

THE SANCTUARY-KEEPER

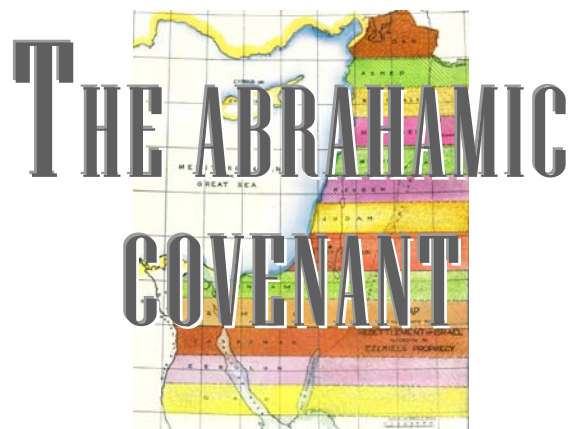
*A Magazine for the Exposition and Defense
of the Holy Scriptures*



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THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

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A Pictorial Overview of the Way of Salvation – “The Paradise of God”

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Thomas Williams on *Truth and Fellowship*

Due to lack of space, “Mr. Wiseman’s Search for the Truth” does not appear in this issue, but will be continued in the 3rd quarter issue.

THE PARADISE OF GOD – Past and Future

We begin our brief overviews of the truths depicted by the connected picture by looking at the Garden itself. Scripture tells us that God planted a garden eastward in Eden (Gen 2:8). Dr. Thomas (Eureka – page 58) makes these statements. “To plant a garden is to fence in a certain piece of land and to adorn it with fruit and ornamental trees and shrubs. If unenclosed, and consequently, unguarded, it is not a garden. The place, then, was an enclosure, planted with “every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.” End quote. This is an important concept as it tells us that the garden was protected from outside entry. The word garden can mean “paradise”, thus we have the Paradise in Eden. In this Paradise, God placed man and his help mate to dress and keep the garden. They were given only one commandment, not to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. In disobedience of this law, they would be condemned to death. As we all know, all of God’s creation at this time was declared to be in a “very good” state. Christadelphians have always believed that this phrase means that the human pair was neither mortal nor immortal. They were not yet dying creatures nor did they have eternal life, yet they may have received this divine characteristic if they had not disobeyed their one commandment. Adam’s state in the Garden, before the fall, was one of peaceful tranquility with His Creator, innocent of transgressions and free from any association with sin. In Romans 6:23, we read that the wages of sin is death. Adam was not yet a dying creature because he was not yet related to sin. Once he became related to sin, he was cast out of the Paradise of God. This is the primary lesson that we should glean from the Scripture’s description of the Garden. Mankind will be allowed to participate in the spiritual benefits of the Garden when they are in a state of sinlessness. Mankind, related to sin in any manner, cannot have complete harmony with Yahweh and thus, cannot re-enter the Garden until that time that they have no more sin. The Cherubim was placed at the entry of the Garden to keep or preserve the way to the Tree of Life. The entry to this enclosed symbolic Garden of God will be guarded and entry forbidden until the believer, baptized into Christ, lives a life of probation and overcomes the temptations of the flesh and then will be judged worthy to “eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God” (Rev 2:7). This scripture in Revelation explicitly states that we have no access to the Tree of Life until after a life of overcoming. In mankind’s fallen state, we will always be outside of the Garden, with a glorious hope of the day of salvation when we will be granted the opportunity to re-enter into peaceful harmony with God, free from any association with sin. In our next installment, we will look at the fall of our first parents and the subsequent casting out of the Paradise of God. (B.H.)



THE TRUTH AND FELLOWSHIP

Thomas Williams, Christadelphian Advocate, May 1908, Editorial



THAT THE SYSTEM OF TRUTHS which is sometimes termed “the Truth,” “the Gospel,” “the Faith,” “the Hope,” etc. is a system, and is definable, is evident from the fact that the faithful are exhorted to “earnestly contend” for it, to hold it fast, to not deny it, and to withdraw fellowship from such as, after the “first and second admonition,” refuse to abandon heresies which make it of none effect.

The meaning of the letters to the seven churches in Asia is that each church is held responsible for the existence among them of those “holding the doctrines of the Nicolaitanes,” “the doctrines of Balaam,” etc.; and that it is the imperative duty of these churches to remove from among them those who persistently hold to such heresies.

The meaning, further, is that if the churches complained of, refuse or neglect to do their duty in this respect, the Spirit will remove their lightstands, or extinguish the lights of the disobedient churches, which means that their lot would be that which ultimately befell the church of Laodicea.

In many cases obedience to the Spirit’s requirements is a very unpleasant duty, and with some persons a duty too severe for fleshly ties to bear; and the weakness (or perhaps the strength) of the flesh is seen in various flimsy excuses for shrinking from duty.

Some ask, “Who are we, that we should withdraw fellowship from individuals or ecclesias?” and they claim that the Spirit did not command the churches of Asia to put from them the false teachers complained of; that the warning was only that God would see to the cutting off. In this there is a failure to see that the Spirit is addressing the churches, not simply the heretics in the churches. To see this the record has only to be read. “To the church in Ephesus,” for example, “To the church in Thyatira,” “I have somewhat against thee,” “thou sufferest that woman Jezebel,” etc. This can mean nothing else than the evils among the churches must not be “suffered” or allowed; the “little leaven” must be removed by the church in order to prevent the “leavening of the whole lump.” In case this was not done by the church, God would do it.

Let no one imagine that an ecclesia will prosper spiritually (I do not mean numerically) while it permits false doctrines to be held and fellowshiped. It is not to be supposed that the Spirit would miraculously destroy those churches in Asia which it warned. A corrupt Ecclesia has its elements of destruction within it. It is self-destructive in the sense of “a little leaven leavening the whole lump.” The admission of one false doctrine becomes a precedent for that of another, and so on. This has been manifest in the history of the Truth in its revival as well as in its Laodicean end in the early days of the Christian era.

THE SANCTUARY – KEEPER

*A Magazine for the Exposition and Defense of
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“Ye shall keep the charge of the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar”

Num. 18:5

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

I Peter 2:5

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

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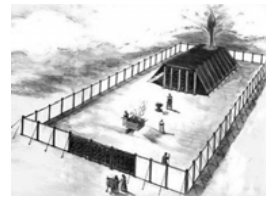
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NUMBER 2

WAR THE WARFARE OF THE TABERNACLE

Opening reading: **Numbers 8:5-26**

These words of God were provided to Moses to describe the duties and obligations of the Levite that God chose to “wait upon the service of the tabernacle of the congregation” (verse 24). These prescribed duties of the Levitical priesthood presents a very interesting type to individuals that have been allowed to join in covenant relationship to Yahweh, whether it is the natural Jew under the Mosaic covenant or the spiritual Jew of all ages who are under the terms of the everlasting or Abrahamic covenant.



As we strive to understand the specifics of the responsibilities of these men of the tribe of Levi, we first notice that they were chosen from among the children of Israel, cleansed and separated from the remaining tribes of the nation of Israel. They were offered as a gift to Yahweh, they were declared to be the firstborn of all of the Children of Israel and they were given as a gift to the High Priest. One of the more interesting and enlightening things that we read in this chapter is provided in verse 24 of Numbers 8. The King James Version tells us that the Levites were to “wait upon

the service of the tabernacle of the congregation”. The margin of the King James Version of the Companion Bible provides some food for thought relating to this phrase. The margin states that this phrase should literally be read as “War the warfare of the tabernacle of the congregation”. What an interesting concept this literal translation should bring to our eyes. Not only would the Levite be responsible for day to day activities of the service of the tabernacle, but they were responsible for protecting and defending the tabernacle. What were they to protect the tabernacle from? As we know, the tabernacle was located in the midst of the camp, so the acts of defense were not directed against the enemies outside of the nation of Israel. How did the Levites act as a means of defense?

To answer this question, we need to understand the basic requirement of the symbolism of the Sanctuary. The entire objective of this place where God chose to dwell among His people was to stress the principles of separation, holiness and righteousness. The priesthood itself presents us with a wonderful picture of this principle of separation. As the nation of Israel was to be a kingdom of priests (Exodus 19:6), the Levitical priests were chosen by God to represent each individual of the chosen nation.

When we review the specific steps of the consecration of the Aaronic priesthood, we see many types that project a process of separation. Read Leviticus 8:6-9. The priests must be washed and then clothed with glorious and beautiful garments. The antitype for us is our baptism and subsequent clothing of the garments of salvation as we come up from the waters of baptism (Isaiah 61:10). The Scriptures tell us that there must be a continual washing, both of the typical Levitical priesthood, and also of the saints of all ages. (Psalms 119:9). The next step in the consecration of the priests was the anointing. This consecration (separation) process was not complete until a sin offering, burnt offering and peace offering were offered. Now that the priests were set apart, sanctified to meet God’s requirements, they would be ready to carry out the services of the tabernacle, to “war the warfare of the tabernacle”.

What specific actions and goals were these priests of the Mosaic age supposed to accomplish? In order to answer this question, we want to review the inspired writings of the prophet Malachi. Read the first and second chapters of Malachi. We want to especially focus on Chapter 1, verse 6 through Chapter 2, verse 9.

The Scriptures tell us of the daily responsibilities of the priesthood in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. However, if we look at Malachi 2:7, we read of what may be the most important responsibility of the Mosaic priest. Although they were to offer the sacrifices, tend to the altar of incense and the table of showbread and perform the annual services in the Most Holy, they were to keep the knowledge, continually seek God’s law, for they were the messenger, the representative of God to their kin, and were also responsible for teaching the Israelites this law and defending the way to righteousness. The children of Israel were not to offer their sacrifices if the sacrifices were spotted or blemished. Who had the responsibility of counseling these offerors about their impure offerings and instructing

the Israelite that they could not use this impure offering in their attempts to fellowship with the Deity? The priests had this responsibility. Did they always keep this responsibility? Malachi 2:8 tells us that they did not. The prophet states that the priesthood had departed out of the WAY (my emphasis); they caused many to stumble and had corrupted the covenant of the Lord. In the description of the duties of the mortal priests in the Temple of Ezekiel, the prophet Ezekiel confirms this severe condemnation. Read Ezekiel 44:12-13. This prophet declares that the Levitical priests of the Kingdom age would not be allowed to minister unto the LORD because their ancestors had caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity. These are very serious charges, brothers and sisters. We need to determine what these priestly men did to receive such a serious condemnation.

The first chapter of Malachi provides the details of the falling away of the Levitical priesthood. The prophet tells us that the priests allowed impure offerings to be made to the LORD. The Israelites were allowed by the priests to offer polluted bread and blind, lame and sick sacrifices. And as the prophet asks – Is this not evil? The Lord did not look favorably on the actions of these priests. Are there lessons here for the saints of this age? Fortunately and unfortunately, there are. The lesson is that we have been privileged to keep the oracles of the LORD as the priests were also to do. We have the responsibility to teach the Word of God to those around us and to also teach the Household of God. The saints of any age must also assure that the sacrifices made unto the LORD are pure and unpolluted. If we fail to do this, will not the LORD make this statement about us – They departed out of the WAY, they caused many to stumble and they have corrupted the covenant of the LORD? Do we want to stand before the Judge of the whole earth and hear these words of Matthew 7:21-23? “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

Read Numbers 1:53. If the Levites, the keepers of the WAY, had completed their responsibilities in a manner pleasing to the Father, then God’s wrath would not have fallen on the congregation of the children of Israel. This shows the seriousness of the work of the ones chosen by God to keep the WAY of salvation and the WAY to righteousness.

As the custodians of the Truth, the Levitical priests were the root cause of Israel’s spiritual successes or failures. Read Hosea 4:1, 6. Because they did not keep this responsibility of teaching the Israelites the Truth and allowed the fellowship with God to become impure, God declares that they had “despised” His Holy Name. (Malachi 1:6). The priests were carrying out their daily Tabernacle activities with no knowledge of their continuous downfall. They asked – “Wherein have we despised thy Name?” (Verse 6) They were totally blind to their status before the LORD. What is the lesson for us, brothers and sisters? Can we go about our daily business and fall into a

contented state of mind that all is well and that there are no “impure sacrifices” being offered to Yahweh? If we study the history of the Levitical priests, we can see the dangers of this position. We should always war the warfare of the tabernacle. Jude tells us to always to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. Of course, we must do this in a Christ-like manner with the ultimate objective of bringing those who are offering impure sacrifices back to the WAY of Christ.

Let us put ourselves in the position of the Levitical priests who were responsible for teaching the children of Israel the way of righteousness, the doctrines and commandments delivered to them by the man, Moses, that God had chosen to deliver this body of laws and commandments to His chosen nation. The scriptures tell us that they were condemned because they allowed impure sacrifices to be offered unto Yahweh. How did this practice of impure sacrifices begin? The priests may have tired of their work of teaching and warring the warfare of the tabernacle. They may have wearied of always being watchful over the congregation. They may have thought that it would not hurt if only one individual offered these impure sacrifices. They may have had family, close friends that wanted to offer these impure sacrifices. This is the way that all false methods of worshipping God have begun. These chosen men of God who were given to God as the firstborn of the nation, forgot a basic principle of the God-given commandments that were their way of life. The existence of a little leaven will leaven the entire batch. One impure sacrifice leads to another, which lead to two others, so on and so on. Finally, they were in a position whereby God had declared that these holy men of God had “despised” His holy name, they had departed out of the WAY, they caused many to stumble and they had corrupted the covenant of the Lord.

What a tragedy, brothers and sisters. What a powerful lesson for the saints of all ages. There have been many strong and courageous warriors throughout the generations of those who hold the Truth. Let us always be counted as one of these warriors who continually war the warfare of the tabernacle. Undoubtedly, there were faithful priests who did stand up for the purity of the Truth. These individuals probably faced severe trials for their stance. But they did so with the knowledge that this was required of them and through their love for the Father, they were willing to stand in the Way of Righteousness and against the way of false doctrine and continuous immorality. We choose to develop the strength and courage to face the impure doctrines and methods of worship in the world around us. We are beset with challenges from outside and inside of the Body. Do we accept any doctrines with spot or blemish? We may be categorized as harsh, without love or legalistic in this stance. Let this not detract us. The faithful Levitical priests probably faced the same charges as they stood firm and refused the blind and the lame sacrifice to be offered on the altar of fellowship with Yahweh. Let us close these words of exhortation by reading the Apostle Paul’s words in Ephesians 6:11-18. Let us use these armored garments and always war the warfare of the Tabernacle.

B. Henderson

BE YE MINDFUL ALWAYS OF HIS COVENANT

A review and consideration of God's Covenant with Abraham and its relation to the Gospel Message

*Be ye mindful **always** of His covenant. The word which He commanded to a thousand generations; Even of the covenant which He made with Abraham, and of His oath unto Isaac; and hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, Saying, 'Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance'". - I Chronicles 16:15-18*

IN THE PASSAGE JUST READ - which is part of David's prayer to celebrate the occasion of bringing the Ark of the Covenant up to Zion - along with the resounding praise and thanksgiving that is offered to God, David exclaims something that should seize our attention and make us take notice. The spirit through David states in verse 15: "Be ye mindful **ALWAYS** of His covenant". What covenant are we to be mindful of? The record further explains – the **covenant** made with Abraham, the **oath** unto Isaac, a **law** of Jacob, and to Israel an **everlasting covenant**. This clear description calls our minds back to the detail record given in Genesis of God calling Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees to lead him to a land "*which I will show thee*". It was there that God promised unto Abram (later changing his name to Abraham) great and precious promises; promises that only through a belief in them can we acceptably approach unto God – promises that are in fact a matter of life and death.

As was mentioned in our opening article of the first issue of the Sanctuary-Keeper (Our "Needs Be") it is our intent (among other matters) to address subjects of fundamental nature in the pages of this magazine. None of us will ever grow too learned, too intelligent, too wise, or too old for the most basic fundamentals of God's Word. We understand that the length might make it overwhelming to read all in one sitting so it has been broken up into several distinct sections for the convenience of the reader.

Our consideration here will center upon the promises made to Abraham – the doctrinal and prophetic outcome of God's Covenant as well as the striking exhortational affect these promises are to have on how we live our lives.

WHY ARE WE TO BE "MINDFUL"?

Before we continue any further we ask the question: *Why are we exhorted to be always mindful of the covenant made to Abraham?* Our answer: The covenant that God made with Abraham is the foundation and outline of God's plan of salvation for this earth. It contains all that God has to offer and all that is revealed afterwards in the

scriptures is added information about the same promise. Adam brought sin, condemnation, alienation, and death upon the human race by his transgression in the Garden: "*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, **IN WHOM** all have sinned.*" But through the covenant with Abraham we see the framework for salvation from this terrible plight. Abraham and his seed were promised the land for an everlasting possession – here is the promise of everlasting life. They could not possess the land forever unless they lived forever. In **Romans 1:16** we read that; "*The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation.*" The so-called religious world makes out the Gospel to be a New Testament phenomenon but yet we read in Galatians 3:8 that God preached the Gospel unto Abraham. We know that "the Gospel" is defined as *The things concerning the **Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ***. So considering that the Gospel was preached or proclaimed to Abraham it stands to reason that we find the "*good news*" of "*the Kingdom*" and "*the Name*" **in the Abrahamic Covenant**. These are matters that we must understand, matters that we must be dogmatic about for the reason that it has a direct impact on salvation. This is why we are exhorted to be always mindful of God's covenant with Abraham.

DEFINING THE TERM "COVENANT"

Now that we have made reference many times to the word "covenant" it is important that we clearly define its meaning. The word "covenant" is from the Hebrew word "berith" and its most prevalent meaning is that of a legal agreement, promise or contract between two parties. Webster's Dictionary defines the English word as "*a promise usually under seal between two **or more** parties especially for the performance of some action.*"

Bro. John Thomas refers to the Abraham Covenant as a "DIVINE LEGAL INSTRUMENT". Unfortunately there is a growing trend within our community to shun anything referred to as "legal", but for those enlightened fully by God's truth it will be realized that God works according to laws that He himself has established, therefore God uses "legal" means in fulfillment of His will. We cannot escape the all pervading and legal aspects of God's workings with man. Therefore, the phrase used by Brother Thomas is most fitting in relation to our subject.

In defining the word "covenant", bro. Ted Farrar in his 1997 booklet concerning the Abrahamic Covenant wrote: "Whenever two parties conclude an agreement in a formal manner, it is done by means of a legal covenant which is binding upon the parties involved. In the case of a covenant between God and Man, because God cannot default, it is also called a promise, for this reason the Abrahamic Covenant is called by both terms and can properly be called, "A Divine Legal Instrument".

There is also a fuller meaning to the word "berith" that we need to be aware of. "Berith" is derived from the primitive Hebrew root word of *berah*, which is a synonym of the word *berar* – words that carry the meaning to purify or cleanse. From its primitive root meanings and by the affect a covenant has on those involved, it

implies purification or a purifier. This is something that we will touch on in more detail but for now we see that in God's covenants with man that sin and sinfulness exist on the part of man. God's covenants are intended to reconcile him to God and make him fit to inherit God's eternal promises and to fully glorify His Name. Purification is necessary for this to be accomplished.

PROMISES MADE – THE TERMS OF GOD'S COVENANT

We have already made many references to the promises but it would be useful for us to review the promises that God made to Abraham as mentioned in Genesis 12, 13, 15, 17, & 22:

- God will make of Abram a great nation.
- God will bless Abram and make Abram's name great and Abram will be a blessing.
- God promised "that I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee."
- God promises that "in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed".
- "Unto thy seed I will give this land".
- God promises the land to both Abram and his seed, all the land of Canaan "forever".
- God would multiply Abram's seed as the dust of the earth.
- In chapter 15:6 we are told that Abram believed the promises that God had made and that God counted or imputed "it to him for righteousness". Not a "blind faith" which is not faith at all, but an intelligent comprehension and acceptance of God's word.
- In the same chapter in verse 18 we see the size of the land grant described as being "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates". And though a specific land grant is revealed as being the center of which all blessings will flow, this promise finds even wider scope in later revelation. In Romans 4:13 Abraham is referred to as receiving the promise to be "heir of the world". In Psalms 2:8 we read "*I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.*" We are told in Matthew 5 that the "*meek shall inherit the earth*".
- In chapter 17:7 the term "*everlasting covenant*" is used to describe the covenant that God has made between Abraham (name now changed) and his seed. There was another "covenant" that was not everlasting that God made with the Children of Israel at Mount Horeb that dealt with temporal blessings – a covenant that fulfilled its mission and was taken away.
- Abraham is promised that he will be a father of many nations.
- Kings will come out of Abraham.
- The LORD covenants to be a God unto Abraham and to Abraham's seed forever.

- God promises to allow the seed of Abraham to join in on the "everlasting covenant".
- The promise to multiply Abraham as the "stars of heaven and as the sand that is upon the sea shore".
- Give possession to his seed (singular) of the "Gate of His enemies". Or in other words this individual would defeat all enemies and rule over them.
- That all nations might find a blessing through this singular seed. **Galatians 3:16** – "*Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, 'And to seeds' as of many; but as of one, 'And to thy seed,' which is Christ.*"

THE PROPHETIC AND DOCTRINAL IMPLICATIONS OF THESE PROMISES

These promises that we have mentioned are plainly stated and clearly indicate the promise of a future and eternal inheritance of the land, a multitudinous seed coming out of Abraham, a singular seed who would rule over all enemies and in whom all nations of the earth would be blessed. But Abraham died with the promises unfulfilled. **Hebrews 11:13** - "*These all died in faith, not having received the promises*". Stephen tells us in Acts 7:5 concerning Abraham, "*And He gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet He promised that He would give it to him for a possession.*" Was he promised a place among the angels in heaven? No, he was promised the land, "northward, southward, eastward, and westward" – all the land that he could see and then some **for ever**. Some try to point to the Jewish inheritance of the land after coming out of Egypt as a fulfillment of the promises but this a precursor, a token of a much grander and permanent fulfillment. Remember, it was to Abraham and to his seed that the promises were made for ever. How do we know that God will fulfill his word? **Hebrews 6:13** – "*For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by not greater, He sware by Himself*". And skipping down to **verse 18**, "*That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation...*" - What are the two things? – THE PROMISE and THE OATH – the promise that God has made and the absolute pledge that He will fulfill what He has promised.

Though not directly stated in these promises but clearly implied and elaborated upon elsewhere in the scriptures, there are explicit prophetic and doctrinal teachings that come out of these promises and that form the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ:

- First of all the hope of life eternal, not in the heavens but on earth.
- Abraham was informed that he would die, so there would be the need and the hope extended to Abraham of a resurrection to receive the promises. This lesson was powerfully taught to Abraham in Genesis 15 when a deep sleep and "horror of great darkness fell over him" – which is a symbol of death, a death that he would have to awaken from. Also in Genesis 22 we read of the testing of Abraham's faith by being commanded to offer up his only son Isaac. Abraham demonstrated his faith and understanding of the hope of resurrection here by

recognizing that God's promises could not be hampered by death. We read in **Hebrews 11:19** regarding what was going through Abraham's mind at the time, "*Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure*". Being a figure or a representation, Abraham was able to see in this action God giving His only begotten Son, and the resurrection of that Son to life through sacrifice – "*who was brought again from the dead*"... "*through the blood of the everlasting covenant*".

- In the promises we see the unmistakable lesson that faith (as well as obedience) is a requirement in order for man to be found acceptable before God.
- Abraham was taught that through covenant and **only** through covenant making would such benefits be realized.
- It is clearly implied that through covenant there is the justification and forgiveness of sins for it is impossible that sinful man can inherit these eternal promises. Sin, both constitutionally and personal must be atoned for before a relationship with God can be entered into.
- We see through the animal offerings made by Abraham of the necessity of the shedding of blood typical of a Greater Sacrifice - that being the promised seed (Christ) through whom salvation would be realized and the fulfillment of the promises confirmed. Not only salvation for Abraham but also to a multitude of others – referred to as the "many nations"- who associate themselves with the promised seed.
- We are taught that inheritance of the Abrahamic Covenant is extended to all who are found to be "in" the promised seed or "in Christ" through faith. (More on that in a moment.)

CONFIRMATION OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

We have made reference to the promised seed as being Christ, but what role does he play in this matter of the Abrahamic Covenant? This promised, individual seed is not only mentioned in reference to the promises made to Abraham, but as Abraham himself would have been aware of had been promised shortly after the fall of man in the Garden as the seed who would bruise (or destroy) the head of the serpent - In other words the destruction of the Sin Flesh nature that hinders man's participation in eternal life.

Abraham asked the question in **Genesis 15:8** (still named Abram at this time) regarding the inheritance of the land – "*Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?*" The fact is that when these promises were made Abraham was a stranger and sojourner among those stronger and mightier than he; he also understood his lifespan was limited. Abraham was looking for evidence or a token of "things not seen". And after the manner of covenant making during those times, Abraham understood that something was needed to confirm, authorize or "ratify" the covenant that God had made with him - a covenant is not legally functional until it is ratified. What was the answer given to Abraham? He was told to take a heifer, a she goat, and a ram and divide them in the midst (the birds were not to be divided). Sacrificing

animals in such a way as this was a common practice of those times in dealing with covenants between men and is even referred to by the prophet Jeremiah (34:18). But, the sacrificing of these animals in and of themselves would have no eternal value – but what they represented, especially in the case of God's covenant with Abraham, had the utmost significance. Bro. Williams in the World's Redemption states:

"In the very nature of the case, then, a covenant provided by God for fallen man demands a sacrifice which will admit of reconciliation and atonement between God who is pure and man who is sinful, and this must take place before the covenants of promise could be realized." (p.80)

Turning over to **Hebrews 9:16-18** we see that The Authorized version of this passage is a poor translation of what the Spirit word is trying to express, but the Emphatic Diaglott is much clearer. "*For where a Covenant exists, the Death of that which has ratified it is necessary to be produced; because a covenant is firm over dead victims, since it is never valid when that which ratifies it is alive. Hence not even the first has been instituted without blood.*" A covenant cannot be in force, it cannot become fully operative until the death of the covenant sacrifice. Who is the covenant sacrifice represented by those animals that Abraham divided? It is Christ, the real covenant sacrifice, the perfectly righteous seed to whom the covenant given to Abraham was also made.

If you will remember we made reference to the fact that the word covenant/*berith* means to purify or cleanse and that it implies purification or a purifier. Not only does it represent the covenant (or agreement) but also the sacrifice which confirms the covenant by opening up a way of justification/purification for sin stricken man. Moses declared to the people in Exodus 24:8 – "*Behold, the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you*". Who other did this blood represent but the blood of the victim slain as a covenant sacrifice? - but Christ. In **Isaiah 49:8** we read concerning Christ, "*Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages.*" Christ was spoken of as being given as "a covenant" or in other words as the covenant sacrifice. In **Zechariah 9:11** we are taught of the **only** revealed means in which men will be brought out of the grave – "*By the blood of the covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water*". Whose blood releases from the pit/death? The blood of the covenant victim; again we are speaking of Christ.

It will be noticed back in Genesis 15 that Abraham walked between the animal parts that had been divided. Bro. Williams explains here that, "*In this way, in covenants between God and men, man, who is a sinner and under justice without mercy, deserves death, may be said to have passed into the death of the victim, or to have died sacrificially or representatively, admitting of atonement.*" It can be said that in order to join in covenant relationship with God, through FAITH Abraham had to avail himself of the blood of Christ, the covenant victim. He had to pass out of Adam into Christ, from one relationship as a constituted sinner **into** the justifying effects of

the covenant victim. And it must be understood that Christ also, as a representative of the fallen race was also unclean, in need of atonement. In order for him to inherit the promises he also had to be justified? How was this? - Through his own blood. As the covenant victim he was a beneficiary of his own sacrifice.

In **Romans 15:8** we read, “*Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers*”. In **Galatians 3:17** we read that “*the covenant*”...“*was confirmed before of God in Christ*”. If only the masses of professing Christianity could grasp the connection that the sacrifice of Christ has to the great and precious promises made to Abraham and its bearing on God’s plan for this earth. If only many calling themselves Christadelphians understood the absolutely critical role that covenant making through Faith and the shedding of blood has in connection with the Hope of Resurrection and the promise of life everlasting.

THE SEED OF ABRAHAM

Up to this point we have considered the fact that both Abraham and Christ were heirs of the Covenant that God had made. But do these promises include anyone else? To Abraham it was promised, “*I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand upon the sea shore*”, and “*thee and thy seed shall inherit the land*”.

Speaking from a natural sense, after the flesh we exclusively understand the Jews, the nation of Israel as the seed of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, **it does not** include the other sons of Abraham. But we must also understand that there is a spiritual aspect as well that is of the utmost importance for us to understand. We must realize that the promises involve a multitudinous seed of Abraham according to the spirit.

Now regarding the nation of Israel’s (after the flesh) relationship to the Abrahamic Covenant, Bro. Ted Farrar had this to say. “Does this mean, then, that the whole nation of Israel were to become heirs of the Abrahamic covenant? By no means. The reason for this is that another Divine Principle of Exclusiveness was operative, namely, ‘*They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.*’” (Rom. 9:8) He continues: “We need to digress here and discuss the significance of the word counted. A synonym for counted is reckoned, treated as, or deemed. What Paul is saying is that, out of the multitudinous Nation of Israel, (the Jews) only those who were “children of the promise” that is, those who had faith in the covenant, were deemed, reckoned and counted as the true seed of Abraham.” (p.22)

So just because one is born a natural descendant of Abraham (through Isaac and Jacob) does not automatically entitle them to be an heir as is found under the terms of the covenant. Paul states in **Romans 9:6-7**, “*For they are not all Israel which are of Israel*”. There is a natural and spiritual application to the term Israel. Jesus referred to Nathaniel, “*Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile*”. And the apostle Paul refers to the saints in Galatia as “*The Israel of God*.” (Gal. 6:16). Paul is explaining

that just because one is born an Israelite after the flesh does not inevitably make them an Israelite after the spirit. The qualifying element that makes one a part of the “children” or “seed” of promise is the principle of FAITH. This is clearly spelled out in **Galatians 3:6,7** – “*Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham*.”. And in **verse 22** of the same chapter we read, “*that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe*.”

Bro. Farrar continues along these lines by concluding: “The only natural Israelites who will inherit the promises are those who become heirs of the Abrahamic covenant through faith therein and who “walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham”. They constitute the called, the chosen and the faithful; “Israelites indeed”; the “Israel of God” – the true spiritual seed of Abraham”.

Examples of who are being referred to here would obviously include individuals such as Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, the prophets, the Apostles and a whole multitude of Faithful Jews whose names have gone unrecorded in the scriptures.

What about the Gentiles? Regarding the Gentiles Paul in **Ephesians 2:12** states, “*that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world*.” Aliens, and “strangers” from the covenants of promise – not a very good situation to be in, especially when we understand that it is only through the covenants of promise that mankind has any hope. Unless we become the seed of Abraham we are without hope. What answer is given then? Verse 13 – “*But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes (marg. – “once) were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ*.” By coming in contact with the blood of Christ, the covenant sacrifice, through the principle of Faith we too have the hope of these promises. Paul continues his explanation of how the Gentiles are allowed access to the promises through the redemptive work of Christ and then states in verse 19, “*Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God*.” So **along with the Faithful Israelites** mentioned a moment ago the Gentiles are also allowed access to the promises as part of the spiritual seed. They (we) are spoken of in the scriptures as being “adopted”, “grafted” into the One Hope as beautifully explained in Romans 9 . The Gentiles **DO NOT** replace Israel as inheritors of salvation as is the dogma of those who hold to something known as “replacement theology”. But by God’s mercy **and only** by his mercy are we allowed to be joint partakers/ joint-inheritors of the promises made to Abraham through the redemptive work of Christ. **Ephesians 3:6** – “*That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel*.” How do we avail ourselves redemption through Christ – the covenant sacrifice? **Galatians 3:27-29**. “*For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise*.”

Now, Israel according to the flesh cannot be overlooked! Nationally speaking, they have always and will continue to play a central role in God's plan. They are the natural seed of Abraham, and scripture after scripture explains in great detail their restoration to the Land of Promise, their future repentance, future prosperity, their exalted position over the Gentile nations, and their restoration to favor with God. As Paul clearly states in Romans 11: 26 concerning natural Israel – “*And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, “There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:” “For this is My covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.”* Natural Israel speaks to us as evidence of our Faith and acts as witness to the surety of God's plan for this earth. Speaking of the future Commonwealth, bro. Williams in *The World's Redemption* eloquently states the future relationship that will exist between natural and spiritual Israel, remembering that spiritual Israel is made up of the Faithful – Jew & Gentile; while natural Israel is made up of the Jews after the flesh:

*“the commonwealth will be enjoyed by the Israel of God, **first** according to the spirit, and **secondly** the nation of Israel restored to the land of their fathers – the former, which constitute the one great body politic, of which Christ is the head, will be the rulers – those who will have overcome, prevailed and become princes with God, kings of whom Christ is King: “King of Kings, and Lord of lords,” will be the rulers, while the twelve tribes of Israel restored to the land promised to Abraham **will be the subjects** to be “planted in a land of their own and never moved; neither shall the children of wickedness any more afflict them as before time.”* (p.76)

APPLICATION TO OUR WALK

The Covenant that God made with Abraham is not only to direct what we believe but how we live our lives. We are told in the **Hebrews 11:13** regarding the faithful that “*These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, were **PERSUADED** of them, and **EMBRACED** them, and **CONFESSED** that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*” To be persuaded, to embrace, and to confess - to have true conviction/faith in what God has promised - results in a life, a frame of mind and disposition that is detached, that is separated from the cares, the politics, the ambitions, the pleasures and troubles of the world around us. Abraham forsook Ur of the Chaldees, Moses turned his back on the cares of Egypt. Israel was commanded to separate themselves from the unholy – as God said, “*Be ye holy as I am holy.*” The promises of God - the Gospel Preached unto Abraham - is much more than an ingenious system of doctrines but is that which is something that must be practiced and demonstrated as a way of life. Do we believe in these promises in the way that Abraham and other faithful have? Then we must demonstrate it in what we think about, hope for, live and die for. We cannot on one hand claim devotion to God's covenant, while on the other hand our lives are consumed with gaining a reward in this life from the heaps of vanity that characterize the current system of things. **Hebrews 6:11,12** “*And we desire that every one of you do shew the same*

diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”

With all these matters in mind let us heed the word of exhortation: “*Be ye mindful **always** of His covenant. The word which He commanded to a thousand generations; Even of the covenant which He made with Abraham, and of His oath unto Isaac; and hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, Saying, “Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance”*”.

A. Thomas

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

THERE ARE CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE TRUTH that have been divinely revealed to the saints of all ages that make up what we call the foundations of the Gospel. Read Ephesians 2:19-22. One of these divinely revealed Truths is known as the Abrahamic (the Everlasting) Covenant. Most Unamended Christadelphians believe that this piece of the Gospel message is so important that they must stand up against any false doctrines that are in opposition to this important component of God's Holy Truth. There is a doctrine held by some called by the name of Christadelphians that is in direct opposition to this wonderful truth of the Abrahamic Covenant. This doctrine is known as the resurrection of the Enlightened Rejecter. There have been many articles written by both the Amended and Unamended Christadelphians groups over many decades that address this doctrine and how it impacts the Truth of God. There are some individuals that appear to be tiring of the continual battle between the two groups relating to this issue. There are some that are saying that the only difference between the Unamended and the Amended communities is this doctrine of the resurrection of the Enlightened Rejecter. There are some Unamended Christadelphians that are saying that there may be some Amended individuals that believe just like the Unamended Body except for their belief in the resurrection of the Enlightened Rejecter to the Judgment Seat of Christ. However, we must look at this doctrine and its impact on other areas of the Truth and determine if there are other doctrinal Truths that will be compromised by the acceptance of this erroneous doctrine.

The primary question that should be asked about this doctrine of the resurrection of the Enlightened Rejecter to the Judgment Seat of Christ and any other doctrine is “Is the doctrine scripturally correct or scripturally incorrect?” This is the question that should be asked by individuals in both bodies of Christadelphians. If you are part of

the Amended community and your answer is that this doctrine is not scripturally correct, why do you still choose to meet with those who are not of the same mind on such an important scriptural doctrine? If you are part of the Unamended community and you also believe that this doctrine is not scripturally correct, then are you wanting to fellowship individuals that believe, support, endorse and teach this erroneous doctrine? Or are you willing to stand up against those that wish to destroy the foundation of the Abrahamic Covenant? The skeptics amongst us will probably now be asking how does the doctrine of the resurrection of the enlightened rejecter have any impact on the Abrahamic Covenant. The objective of the remainder of this article is to show how this erroneous doctrine does indeed impact the Abrahamic Covenant and also is the logical starting place for many other false doctrines that have crept into the Christadelphian Body over the last 100 years.

Anyone who studies God's Holy Scriptures must admit that the many aspects of the Truth are so tightly wound together that if one erroneous doctrine is introduced that it will impact all other aspects of the Truth. If the foundations are being chipped away, the whole structure will eventually fall. A system of beliefs that contain any erroneous doctrines is like the house that Jesus describes in Matthew 7:25-29 as one that is built on sand. Eventually the strong foundations will erode away and the spiritual house will be swept away by the strong winds of false doctrine and the waging seas of humanism.

Let us now examine the impact of the unscriptural doctrine of the resurrection of the Enlightened Rejecter to the Judgment Seat of the Righteous King.

- **According** to this theory, the Enlightened Rejecter (ER) is one who has been exposed to the knowledge of the truth of the God of Israel and has rejected the calling of the Gospel message, thus rejecting Yahweh and His beloved Son. Based on this exposure to the Truth and the subsequent rejection of the Truth, according to this doctrine, this individual is now known as an "Enlightened Rejecter". Thus, per this erroneous theory, these individuals are now "responsible" to a resurrection to the Judgment Seat to "be judged according to their works," and "receive in body according to what they have done, whether it be good or bad." Proposition #24 – Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith.
- **This theory** of the resurrection of the ER puts forth the proposition that the basis of resurrection for these individuals is their exposure to "Light" or knowledge.
- **This is in direct opposition** to the Unamended belief that the basis of resurrection in this generation occurs when one becomes related to the blood of the everlasting covenant through the waters of baptism.
- **The Unamended Body** believes that mankind is born with an inherited condemnation to eternal death that we call "sin in the flesh" or "Adamic Condemnation". This inherited condemnation is the barrier to resurrection, and we understand that resurrection is defined as a furtherance of life after death, even if for a little while until death is pronounced again. Therefore, the Unamended believe that there is no resurrection unless this barrier is removed. The doctrine of

the resurrection of the Enlightened Rejecter is in direct opposition to this belief held by the Unamended Body. Logical thinking dictates, if we accept the theory of the resurrection of the Enlightened Rejecter, that the ***only barrier*** to resurrection is lack of sufficient knowledge of the Truth of the Gospel. According to this theory, once an individual has gained a specific amount of knowledge (the amount never has and can never be defined), that person becomes resurrectionally responsible to the Judgment Seat. This erroneous theory implies that the removal of this barrier at the time of exposure to the "Light" applies to both groups who subsequently either accepts or rejects the calling of the Gospel.

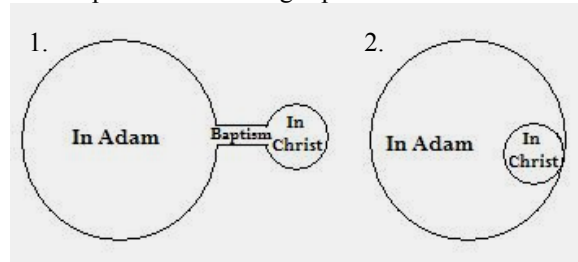
Some may say that this is not what the Amended or those who seek an unscriptural Unity teach, but do not be deceived. Brethren, please take note of what the latest NASU proposal asks of all who accepts their unity process. This is quoted from page 7, and is included within the section entitled "Mutual Assurances Related To The NASU Unity Document and under Part "E" of the sub-heading of Further Points of Agreement and Acceptance. Part E reads as such: "Amended brethren emphasize knowledge (emphasis theirs) of God's will and calling (emphasis theirs) to submit to it, as a common basis of resurrectional judgment for those in covenant relationship and those without, whom God requires to give account for their refusal of His gracious invitation to eternal life." End quote. The Unamended Body is being asked by NASU to agree upon and accept as a scriptural truth that the basis for resurrectional responsibility for both those in covenant relationship and those without is knowledge of God's will and calling to submit to it. How can the Unamended even consider accepting this false theory of twisted Scriptural doctrine?

- **The Unamended teach** that baptism is an outward expression of the faith of an individual and the way in which that individual comes into contact with the blood of the everlasting covenant. Read Romans 6:3-9 and Hebrews 13:20. The theory of the resurrection of the ER teaches that baptism does not remove any barriers to resurrection (justification from the sin in the flesh inherited from our fathers – Adamic Condemnation) as this barrier has already been removed when the individual obtained this undefined amount of knowledge of the Gospel message. A logical mind will understand that the sentence to eternal death and the barrier to resurrection can only be removed once. The Amended believes that this barrier is removed when one obtains enough knowledge to either accept or reject the Gospel. The Unamended believe that the removal of this barrier occurs at the time one is raised from the waters of baptism.
- **The theory** of the resurrection of the Enlightened Rejecter to the Judgment Seat teaches that the condemnation received from our father Adam only refers to mortality - there is no legal condemnation or legal barrier to eternal death. Therefore, if Adamic Condemnation is not removed at baptism, as the Amended believe and teach, than an individual is "In Adam" and "In Christ" at the same time. This is in direct contradiction to the Unamended belief that one cannot be related to Adam (in Adam) and related to Christ (in Christ) at the same time. Brother Jim Stanton pictorially depicted this relationship in the Sanctuary Keeper

magazines that he published. Each of us should review this pictorial representation and understand the points that are being depicted.

1. Federal Relationship
Unamended Teaching
EITHER in Adam OR in Christ

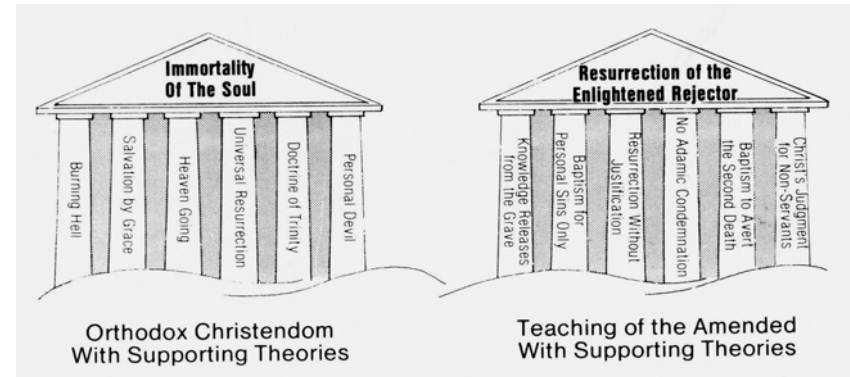
2. Federal Relationship
Amended Teaching
In Adam WHILE in Christ



- **Therefore**, the next logical place that this doctrine of the resurrection of the Enlightened Rejecter to the Judgment Seat of Christ takes the thoughtful mind is that the only benefits of the act of baptism is to receive remission from personal sins only.
- **Therefore**, the logical mind must ask – “If the only objective of the act of baptism is for personal sins only, than what was the purpose of the baptism of Jesus Christ, as He had no personal sins”?
- **Therefore**, if Christ did not require justification from his condemned nature and he had no personal sins, then why did He have to die? Romans 6:23 tells us that the wages of sin is death. If Christ was not related to sin in any manner, then why did God require His death?
- **This erroneous theory** then brings us to the logical conclusion that God was unjust in requiring the death of an individual not related to the Law of Sin and Death.
- **Therefore**, if Christ did not need to die for himself, then he only shed His blood for us and not for Himself. Therefore, Christ would not be a representative of fallen mankind, but would be a substitute.
- **If Christ** did not need justification from his nature and since he had no personal sins, then this erroneous theory of resurrection of the Enlightened Rejecter to the Judgment Seat of Christ brings us to the logical conclusion that Christ must have had clean flesh as is taught by the Apostasy.

We can see through this logical progression that the erroneous theory of the resurrection of the ER leads us to most of the doctrinal errors that the Christadelphian Body has had to endure since the revival of the Truth. If we could only think about this doctrine and its impact on the Truth in such a logical manner, it should be clear to the necessity of standing against and separation from any that teach, support, endorse and promote this erroneous doctrine. This writer fully understands that those that believe in the resurrection of the ER to the Judgment Seat of Christ may not believe or teach the other erroneous doctrines that have been discussed in this article. However, we should remember that a single erroneous doctrine destroys the foundations of the Gospel Truth. Can we ignore this logical progression? The current NASU document asks the Unamended to accept this erroneous doctrine. Why would we be willing to accept this doctrine that opposes the basic foundations of Truth?

Brother Stanton included this diagram on the back cover of The Sanctuary Keeper when he distributed this magazine. It would be well for us to remember this picture and the impact on this erroneous doctrine on God’s Truth.



We conclude this article by asking the readers to realize that any erosion of the foundations of Truth will only lead to further and further erosion and soon there will be no truth. Any false doctrine must be supported by other false doctrines. Let us always keep the doctrine pure and simple. Our salvation may depend on it.

B. Henderson

BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF HABAKKUK

CHAPTER 3 – THE SURE WORD OF PROPHECY

THE PROPHECY OF HABAKKUK, while often overlooked in our time is, in the opinion of this writer, full of information pertinent to these last days. The book has three chapters, three sections and therefore three themes.

The prophet begins chapter one declaring a burden and relates his frustration regarding the wicked state of Judah. He wrestles with the same problems as an earlier patriarch - Job - and like Job has certain questions. “*How long shall I cry*” (1:2), and in verse 12 - “*Art Thou from everlasting*”. The first question was prompted by the continued evil perpetrated by the people which seemingly was allowed to go unchecked. The second was prompted by the fear that the aggressor nation of Babylon should be allowed to go on unimpeded. This was a burden indeed, and the concern felt by the prophet was motivated by his love for Jerusalem and his brethren there.

Chapter two, the second theme, is a vision, a revelation. This vision, itself has three sections; or another way of saying it, the prophet gives three basic principles of the Divine purpose. The first- *the just shall live by faith, the second-the proud shall be humbled, and third- the LORD shall be exalted.*

We then come to chapter three where we see a most interesting chapter which serves as a consummation. It may be sub-divided as follows into eight sub-sections.

1. Vvs 1-2 A plea for the consummation
2. Vvs 3-4 Manifestation of the Mighty One
3. Vvs 5-6 Surveying the work of conquest
4. Vv 7 Subduing the Arabs
5. Vvs 8-10 Initial conquest of Gentile power
6. Vvs 11-13 Divine authority established on earth
7. Vvs 14-15 Extending the Kingdom
8. Vvs 16-19 Habakkuk's confidence, vow and assurance.

The chapter is written in the form of a Psalm or prayer, and we are immediately drawn to the question, "why", or what is the reason for the prophet's "shigionoth"? The word *shigionoth* carries the meaning, to cry aloud. It may be used to express pain, danger or possibly to express joy of deliverance. In this case it is the latter – joy. And the reason we say that is because there are several clues given. The context is always important, but in this case the gender of the word gives us a critical clue. *Shigionoth* is in the feminine gender. The context of the subject matter places us in a latter day scenario, and so who will be crying aloud for joy but the Bride of Christ, who at the deliverance of Zion and the re-establishment of God's Kingdom will be raising their collective voices in enthusiastic Hallelujahs.

At the time this prophesy was being written, Judah was very aware of the menace presented by Babylon, yet the prophet writes; "*O Lord, revive Thy work in the midst of the years*". To revive is to make a thing live or preserve it alive. What work, we might ask, and what is meant by the midst of the years? Looking back at a previous chapter we are reminded of Yahweh's purpose, and what we know of conditions in Judah as Habakkuk wrote we can safely say that purpose was not being realized. When, then, will that purpose be realized?

Shortly after the conversion of Paul of Tarsus, and after he had started his ministry to the Gentiles, the apostles met in Jerusalem. They were disputing whether or not the Gentiles should be allowed to be included in the gospel message. Peter stated they should, and further more, that no difference should be placed between Jew and Gentile believers. Then comes these words of James in Acts 15:14; "*Simeon hath declared how God did first visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name*" The purpose of Yahweh, or as Habakkuk puts it "Thy work", was to be revived starting with the ministries of Christ and then the Apostles, and continued with the second advent of our Master, Jesus Christ. That puts this third chapter of Habakkuk into the area of latter day fulfillment. That, then puts a different light on what comes next.

A casual reading of the text would allow one to pass over the import of the wording of verse three. The Authorized Version states "*God came from Teman*". God is correctly to be translated 'Eloah' or Mighty One and Brother Thomas tells us in Eureka, vol. 3, p. 180 - "The prophet did not write; 'Eloah came from Teman'. The word rendered came is not "bah" as in Deut. 33:2, but "yahuo", the future of the same verb, and, therefore, to be rendered, 'Eloah shall come in'."

Clearly agreeing with the meaning of the previous verse, "*revive Thy work in the midst of the years*", was all future to the prophet Habakkuk. The march north from the site of Judgment (known to Christadelphians as "the March of the Rainbowed Angel") along with its epic confrontation with the Gogian Host involves a certain subduing of the Arabs along the way and is expressed by Habakkuk as, verse 7; "*I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction: and the curtains of Midian did tremble*". Once again quoting from Eureka, vol. 5, p. 251, we find, "it must be evident to every one, that before the wild marauders, who inhabit Arabia Deserta, Arabia Petraea, and Paran, Horeb, Sinai.....can glorify Yahweh... they must be subjected to severe discipline". The destiny of the Arabs is quite different than that of the Edomites. The latter will be completely destroyed or cut off while the former will be incorporated into the Kingdom of God.

Verse 8 speaks of rivers, the sea, horses and chariots. Two rivers dominate the Middle East and they are none other than The Nile and The Euphrates. Symbolically then Habakkuk is referring to Egypt and Assyria. The prophet Jeremiah warns Judah of the consequences of drinking of the waters of Egypt and Assyria; that is for seeking the assistance of Egypt and Assyria. (See Jer. 2)

In Is. 8:7, the invasion of Assyria is symbolized as the flooding of the Euphrates, and then in Revelation 16:12, the evaporation of the Turkish power is seen as a drying up of the river. The sea (vs.8) symbolizes Gentile power and so in a turbulent state we are to understand that Yahweh's wrath is about to be poured out against them by the Christ-multitude.

It is well known that horses in scripture represent war or that warfare is about to be waged. What else can the use of chariots in this context mean but the saints in glorious but warlike manifestation, led by the Lord Jesus Christ? Verse 9 tells us that the bow was made quite naked. Doesn't this clearly indicate that, according to Habakkuk, there will be a declaration of war, and that all mankind shall submit or be destroyed.

Neither time nor space permits a verse by verse analysis of this fine chapter but suffice it to say the prophet Habakkuk has given us a warning, a vision, and a glorious hope for a soon to be dawning new day. In that day, the Son of Righteousness will rise and cause to fade forever the darkness of night.

*Herb Thomas
Republic, MO*

IN SEARCH OF THE PERFECT ECCLESIA - EXHORT ONE ANOTHER DAILY

IN THIS FIRST INSTALLMENT of the section of this magazine dealing with the subject of exhortation, we wish to consider the messages to the seven Ecclesias of Asia Minor that were recorded for our benefit in the second and third chapters of Revelation. There are many excellent works in Christadelphian libraries that deal with this subject, so the comments and thoughts below should not be new to anyone. We hope everyone has taken the opportunity in their probationary lives to read works such as Eureka, Thirteen Lectures on the Apocalypse, and Apocalypse Epitomized that provide the studious individual of the Truth with adequate means to understand the significance of the multitude of symbols that God chose to use in this last book of His Revealed Word.

When considering all of the various problems that exist in the Ecclesias across the land, this writer believes that the lessons to be learned from a detailed study of the problems, challenges and exhortations to these seven actual, but also symbolic, Ecclesias that existed in the time of the Apostle John will provide us the wisdom, understanding, strength and courage to address the trials, temptations and tribulations of the current age. All individuals that have been exposed to the problems within the Unamended Christadelphian Body have struggled with how to handle the matters in the divine way commanded throughout the Scriptures. The Arranging Boards of this age must manifest an attitude of strength and courage in handling the delicate and difficult issues arising out of the spirit of humanism that face the Brethren of Christ in these last days of the kingdom of men. The objective of the articles that are put forth for your consideration about the divine message to these seven Ecclesias is to exhort, edify and learn from the lessons of Ecclesias of ages past. Each of us would like our Ecclesia to be perfect in all matters, without any internal problems that must be addressed and all members behaving in a Christ-Like manner at all times. Unfortunately, this will never happen, as long as the communities of called out ones are populated with mortal humans all possessing the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life. Although we cannot be part of a perfect Ecclesia at this time, if we let the lessons learned from these seven Ecclesias edify us in the proper manner, we can improve the conditions of the Ecclesia in which we choose to worship Yahweh. In that regard, we have entitled these remarks: **“IN SEARCH OF THE PERFECT ECCLESIA”**

The first chapter of the Apocalypse presents the background and summary of the remaining 21 chapters of this symbolic book. We are told in verse 19 that John was to write the things which thou hast seen, the things which are and the things which shall be hereafter. It is the “things which are” that we wish to consider in these comments.

The “things which are” are those things that were pertinent to the age in which John lived, in particular, to the brotherhood and all of their problems, issues, and challenges that the faithful brethren of the day had to address. These were actual Ecclesias with similar problems to all Ecclesias of every age. Brother John Thomas in Eureka suggests that the messages not only describe the Ecclesias of John’s age but represent the progression of the truth throughout seven ages of time that lead up to the return of Christ and the re-establishment of God’s Kingdom on earth. For a brief summary of these ages, the reader is referred to Apocalypse Epitomized on pages 39 – 40. If this is a valid conclusion, and there is no reason to believe that it is not, we should pay close attention to the message to the last Ecclesia – the Ecclesia at Laodicea. Does this Ecclesia represent in symbol the times in which we live? We shall see as we move forward with this study.

DO WE HAVE EARS TO HEAR?

One of the primary lessons that we should glean from a study of these seven Ecclesias is that they were written to the elders of the Ecclesia. In Chapter 1, verse 16, these individuals are referenced as stars in the right hand of the One like unto the Son of Man. Verse 20 of the same chapter names these individuals as angels of the Ecclesias. We know that angels simply represent messengers and can be either divine or human beings. These stars/angels were simply the elders of the Ecclesia. The elders of the early Ecclesias were usually divinely appointed. See Acts 20:28 and I Corinthians 12:28-31 for examples of these divinely appointed individuals. When we understand the difficulties that these divinely appointed brothers with Spirit-endowed gifts had to face in carrying out their responsibilities of leading the Ecclesia, we are truly humbled at the tremendous responsibilities and challenges of the elders of the modern Ecclesias by men who are not divinely appointed and without the Spirit gifts to guide them.

However, it is not only the elders of an Ecclesia that should study these verses for guidance in the establishment and maintenance of an Ecclesia. Every Ecclesial message contains the phrase – “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Ecclesias”. These are powerful lessons to every member of the Ecclesia. Each of us must understand what God requires for the continuance of the Truth. We must maintain a zealous, loving attitude as we contend for the purity of the Truth in our Ecclesias. All members of today’s Ecclesias are responsible for the spiritual welfare of the Ecclesia. The individual members of an Ecclesia cannot sit back and wait for the elders to address matters contrary to the Truth. All should be constantly on the alert for situations and individuals that would want to introduce new and erroneous ideas into the Ecclesial atmosphere. Each member of the Ecclesia should fulfill their responsibilities of being a watchman over the household of God. All are sons and daughters of Yahweh, studying to show ourselves approved of God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed of the Truth or their defense of it, and always rightly dividing the word of truth.

The individual members of the Household should not allow themselves to be lead down a path that may lead to the removal of the lampstand and possible eternal death for the individual member. Every member should hearken to the challenges presented to these seven Ecclesias to listen to what the Spirit is teaching the Ecclesias. "He that hath an ear" is a rallying cry for the Ecclesias of today who are suffering from the indifference and tolerance of false ideas and the brethren that teach, support and endorse these ideas in the Ecclesias. By hearing and attending to the things that are spoken, the members remain active in the teaching, proclamation and contending for the principles of Truth that comprise the precious plan of salvation that God has mercifully provided for His servants of all ages. Of course, all things must be done decently and in order (I Corinthians 14:40). There are Scriptural principles that **MUST** be followed when troubles erupt in an Ecclesia. As important as it is to address these things timely, it is just as important to address them correctly. The primary objective of all matters that are addressed by the Ecclesia is to contend earnestly for the Truth with the goal of bringing our erring brethren back to the paths of Truth.

I KNOW THY WORKS

Another constant part of the message delivered to these first century Ecclesias is the phrase "I know thy works". All of our actions, words and thoughts are known by the Alpha and Omega of God's Truth. We must realize that God and His son, understands the true objectives of everything that we do or say. We have to admit there are problems within the Ecclesias of today. Some may say that those who stand up and address these problems are showing an unloving and harsh attitude towards those brethren causing the problems. This is implying that those who do not address the problem and who are willing to tolerate the issue and the problems are the only ones displaying love towards the erring brother or sister. God knows the thoughts and intents of each of us. By tolerating ideas and teachings contrary to the Truth, are we really showing a spiritual love towards the erring brother? If we truly loved these erring brothers, we would want to do whatever possible to help them see the error of their ways, discuss the matter with them in a timely manner with the objective of bringing them back to the paths of Truth. Could it be that those tolerating these errors are thinking more about the difficulties in addressing issues with those with whom they are very close? Could it be that those tolerating these errors may be thinking more about the social aspect of possibly losing a good friend? Isn't it better to lose a friend and gain a brother for eternity? Let us never use a front of false love to keep us from fulfilling all the responsibilities that are provided to us in these messages to the seven Ecclesias in the Apocalypse. Remember the phrase of He who liveth, and was dead and now is alive for evermore – "I know thy works".

WHAT THE SPIRIT SAITH TO THE ECCLESIAS

The messages to the seven Ecclesias were delivered with four parts to the message. There were words of condemnation, words of commendation, words of counsel and

challenges to overcome the problems within the Ecclesias. The table that follows presents a comparison between the condemnations and the commendations.

Ecclesia	Condemnation	Commendation
Ephesus	They had left their first love	They patiently labored and did not bear them which were evil or those who were false Apostles and they hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes.
Smyrna	None for the Ecclesial elders	They suffered tribulations for their beliefs and they were viewed as spiritual rich, despite their natural poverty
Pergamos	They tolerated the Balaamites and the Nicolaitanes within their midst	They held fast the Name of Christ and did not deny His Faith
Thyatira	They tolerated the woman Jezebel within their midst	Their love, service, faith and patience
Sardis	They had a name of being alive, but was really dead	There were only a few individuals who had not defiled their garments
Philadelphia	None for the Ecclesia elders	They kept His Word, did not deny His Name and kept the word of His patience
Laodicea	They had a lukewarm attitude towards the things of the Truth	None

This writer believes that we learn more from our mistakes than from our successes. Therefore, we have chosen to mainly focus on the condemnations pronounced against the Ecclesias. Some may think that the focus on the negative things is unproductive, but it is these very things that we will have to answer for when we stand before the Judge of the whole earth. In our search for the Perfect Ecclesia, we should strive to not fall after the example of the condemnations but always emulate the positive actions of the Apocalyptic Ecclesias in order to receive the approval of Christ at His bema.

As we study the things in which these Ecclesias were condemned, we see that these works of the early brethren mirror what may be found in the Ecclesias of any age. We see apathy, toleration, going through the motions of worshipping the God on high, a prideful attitude and a lack of recognition of the problems within the Ecclesias. Even though several Ecclesias received commendations for their actions, we should pay special attention to these things that they were commanded to repent from and if

they/we do not repent, the Ecclesial lampstand would be removed. This is a serious consideration that we need to think about. Unless we repent from the impacts of the humanistic attitude of Apathy, Indifference and Toleration of false ideas, our modern lampstands may be removed. In these latter days, we can see the continual decline of the Truth due to these attitudes. If our Master does not return for a few more years/decades, where will the Truth be? Will there be any who will have the strength and courage to fulfill their responsibilities of watchmen over the Truth? Brethren, if these attitudes are prevalent in your Ecclesia, stand up for the Truth. Let us be counted with the few in Sardis who have not defiled our garments.

As we study these condemnations of the Spirit towards these Ecclesias, we wish to briefly review the contemporaries of the faithful brethren of these Ecclesias. The Spirit Word identifies certain groups as constituents of that which He hates. These groups are the Nicolaitanes, they which say they are Jews but are not, the synagogue of Satan, the Balaamites, and the woman Jezebel. A detailed review of these groups would require a great amount of historical details that is not the intent of these articles. The reader should read Chapter 2 of the first volume of Eureka for a complete historical understanding of these groups of individuals. We wish to briefly point out how the same attitudes of these groups can impact the Ecclesias today and the relationship that the believers of today should have towards these attitudes.

IDENTIFICATION OF THOSE WHO OPPOSE THE TRUTH

Nicolaitanes – This name is formed from two words – *nicos* – which means victory and *laitos* – which means the people, thus the full meaning signifies the vanquishers of the people. Brother Thomas identifies these as errorists who introduced Gentile philosophy (humanism) into the Truth.

Those who say they are Jews, but are not – This group were laying false claims to being spiritual Jews, but in fact were not.

The synagogue of Satan – This was a collection, gathering, or a congregation (but not an Ecclesia of called out ones) of those who went out from the Truth of their own accord and formed a congregation of those who oppose the Truth. They were opposed to the Truth while still claiming some sort of identity with the Truth. (Apocalypse Epitomized – page 45)

The Balaamites – The name Balaam signifies the Waster of the People. The Spirit Word uses this name to bring us back to the literal man described in Numbers 22 who allowed the prospects of riches and honor to blind him to his responsibilities to Yahweh. The doctrine of Balaam is the teaching that is prepared to bend Scriptures to personal advantage. (Apocalypse Epitomized – page 49)

The woman Jezebel – This woman represents a religious community that opposes the Truth and its true servants. This symbolic woman taught and seduced the sons and daughters of Yahweh to commit spiritual fornication and to eat sacrifices made unto idols. -TO BE CONTINUED

B. Henderson

PREPARING TO PREACH – Lesson 2

Christa-what? What do you believe? Last issue we discussed turning our uncomfortable moments into opportunity, by being prepared to give a quick description of our faith in positive statements designed to provoke questions. In case you missed the last issue, here are the four points to memorize:

1. We focus on the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
2. We believe that Jesus will return to the earth to set up a kingdom in Israel that will never end.
3. When he returns, he will resurrect everyone who has been baptized with knowledge) into his name.
4. Those who are judged worthy by the Christ will be given an immortal, sinless body.

Write them down and memorize them. Carry them with you. Every time you walk past a mirror, ask yourself "Christa-what"? - and then recite the list. With all the times we admire ourselves in mirrors, there's no excuse for any sister or brother to claim that they can't memorize these four sentences.

The Promises to Abraham

This writer remembers as a young man, hearing brother Ned O'Kelly saying that this was the first verse in the Bible he would bring unbelievers to. (Galatians 3: 26-29) Gal 3:26 *“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”* He said that he would show them the verse and then ask "Do you know the promises God made to Abraham?" When they said they didn't, he would say "Well I think you should!", and take them from there. This verse is one of the most powerful verses in the arsenal of our Faith because it directly ties together our Lord and Master Jesus Christ to Abraham. To rephrase, through Christ we have hope of the promises made to Abraham.

Bible Marking

There are 3 main points to cover on Abraham:

1. The Promises made to Abraham.
2. The promises were never fulfilled during his lifetime.
3. Those promises are the basis for both the old and the new testaments.
4. Resurrection and eternal life (Notes will be given in the 4th quarter issue.)

Where and how do we do the markings?

There are two options that we can recommend for putting notes on your Bible. The first is to look at the front and back pages on your Bible, usually they are blank. You

can either write your notes on these blank pages, or you can write them on a sheet of paper and tape it to a page in the beginning of your Bible. The advantage of taping the sheet of paper is that it is easily moved if you change Bibles. Lastly, you can cut out these pages from the Sanctuary-Keeper and paste them in your Bible, but please make sure you look up the Bible verses so you are familiar with the content and context of the verse before you go to quote it.

We are going to give you some notes to put in your Bible, but it is vital for you to look at the verses given, so you are familiar with the entire verse. What we give below for the Bible verses is the shortest portion we can, to remind you what verse you are going to be discussing. Quote the verse in any way that helps you remember what you are going to be looking for, and feel free to remove or add other Bible verses to help you make your point.

Let's Start

We're going to break each section of our notes down to 3 parts, like you see below. What I have given here is a suggested layout. Feel free to write it down any way you think best.

1. Abraham

- a. We need to know God's promises to him. Galatians 3:27-29 – "And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
- b. The specific Promises:

Genesis 15:18 Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

Genesis 12:3 in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Genesis 13:15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

Genesis 17:8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession

2. But Abraham never had the land as he was promised Abraham had to buy a place to bury Sarah. He owned none of the land he lived in.

Genesis 23:4 give me a possession of a buryingplace with you...

Heb 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off...

Acts 7:5 And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on:

3. Why did Abraham never receive the promises? When will he receive them?

Heb 11:13 These all died in faith...but having seen them afar off

Matthew 22:32 I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

Luke 13:28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.

Luke 20:37 Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. (38) For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.

4. The promises to Abraham are the central theme of the New Testament and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We have given a lot of Bible verses here to show that it is a consistent theme throughout the New Testament.

Luke 1:73 The oath which He swore to our father Abraham,

Acts 3:25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers,

Acts 7:5 yet He promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him

Acts 26: 6 And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God, unto our fathers: ... (8) Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?

Romans 4:13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world... (16) Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end **the promise** might be sure to all the seed;

Romans 15:8 to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:

Galatians 3: 7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham... (9) So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

Galatians 3: 14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ;

Galatians 3:16-19 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made.

Galatians 3:29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Ephesians 2:12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

Colossians 3:24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance:

Hebrews 6: 12 followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Hebrews 7:6 ...and blessed him that had the promises.

Hebrews 9: 15 they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Hebrews 11: 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises,

POPE JOHN PAUL II

By the time that this issue of the Sanctuary-Keeper reaches the reader's hands the death of Pope John Paul II will be a fact that will have been repeatedly drilled by the general news media as they over eulogize and analyze to the point of ad nauseam what they perceive to be as one of the "greatest leaders of all time". Due to the rapidly decreasing health of John Paul his death is of no surprise to us. It was becoming increasingly apparent that this man would not be at the head of the Mystic Babylonian system that opposes the True Messiah when He returns to re-establish the Israelitish Commonwealth on earth.

Nonetheless, as Christadelphians we should find great significance in the life and death of this individual but for entirely different reasons than those expressed by the world at large. As understanding the Truth of God's Word and the place that the Papacy and the religious system it controls plays in it (as a key theme in the writings of the Apocalypse), there are major issues that should be of great interest to us.

- The world reaction to his death as seen in the outpouring of grief and respect from not only Catholics worldwide but by Protestants and secular individuals and entities including the news media.
- The impact that John Paul II has had in restoring Papal influence on world political affairs – especially in the arenas of Western and Eastern Europe, and in the Middle East.
- His relationship with Israel and the Jews in general.

World Reaction

In the book *The History of the Papacy* (Alan Hall) it is stated concerning John Paul II – "It is one of the strange dichotomies of Pope John Paul II that he is so popular when he is also so entrenched in his views. Nothing has fundamentally changed in the church since he assumed power...Popularity and openness have not added up to any willingness to change what he sees as the essential foundations of the church." And further on, "The pope intended to change the role of the church in society – but not the church."

For 1,260 years Rome had to force people into compliance by the amassing and use of political, economic and military might. "The Church" no longer has the temporal and military power to force her will but now we see world leaders and the masses, Catholic and non-Catholic, willingly and joyfully throw their approval at her.

As is pointed out in the excerpt we provided, it is so very ironic that even though John Paul had taken such a hard-line/conservative approach to many



Pope John Paul II on the Vatican's €1 coin

moral issues that have been compromised in recent years (e.g., homosexuality, birth control, abortion, etc.), he was able to accomplish a level of adoration that few have ever achieved in the history of the world. Make no mistake; the Pope did not gain popularity by compromising his beliefs – which makes his popularity amazing. Quoting again from the same book, "The pope has moved swiftly and ruthlessly to crush dissent in the church. He made it his mission from the start to silence people who he thought preached a doctrine alien to his teachings."

As we watch the transpiring of Vatican events and how the eyes of the world are now fixed on Rome, it should be of no surprise to us how willingly the European "Beast Nations" and world in general will throw their power behind the resolve of the Papacy when they make the charge of "Anti-Christ" against The Man (The Son of God) who establishes His Kingdom out of Jerusalem and commands the world to submit to it. John Paul has been pivotal in influencing the world to once again drink out of the cup of Papal fornication, regardless of religious conviction or lack thereof. *History of the Papacy* once again – "His message is loud and clear as it ever was as he leads a church more united, stronger, and better equipped than it has even been in the history of the papacy. 'Never has there been a more effective pope,' said William Burrell, an American Catholic scholar. **'He is truly the leader of the world, regardless of individual faith.'**" (Emphasis added)

The Media

The media has and continues to play a very interesting role in the promotion of John Paul's agenda and Catholicism in general. A remarkable relationship exists between the two. As has been mentioned, the Pope did not change the fundamental beliefs of "the Church", but he did change the way that it portrayed itself through the use of mass media. On a news report that we heard within the past few days it described the Pope as the "Master of the Media" - due to his unique ability to promote his agenda through the media. The report went on to explain that the Pope did not see "going to the people" as good enough but "wanted to be seen by all people" through the use of mass media.

John Paul's use of the media is no accident. It has been an open policy of the Catholic Church to promote her agenda and policies through journalists and broadcasters. According to a booklet of instruction called *Mass Media – The Pastoral Instruction* written by the Catholics as a guide for such matters, it is stated that the mission of the "Church" is to "possess and master the world." The media is seen as a tool for fulfilling this mission. Quoting once again from the book – "Parents, educators, priests, and Christian (i.e. Catholic) organizations should encourage young people with the right qualities to take up a career in social communications...Broadcasters have access to the minds and hearts of everyone ...Television, especially...The Church cannot afford to ignore such opportunities..."

In June of the year 2000 the Vatican hosted a “Jubilee of Journalists”. It was reported by the Vatican newspaper: ‘*L’ Osservatore Romano*’ that there were 7000 media professionals and their families in attendance from all over the world. What other religion or organization for that matter can boast of this kind of influence? Truly, this Pope has been the “Master of the Media”.

Public opinion/ public relations reigns supreme in this modern technological age. “The Church” has figured this out and mastered it under the guidance of this Pope. And never has the media’s bias been more fully manifested than in the blitz of information and praise that we have seen in the short few days since his death. A recent report claimed that over 35,000 news stories were filed just in the one day after his death – compared to 1,000 after the death of Ronald Reagan. The endless stream of priests, cardinals, church officials and “experts” are clearly basking in the positive attention they and their religion have received. It may prove that the death of the Pope was one of the best publicity opportunities for Catholicism rivaling anything he promoted during his life.

World Influence

John Paul II has restored a level of world influence not seen since the days of the Holy Roman Empire. Not just an influence on religious and economic values (which has been a major part of the Pope’s emphasis) but on the political leaders of this earth as well. No longer is the Vatican’s influence confined to the few acres of space that was left after its loss of temporal power in the late 1800’s. Reference is made in Rev. 18:3 to the fact that “*all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her...*” John Paul’s pull on the conscience of leaders around the globe (Catholic and non-Catholic) is nothing short of remarkable as a steady flow of presidents, prime ministers, ambassadors and delegates continuously made their way to Rome to have an audience with the Pope. Any endorsement from this Pope was considered “icing on the cake”. And as of the date of this writing, news reports have claimed that over 200 world leaders and delegates will be in attendance at the Pope’s funeral.

Much more could be said regarding his world influence, but there is no place that the Pope’s influence is more clearly demonstrated than on the Western and Eastern European stage. It has only been in recent years that information has come to full light in regards to the Pope’s part in bringing down communism. The fall of communism has helped to remove a stubborn barrier that hindered Western and Eastern European cooperation – a partnership that we expect according to Bible prophecy.

In 2004 the Pope was given the “Extraordinary prize” (as it is described) of *The Karlspreis* – in English it is called the *International Charlemagne Prize*. This award is given to those who contribute to the “European idea” and European peace. The award commemorates Charlemagne, who was the founder of the Holy Roman Empire (“Beast of the Earth” – Rev.13). Along with his

efforts against communism, John Paul II was the force behind acceleration of the European Union. Connected to this he was pivotal in reviving and promoting the historic belief of the Holy Roman Empire – something in which many of Europe have embraced. Therefore, being awarded such a prize is most fitting and extremely telling as to how important Europe views the Pope in relation to this “European idea”.

The Pope also did much in the attempts to bring unity between Catholicism and Greek Orthodoxy as well as with the Russian Orthodox, though falling short of the goal. Even so, the process still continues and it will no doubt fall to the next Pope to carry on the work. Nonetheless, great strides have been made in achieving dialogue and a degree of cooperation that did not previously exist.

The Pope’s efforts have not stopped with Greek Orthodoxy but have extended in evangelical efforts to bring all of “Christianity” back into the fold of the “Mother Church”. The Pope and the Catholic religion do not recognize the legitimacy of the Protestant movement and make no apologies for considering themselves the one and only “true Church”. Even with such an uncompromising position there is an overwhelming degree of adoration being shown the Pope from religious leaders outside of Catholicism, as we mentioned earlier. It is all too apparent that the Protestant movement has long forsaken the “protesting” spirit that their forefathers had against Catholic tyranny and apostate belief. In watching the nature of events that surround the Pope’s death we probably are witnessing a small taste of the world and media frenzy that is to come in support of whatever explanations and recommendations the Papacy can offer a frightened and confused world at the supernatural unfolding of events that will have transpired in Israel. “Christian unity” as envisioned by this Pope will no doubt for a short time become reality – a unity that leads to utter destruction.

The Pope and Israel

A great struggle in the scriptures is found between the future of Jerusalem and the future of Rome. One (Jerusalem) will be the eternal source of life and blessing while the other (Rome) is the “mother of harlots”- that which is to be “utterly burned”. Due to the charismatic influence of John Paul II it is clear that the masses have chosen Rome and what she represents as the object of their adoration.

Related to this matter, the Pope has received praise for his efforts to reach out to the nation of Israel by apologizing for the role of the Catholic Church in the Holocaust and by being the first Pope to visit Israel. These appeared to be nice gestures but not all things are as they seem, especially when considering the public relations savvy of this Pope.

It was not until 1993 that the Vatican officially recognized Israel as a state. This was due to a long standing position that appeared in the Vatican newspaper on May 14, 1948 – “Modern Zionism is not the true heir of Biblical Israel, but a

secular state...Therefore the Holy Land and its sacred sites belong to Christianity, the true Israel.” Though the Vatican now officially recognizes the Jewish state this has not changed their underlying beliefs. The Vatican perceives Israel as a threat to its own claims as being the “true Israel” and “the Kingdom of God”. According to the book *The Vatican Moscow Alliance* (Avro Manhattan, 1977), “In Vatican eyes, therefore, the millenarian yearning for a global Hebrew theocracy represents a deadly threat to the eschatological teachings of the Catholic Church. When translated into concrete political terms such a view spells not only rivalry, but implacable enmity...” The author continues: “A Vatican fundamentally opposed by a powerful Jewish theocracy, therefore, would become not only hostile to Zionism and consequently to Israel; it would seek powerful allies to neutralize both.” And providing one more significant quote – “the Vatican could not and would not tolerate the establishment of an Israel which claimed messianic privileges, or rather, messianic uniqueness and which, therefore, would compete with the Roman Catholic Church as the center of a future spiritual kingdom...”

The agitation that the Vatican has helped to promote in the Middle East has created a public relations nightmare for Israel, and understanding the underlying reasons for Vatican disapproval of the Jewish state helps explain the unlikely alliance between Catholicism and some in the Arab world. “The Church” will use any means available to them to undermine Israeli interests, and along with this there is a saying that “politics makes for strange bedfellows”. It should be remembered that Yasser Arrafat was given an audience with the Pope on numerous occasions – and by some reports more than any other leader. Last year many Catholic priests, nuns and officials were deported by the Israeli government due to the help that they were giving Palestinian “militants” (terrorists). Connections have also been made that link the IRA (a very Catholic oriented terrorists group) with training and helping Palestinian terrorist groups.

The End of the Matter

“*Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen*”. We look forward to that day when that astonishingly wicked and corrupt system of worship is brought down, along with the Roman – “Eternal” - city that is her figure head. “*Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more*” (Rev. 18:21). But until then we see a system that has been revitalized in arrogance and influence – greatly due to the instrument known as John Paul II. We hope that the event of his death will renew Christadelphian interest in the part that “the Church” plays in the prophetic word as the Great Apostasy, “the Man of Sin”, “the False Prophet”, the “little horn” of Daniel 7, the “beast of the Sea” of Revelation 13, and the “Harlot” of Revelation 17. No matter who is chosen to be the next Pope and no matter what his age or the ideology he promotes, he will no doubt build upon the efforts of his predecessor. Let us continue to watch!

A. Thomas

Editorial Flyleaf

As evidenced by the publication of this issue, the Sanctuary-Keeper continues on. We very much appreciate the many encouraging letters that we have received, and more important – your subscriptions. This is a small effort but we hope that it can be of value and use to help strengthen the promotion of The Truth in these last days. We have received inquiries on how donations may be made but we would like to handle that the same way that the previous editor (Jim Stanton) handled it. That is, instead of sending donations it would be better to make a subscription for someone that you think would profit from getting the magazine. For the time being we are on financially stable ground and to continue to build our subscription base would be of more benefit to the effort than to ask for additional funds. We would like to express our sincere thanks for those who sent in extra contributions with their subscription.

As of the publishing of this issue of the S.K. we have not yet received the results from the NASU committee as to the tally of ecclesias that have either accepted or rejected the NASU initiative. There is not much more that can be said at this point, but it certainly will be interesting to see how the numbers are interpreted by the NASU committee. We have been encouraged by the many Unamended ecclesias that have made their opposition known by mailing out statements throughout the community. What was especially encouraging was to see several ecclesias stand behind the BUSF by declaring it as their

“exclusive” basis of fellowship. Statements of opposition that we are aware of include: Austin, TX (Circle Drive); Conway, AR; Dallas, TX; Del Rio, TX; Evansville, IN; Richmond, VA (Forest Hill); Fort Smith, AR; Henderson, KY; North Little Rock, AR; Los Angeles, CA; Minneapolis, MN (South); Mississippi; Monroe, LA; Mt. Sherman, KY; N.W. Arkansas (Rogers); Orlando, FL; Plymouth, MA; Quincy, MA; Republic, MO; San Antonio, TX; St. Louis, MO; Tri-City, Arkansas; Tulsa, OK; Village, IL; Hamilton, ON (West Avenue); and Worcester, MA.

In recent correspondence with a young brother one of the NASU committee members attempted to downplay the public opposition that has been expressed by stating, “One observation we might make is that the very public responses of some (mostly very small) ecclesias, which were copied to all Unamended ecclesias, are not representative of the community as a whole. Most ecclesias did not copy their responses to everyone.” Clearly the NASU wishes to downplay the legitimacy of the opposition by referring to such as being “mostly very small”. In looking at the above list it will be seen that there are also some fairly sizable ecclesias listed. But when it comes to Truth against error what difference do numbers make? Clearly the numbers issue has been important for those who have promoted the NASU, and it is obvious that they will continue to use the issue to squelch the voice of opposition. And, how they define “the community as a whole” should be under serious

analysis. It is our understanding that many in the Amended community are supportive of the NASU initiative – and why shouldn't they when the format of the NASU is favorable to their position? If you include the Amended and Unamended together as the “whole” then yes we are outnumbered. But, if we are speaking of just the Unamended community (which should be our primary concern) it is already very clear that the NASU is in serious trouble. Even if a degree of accomplishment or “victory” is declared by the NASU committee – there are no winners when Truth has been compromised and unnecessary strife and division is being imposed. If they want numbers, then let them have their numbers, but leave the rest of us whose desire is the preservation of the Truth in peace.

For those who do not have e-mail or internet access an unfortunate controversy arose within the past few weeks when it was discovered that there was a Christadelphian web site being sponsored by two brothers out of Arkansas that were posting some reflections and correspondence from a “brother” of the Christadelphian community who had joined the National Guard and was serving over in Iraq on active duty. His comments were posted as “spiritual lessons” from a “brother” serving in Iraq. This “brother's” service was very much cast in a positive light on the web site, and considering the Christadelphian communities continual stand as conscientious objectors in relation to military service (Doctrines to be Rejected - #35) the discovery was

quite a shock. All one had to do to find the web site was to type in the words “Unamended Christadelphia” on a search engine and a link to the site came right up. Any draft board or government agency would be able to easily find the site, and considering the thoroughness of our Government when conducting background checks such a thing would not bode well for a brother or sister making a plea of “Conscientious Objection”. This site had been in operation since last summer, but fortunately due to the resulting outcry the portion in relation to “Iraq” was removed – though there still exists comments from the “brother” in question that relate to his military service. Brethren, these things ought not to be so within our community.

We were recently blessed with the opportunity to attend this year's annual Monroe, LA Fraternal Gathering. The theme verse came from Hebrews 11:13, providing the basis for the lectures and classes given. The gathering was well attended, the fellowship most enjoyable and profitable, and the hospitality and natural care provided by the brothers and sisters of the Monroe ecclesia greatly appreciated. During the Gathering we were pleased to witness another one of Adam's race come out of the Constitution of Sin into the Constitution of Righteousness by putting on the saving name of Jesus Christ through the waters of baptism. After a good confession of her faith Lindsey Sanders, daughter of bro. Mark and sis. Candy Sanders was immersed by her grandfather bro. Lamar Sanders. (A.T.)

COURAGE BROTHER

Courage Brother, do not stumble
Though thy path be dark as night.
There's a star to guide the humble
Trust in God and do the right.

Let the road be rough and dreary,
And its end far out of sight.
Foot it bravely, strong or weary,
Trust in God and do the right.

Perish policy and cunning,
Perish all that fears the light.
Whether winning, whether losing.
Trust in God and do the right.

Trust no party, sect or faction,
Trust no leaders in the fight,
But in Every word and action,
Trust in God and do the right.

Trust no lovely forms of passion,
Foes may look like angels bright.
Trust no custom, school or fashion.
Trust in God and do the right.

Simple rule and safest guiding,
Inward peace and inward might,
Star upon our path abiding.
Trust in God and do the right.

Some will hate thee, some will love thee,
Some will flatter, some will slight,
Cease from man and look above thee,
Trust in God and do the right.

He (Deity) has granted a dispensation to no set of men to worship Him “according to the dictates of their own conscience”. This is a liberty and right that He has granted to none. All that He has granted is liberty to enter His august presence and to do Him worship according to the dictates of His word. All else is mere “will worship and voluntary humility,” of which He has recorded His contempt (Col 2:23) - John Thomas, Eureka.
