the flesh in order to submit to the absolute Truths of Divine wisdom, and to adhere to such without wavering. *"Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle (2nd Thess. 2:15)."*

He continues on the same page - *"The fathers should be willing to acknowledge that it is not "the Truth" that has driven away the children; it is our handling and application of the Truth that needs to change. The children should be willing to acknowledge that the fundamentals of the Truth need not and must not be compromised in order to administer love for our brethren."* This is a confusing and contradictory observation. If "the Truth" is not driving away "the children", then why does the writer perceive that the "fundamentals of the Truth" are being "compromised" by "the children"? If "the children" are compromising the Truth, then it shows that THE TRUTH is not to the tastes of those being "driven away". It is evident that the class to which bro. Millay refers to as "the children" is being repelled by the very principles/fundamentals of "The Truth".

"The Truth" as a series of teachings cannot be separated from its handling or application. "The Truth" is a complete package of belief AND practice. One cannot say that they reject the way it has been "handled", and yet claim to still have a love for its doctrines. If one truly understands THE TRUTH and embraces a love for it, they will understand what is to be believed and what should be practiced. In recent years we have seen a tragic breakdown in both belief and practice as many have been influenced by the worldly philosophies of these modern times. Many have branded the beliefs and practices of early brethren as nothing more than "legalistic" and "belonging to another time". They are desirous of a more "updated" and "fresh approach" to religious beliefs and practice, one that is not so "restrictive" or "exclusive", but rather much more ecumenical and *phileo* based. Like the Israelites of old, brethren have pleaded with them to walk in the "old paths", but their answer has been repeated over and over again - ***"We will not walk therein"*** (Jer. 6:16). Should Yahweh have made the Truth more palatable, lightened up on its "application" or "handling" so that so many of the Israelites (whether in the time of the Prophets, or of Christ and the Apostles) would not have been turned off by it? Where does the fault lie?

"Two Opinions?"

Bro. Millay pursues the same argument further on p. 15 where he addresses Elijah's question - *"How long halt ye between two opinions?"* He tries to associate the controversies within the Brotherhood as a halting between two opinions - comparing it to the "partisan gridlock" of government. He states, *"What hurt does our internal debating and bickering (as it may be perceived)*

have on the little ones in our community?" What can be said about such debating or bickering? Wasn't Elijah himself accused of such a thing by Ahab with the rhetorical question – "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" Would it have been better for Elijah (or any of the Prophets) to remain quiet and cease pointing out error and wickedness? Would there have not been more peace or at least the perception of peace? These are the very things of which many conservative brethren have been accused in recent years – being "political", "partisan", "causing trouble", "driving away the young people"; simply because they are not willing to stand by and watch error overtake the Brotherhood, nor just quietly "go with the flow" as to maintain a sense of peace.

He continues, *"Today, we need to be willing to recognize that both the fathers and the children have their weaknesses and their strong points. However, neither opinion may be completely in tune with the Word of God."* Such is an over-generalizing assumption. As we have pointed out, some of "the fathers" have greatly failed the Truth and "the children" in these last days due to an Eli type approach of lax spiritual discipline out of fear of "driving away the young people" and disrupting "peace", while other "fathers" (though a dwindling minority) have attempted to stand firm. There are also examples of "the children", in contrast to the general descending sentiment, who have very strongly desired a return to the "old paths" – to the great dismay and irritation of many "fathers" who have abused their spiritual responsibilities.

Peace and Relationships

Over the past few years both bro. Millay and other brethren, have in effect, turned a blind eye to fundamental error while striving to "cut the legs out" from underneath those who have tried to preserve the "old paths" and who cry out the necessary warnings, taking action against error when needed. Such has been viewed as contrary to the principles of peace, and as encouraging "strife, contention and conflict" (p.22). They fail to see that it is the existence of error that creates conflict: that there is a natural enmity between truth and error that must be confronted if brethren are to be faithful to their spiritual duty. This has always been the state of things between Truth and Error, as long as there have been faithful brethren willing to resist the fruits of darkness. Bro. Millay draws upon James 3:18 to state, *"This teaching implies that the conditions for bearing the fruit of righteousness require peace as a deliberately sought outcome; it is something that is "sown and "made" - not strife, contention and conflict. It is therefore necessary for us all to ask, in the spirit of self-examination, **what steps am I taking to bear fruit and make peace in and among our ecclesias?**"* Let it be understood that "peace" is not something that can be forced. Peace cannot include an "agreeing to disagree". Nor can peace, through laxness or a tolerance of error (i.e., the path of least resistance), be viewed as quality fruit.

Bro. Millay later concludes on p. 22 that, *"The spirit of Elijah is all about turning our hearts to wisdom and using that wisdom in our relationships with our brethren."* Really? Is that what we are to take away from Elijah's work?

That it is all about “relationships”? We are hearing this distressing cry more and more in recent times. It marks a dramatic and frightening shift away from the “old paths” of obedience to Yahweh as the primary duty of our lives, and an embracing of the trends of the ecumenicals that seek to lessen the importance of Doctrine and to focus on a humanistic spirit of “relationship building”. There are certainly clear Scriptural commands that dictate how we are to feel about and interact with one another, but the focus on “relationships” puts the cart before the horse. Love and obedience to God is our primary duty (as preached by Elijah) founded exclusively upon the principles of THE TRUTH. Relationships, or our fellowship with one another is an outcome of “walking in the Light” (1st John 1:7) – a truly shared belief, love and execution of the principles of God’s will. We do not build relationships first and then add the other as an extra bonus – First one THEN the other!

“Unhealthy trends”

On p. 26, bro. Millay gets to the heart of his grievance by listing twelve points, which he views as “unhealthy trends” that are promoting strife. We here quote them in their entirety as this emphatically illustrates the great divide that exists in our community with those like bro. Millay, who see some of the problems but also view those who are “contending” as a significant part of the problem, and tend to grossly misrepresent the actions and motives of those who are in fact “contending” for the “old paths”. Please note the following information carefully:

- *“Morality and worldly behavior: On the one hand we see rigid intolerance for individuals who have had difficulties in their early life choices; some allow no mercy or forgiveness under the justification that this is not our place and forgiveness can only come from God. On the other hand, we are always trending toward more tolerance and acceptance of worldly norms that are not far removed from the wickedness that filled the earth in the days of Noah and Lot. Jesus warned that such would be the condition at the time of his return.”*

COMMENT: There is nothing to disagree with in the latter part of this point, but the former comment is highly suspect. Where is this “rigid intolerance of individuals” based upon their early life choices evident? Now, it has been the argument of those who have contended against *remarriage after divorce* that it is not for us, but for God alone to forgive an ongoing lifestyle that can be viewed as adulterous; as it is understood that for us to understand sin as forgiven requires a turning away from the sin. An ongoing marriage after divorce complicates the Scriptural criteria for forgiveness. Bro. Millay directly points to the marriage issue on page 33, where he clearly takes a shot at what he perceives as “the rigid” nature of those who hold a conservative view on the Marriage Question. Are such brethren really guilty of promoting an “unhealthy trend” or promoting strife? What about

those who have made great efforts to justify and normalize the matter of “Divorce & Remarriage”? – Something that has in fact stoked the matter as a contentious issue. No mention of that by bro. Millay.

- *“Prophetic Views: The elevation of certain pioneer writings to the status equivalent to inspiration, requiring submission to 150 year old interpretations of future events that do not always fit well into the present alignment of the nations. On the other hand, the tendency to discount well established Biblical principles on prophecy, looking rather to “Google” for new concepts and modern views.”*
COMMENT: Bro. Millay condemns traditional prophetic understanding while misrepresenting those who hold to it. Who is requiring “submission”? How is it “unhealthy” and “promoting strife” to contend for traditional prophetic interpretation? Whether it is 150 years old or one year old; if such is in fact Biblical in nature, and unfolding before our very eyes (as much of the “150 year old interpretations” in fact are) how is such causing “conflict”? Bro. Millay provides no specifics here and makes no mention of those who continually malign and mock those who hold to more traditional prophetic understanding. So, who is really promoting strife?
- *“Fellowship discipline: Seeking more ‘exclusive’ or more ‘inclusive’ fellowship norms.”* **COMMENT:** Here lies one of the biggest issues of our time in the Brotherhood. Bro. Millay tries to cast both “exclusive” and inclusive” fellowship standards in a negative light – when in fact we can only have one or the other. No one is trying to be “**more** exclusive”, but merely to preserve and practice the fellowship standards that the Scriptures require of us. Such is a necessary reaction to the more “inclusive” practices that have been taking place throughout the Household and that have been largely tolerated. This is not an issue where one can simply sit on the fence and blame both exclusivity and inclusivity as the problem – though it certainly is palatable to the “Eli” type mindset that would prefer not to take any kind of action or make a decision one way or another. “How long must ye halt between two opinions?”
- *“Doctrinal purity: The focus on doctrinal purity as the nearly exclusive requirement for salvation with limited emphasis on being ‘doers of the word’; or the promotion of love and forgiveness in any situation, no matter how wicked, while looking at mercy as the unconditional right of the believer.”* **COMMENT:** This is a perfect example of a “straw-man” argument. Who is giving “limited emphasis” to matters involving the application of walk? Although the latter point here is certainly valid and viewable, who is guilty of making doctrinal purity (in fact, an extremely critical issue) the “nearly exclusive requirement for salvation”? Though such an accusation may have a certain appeal

to those who are attempting to lessen the importance of doctrinal issues, it is a slanderous and unfounded charge.

- *“Traditions: Placing more emphasis on the traditions of men over the commandments of God. Conversely, demonstrating little or no respect for the established practices and customs of the ecclesia.”* **COMMENT:** We will defer the reader to our comments on the previous bullet point as having application here as well. It is very easy to make broad unsubstantiated generalizations without specifics.
- *“Pride: The elevation of self esteem and unhealthy confidence in one’s scriptural understanding and his presentation of complex doctrines and controversial subjects. On the other hand, being unwilling or unable to stand up for important scriptural principles.”* **COMMENT:** Although pride, along with the “lust of the eye and the lust of the flesh”, are certainly continuous and powerful elements with which we fight daily in our warfare with the flesh – there would appear to be a judging of motives here by bro. Millay. Since we have personally had disagreements and exchanges with bro. Millay previously on various issues of our day, we understand that he views absolute certainty of belief as a bend towards being prideful (a theme he addresses in other places in his booklet). Are we not to be “assured”, and “unmovable” in matters of the THE TRUTH? Unfortunately, brethren such as bro. Millay view such assuredness and unwillingness to bend to a different way of thinking as a sign of pride, and therefore judge it as fact. How does one exactly discern or define an “unhealthy confidence”? If it is confidence in one’s own abilities, that certainly would be a call for concern – however, such should not be mistaken for a CERTAINTY of a Truth based upon God’s Word.
- *“Respect of persons: Elevating certain individuals and their paradigms to positions of honor. On the other hand, showing little or no respect for those that labor faithfully in the Lord’s service.”* **COMMENT:** At face value, there is nothing with which to disagree here. We will emphasize that we are not to be a “respector of persons”. However, we certainly should esteem those who themselves have a respect for, and a firm grasp of the Truth. We should also cultivate an appreciative regard for the labors of brethren who have preceded us – for we stand on their shoulders as it were.
- *“Preaching the Word: The concept that the time for preaching the Word is over and we are now called on simply to ‘strengthen the things that remain’. Conversely, the practice of compassing sea and land to make one proselyte, even when it is necessary to compromise well established doctrinal teaching and practice.* **COMMENT:** We have personally never encountered the former point, but that is not to

say that it has not been expressed in some circles. This once again comes back to a “who” and “where” question.

- *“Ecclesial authority: The tendency to practice contamination by association, or boycotting of certain Bible schools and Gatherings in order to control fellowship practices. On the other hand, showing little or no restraint in fellowship practice, placing the advantages of social bonding over established Bible principles.”* **COMMENT:** The accusations of “contamination by association” have circulated far too long – revealing willful ignorance, while provoking fear tactics and ill-informed charges against those who have made very clear Scriptural stands against the promotion and tolerance of doctrinal error. Avoiding certain Bible Schools and Gatherings that tolerate such error is not about “control”, but rather exercising sound fellowship practice and spiritual sense, AS OPPOSED to the “on the other hand” practices of “no restraint” that bro. Millay also condemns. That is the great irony in all of this. While it is recognized that “no restraint” promotes strife, those who take definitive action against such permissiveness are also condemned. Simply recognizing error isn’t enough. One must act against it...and certainly not work counter to those who are taking action. Bemoaning the existence of error while attempting to tie the hands of those prepared to do something about it is to give such error protection AND enable its growth.
- *“Problems between brethren: The lack of respect for the principles in Matthew 18; handling problems between brethren and judging brethren in public forums rather than first seeking scripturally based solutions in private. Conversely, refusing to deal with any problems; letting all manner of conduct go unchallenged.”* **COMMENT:** Matthew 18 (that which is to involve a private trespass between brethren) is frequently misapplied and used as a dubious tactic by the very ones who prefer to ignore rather than resolve problems. When issues and errors are promoted publicly or pose a threat to the well fare of the Household, unfortunately it requires public repudiation and warning to counter the damage that has been done. How is it to be applied when the matter has already seen the light of day? Although the cry for “Matthew 18” is often made, when it is actually used in various situations there seldom seems to be the will to follow it through to its fullest Scriptural process - i.e., expanding the scope of those involved to the point of the casting out of the unrepentant offender(s). Therefore, it ends up being a stall tactic for endless discussion and a way to keep any open opposition or “controversy” silent. Any open expressions of concern or objection are quickly pounced upon as “not in the spirit of Matthew 18.” Please note that bro. Millay only refers to “all manner of conduct”. Why are **matters of doctrine seemingly ignored**?

- *“Views toward other fellowships: The lack of respect for certain brethren based on their labels, judging them unworthy and outside the scope of salvation. On the other hand, promoting the idea that there are many individuals in other Christian churches, clearly having false beliefs, who will be saved.”* **COMMENT:** Bro. Millay reveals more of his own views regarding the fellowship divisions under the Christadelphian umbrella on p. 36. He attributes the contentions found in the book of Job, between Job and his friends, *“as the result of pride”*. He goes on to say that, *“The grounds of the contentions that were foremost in the Book of Job are essentially the same issues that brethren spend most of their time contending over today. They were debating about the judgments of God and how God deals with the wicked. Our most divisive debate is over the responsibility question and how God deals with those who reject His offer of salvation.”*

Apparently, bro. Millay equates the book of Job to the divisions we have today regarding resurrectional responsibility and the Atonement. He continues his argument by asking the rhetorical question – *“Is it possible to know how much pride is actually behind our contentions, both about resurrection, atonement, and other prominent issues? It did not matter that Job was correct in his understanding and that he always spoke the things that were right about God...His pride was manifested in his passion for earnestly contending for the faith to such an extent that it led to lack of respect for his brethren and to his over-confidence about being right.”* We can only view bro. Millay’s opinion on the Book of Job and his application to current issues in the Brotherhood as critically flawed. Are we now supposed to throw up our hands – in a spirit of supposed humility – and say we know nothing, and that maybe these issues are not that important after all? **This is the promotion of ignorance and confusion!** It is tragic to see such critical doctrinal issues reduced to nothing more than sinful “pride”! That pride can work its way into any matter touched by human minds there can be no doubt – but we can also view it as a matter of pride when brethren attempt to reduce the very critical issues of God’s Truth to a trivial status! Humility **is certainly** to be developed in our character, but spiritual “effeminacy” and uncertainty on doctrinal matters is not. Bro. Millay may not be sure in his assessments of such doctrinal issues, but the rest of us had better be sure.

Later, on p. 39, and in connection with his thoughts in the previous bullet point, he makes the following observation – *“There is an abundance of Scripture that commends humility and condemns pride. They are greater in number than testimonies that support our established positions on doctrinal issues over which*

there is earnest contention. There are a multitude of verses on how we should conduct ourselves as brethren “one to another” and, in comparison, far fewer that support the methods or discipline that we use to maintain our “line in the sand” boundaries.” This is an extremely faulty, and dangerous premise to throw out to a Community that has already grown extremely apathetic to our doctrinal and moral foundations. He doesn’t attempt to support his contention with facts. We will say that the Scriptures are filled from cover to cover with the balanced and clear testimony of Yahweh’s wisdom as to what is to be believed, and how it is to be applied – including the issues of humility and pride. **It is doctrine** regarding God’s Plan and Purpose that gives us the knowledge, understanding, faith and conviction REQUIRED to connect us to the Hope of eternal life and inheritance to come, **including its moral commands and lessons** as how we are to manifest the Divine character acceptable to God and His Son. **NEITHER CAN BE DIMINISHED IN ANY WAY, SHAPE OR FORM.**

Concluding thoughts

Although we did not wish to write as much on this topic as we have, we are reminded that it takes considerable more effort in print or word to address error as the error itself. We have only scratched the surface, and we have not attempted to provide extensive Scriptural references – as we have dealt with many of these issues in exhortational and expository form throughout the years. Nor are our readers ignorant of these matters. But, as we see such Scripture-wresting philosophies promoted in this book, and have been promoted for many years, continuing to disintegrate the foundation of the Unamended Community and alter the minds of many – it is critical to address these insidious spirits of diabolism. Though we do not respect the overall views and conclusions promoted in the booklet, we have attempted to at least be fair in our representation of them.

We do not see a solution in bro. Millay’s pamphlet, rather an opposite outcome will be perpetuated. Instead of following “*after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another*” (back cover synopsis), these kind of philosophies are in fact tearing us apart. There can be no real peace on such an erroneous position – one that undermines and misrepresents those that are contending for the “old paths”; one that claims to recognize error while providing it protection; one that promotes doctrinal doubt and uncertainty in the name of “humility”, and elevates peace as the primary objective; and one that wrests the true spirit of Elijah’s mission and teachings. **Such is not the “spirit of Elijah”, but provides an outcome more in keeping with the “spirit of Eli” – a spirit that left the Children of Israel in utter confusion and disillusionment through lack of strong leadership, clear vision and decisive action.** Brethren – this is where we are today.

A Thomas

THOUGHTS GLEANED FROM ROBERT ROBERTS' "THE LAW OF MOSES"

CHAPTER IV THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

"An analysis of the Ten Commandments reveals an arrangement of them that in itself is eloquent of many things. The first four relate to God: the fifth to Family: and the last five to a man's relation to other Men. In this order we have an exhibition of true relations of human life in their several degrees of importance, as divinely estimated - all depending one on the other, and each of them essential to a true economy of human life - yet some before others. There are relations of life that are first, and there are such as are last, while all having a needful place. The grouping of the Ten Commandments reveals them in their true order. Here they are: 1, God; 2, family; 3, society. This is a perfect order."



The First Commandment.

"As affecting the living congregation of people to whom the Ten Commandments were actually delivered, it was much more effective to appeal to their experience (what they had seen and heard) than to an assertion to be taken on trust....That God made heaven and earth they might believe; but that God had brought them out of Egypt they knew....To believe that God gave the law of Moses, and yet attribute a mythical character to the Mosaic narrative of Israel's deliverance, is an illogical and an absurd performance....God is the author of the Ten Commandments and ...therefore their opening declaration is true that He brought Israel out of Egypt."

“God interfered in the question of Israel versus Egypt, expressly that the great fact might be brought within the range of human senses that God exists as a conscious, personal, omnipotent Being, holding all creation in His hand....Consequently, we are placed in a position that compels and enables us to lay all our theories down in the presence of the Mosaic achievements in Egypt and the wilderness; and to connect all scientific facts and phenomena with the stupendous fact...that the root of all power lies in the God of Israel - the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

The Second Commandment. *“The reason for the prohibition of graven images may strike the mind harshly at its first impact: but afterwards it will be found to have wisdom and even commonsense at the bottom of it: ‘For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God’....Jealousy is displeasure at preference shown for another....While it is the fact that preference for Himself affords Him satisfaction, He knows that in this preference alone lies man’s highest good, and preference in another direction is preference for an emptiness and a nullity, and therefore a preference that will work nothing but harm and ruin in the end. In addition to this, preference for Him is reasonable and just, because He is the Author and Owner of all things.”*

The Third Commandment. *“It is an indispensable corollary of belief in God that His name should be had in reverence, and should never escape human lips in the spirit of flippancy - not to speak of profanity....The spirit of unutterable reverence towards God is the spirit which every institution of the law was calculated and intended to generate. Sacrifice means nothing so much as this. The position of the tabernacle in the midst of the assembly, guarded on every side by the ranked tents of the Levites, taught no other lesson.”*

CHAPTER V. THE SABBATH LAW

“Acceptable keeping of the Sabbath involved the exercise of mental discernment in relation to God. It required the mind to be fixed on Him in a special manner....Nothing better could be conceived - nothing more suited to man’s spiritual requirements - than this compulsory suspension of secular activity once in seven days, and this overt concentration of the mind, in a special manner, on the Creator who in all natural life is out of sight, and therefore liable to drop out of mind.”

CHAPTER VI. THE SABBATH IN GENTILE TIMES

“The Sabbath to this day distinguishes Israel from the other nations, and separates them from the communities among whom they live....It is a singular fact that in a certain form, the Sabbath law has become incorporated with the religious systems of Gentile Europe and its offshoots....It has been established among them as the result of the establishment of ‘Christianity,’ though it is no part of ‘Christianity.’ In this respect it is a ‘sign’ among them that God raised Christ from the dead, just as the Mosaic Sabbath was a sign that God brought Israel out of Egypt.”

“Jesus truly came to fulfil the law, but he came to ‘fulfil’ in a much higher sense than merely conforming to the letter of its enactment. He came to end it by accomplishing in himself all that it foreshadowed, plucking the sting out of it by giving himself up to its curse in suffering himself to be crucified.”

“The Sabbath, intended as a blessing, had in Christ’s day degenerated into a day of oppressive restraint and formalism; and Christ had to remind his generation that ‘the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: (Mark 2: 27). In all cases in which he appears in connection with the Sabbath, it is in opposition to those who stickled for what might be called a sabbatarian treatment of the day.”

In the following two excerpts, Bro. Roberts deals with the issue of Sabbatarianism, a prominent issue in his day:

“It is evident,...that those make a great mistake who speak of ‘the Christian Sabbath; in the sense of its being a day to be observed by believers in Christ as the seventh day was observed under Moses. In fact, there is no such thing in scriptural truth as ‘the Christian Sabbath.’ Christ appointed no Sabbath, and the Sabbath of Moses was the seventh and not the first day of the week. Christ appointed the assembly of his brethren to break bread in remembrance of him, and by apostolic usage, this assembly was held on the first day of the week, but this is a different thing from keeping the day holy as a day. On this we have no command and ‘where there is no law, there is no transgression.’”

“A man is at liberty to ...set the day apart for special exercises in a religious direction if he choose; but he has no authority to lay down an imperative law for himself or others where God has imposed none. The only law laid upon believers in such a manner is to ‘forsake not the assembling of themselves together’; and apostolic example leads them to obey this law on the first day of the week , and to make the breaking of bread ‘in remembrance ‘ of Christ the chief feature of it.”

“But in Christ, their righteousness was by faith of him (Rom. 3: 21-22), not their own righteousness which was by the law, but the righteousness which was of God by faith (Phil. 3:9). Therefore all who entered Christ entered the true Sabbath keeping, in ceasing from their own works, as the ground of their hope toward God.

Submitted by one of our readers

“We have heard it said that the basic Christadelphian presentation of the Truth is dull and uninteresting, that we need a gimmick to help in the presentation. I suppose we should take note of the criticism if we are dull and uninterested in either talking or living the Truth. Ideally, even though our opponents disagree with our set of values, we would like to leave them with the assurance that we are supremely interested in the things of our faith. When Paul appeared before Agrippa to answer for the things whereof he was accused of the Jews, he used no gimmick, only the presentation of the Truth...(Acts 27:27-29)... If a convert is tricked or gimmicked with anything less than a factual presentation of the gospel and its power unto salvation, then he is not yet converted.” - James Stanton

EDITORIAL FLYLEAF

4TH QUARTER S.K.

As was the case last year, we are running severely behind on the Fall Quarter. We are usually faced with unique challenges in our work schedule and ecclesial duties in the fall, which hampers the timely publication of the Winter Quarter. As this issues goes to print the 4th Quarter edition will be underway, and Yahweh willing, we hope to have it ready for print by the end of December.

SUMMER QUARTER CORRECTION

In the last issue of the SK, within the article “Israel: Yahweh’s Battle Axe” we misapplied a Scriptural reference. We provided Zechariah 12:6 (p.25) as applicable to natural Israel’s future militant role against the nations. After reading some comments in Eureka on the verse, we believe that bro. Thomas is correct in applying the symbol of the “governors of Judah” to the work of the Saints rather than natural Israel.

“THE WORLD’S REDEMPTION”

Within the last couple of years The Christadelphian Advocate published a Seventh Edition of bro. Williams’ book. Many in the Unamended Community once viewed this as an invaluable work that lays the fundamentals of THE TRUTH out in an excellent and clear manner. The Seventh Edition is of an outstanding quality and does honor to the importance of the work itself. It is our understanding that 500 copies were printed, but despite attempts at promotion by The Advocate, only an extremely small number has been purchased or given away. This is not a good commentary on the state and interests of Unamended Christadelphia. Many of us already have copies, but they are probably well worn and in need of replacement. Our young people need their own copy, and those we may encounter that are sincere in their efforts to understand THE TRUTH should be provided this work - the purpose for which it was originally intended. The book can be purchased through The Christadelphian Advocate website.

TURKEY SHOOTS DOWN A RUSSIAN FIGHTER JET!

As we finish this edition of the SK, all of us have heard the news of the downing of a Russian fighter jet by the Turkish air force. Russia is threatening retaliation. As Believers can expect Russia to eventually gain control of Turkey, this is extremely important for us to watch unfold. What will be of special interest is how this will impact NATO, who is bound to defend Turkey in case of an attack. Expect to see NATO eventually torn apart as member countries such as France, Germany and Italy continue to gravitate towards alliance with Russia, while abandoning Turkey.

As of now, Russia is greatly increasing its military presence in Syria, barring Turkish exports into Russia, and keeping Turkey out of Syria by setting up advanced anti-aircraft defense systems on Syria’s border with Turkey. There have been unconfirmed reports of Turkey blocking maritime traffic through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles. The firewood and kindling are in place, now all is needed is the match. - SK