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THE SANCTUARY-KEEPER

P.O. BOX 302

Greenbrier, AR 72058

THE SANCTUARY~KEEPER



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

HABAKKUK'S PRAYER & PSALM OF CONQUEST AND GLORY

Also

COMPROMISE

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF AGAPE LOVE

THE TRUE DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE

SHOULD BELIEVERS VOTE OR PARTICIPATE IN POLITICS?

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

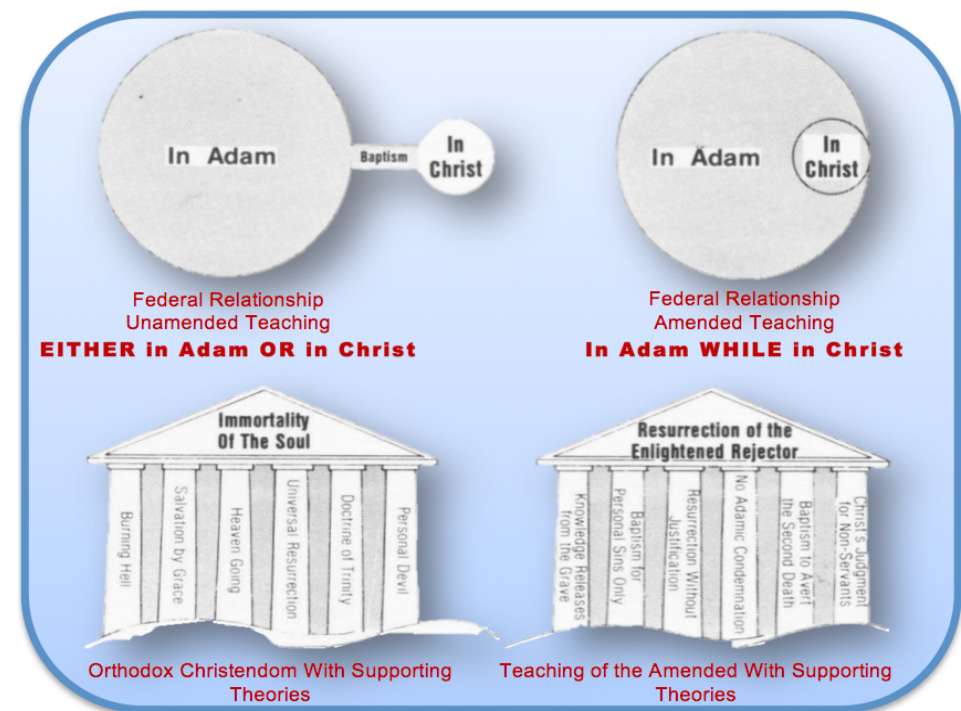
Contents

- p. 1 Compromise
- p. 7 Practical Applications of Agape Love
- p. 16 Amos 1:3
- p. 17 Habakkuk's Prayer & Psalm of Conquest and Glory
- p. 27 Fellowship and Division
- p. 28 The True Definition of Marriage
- p. 35 The Number "4"
- P. 37 Should Believers Vote or Participate in Politics?
- p. 41 From Darkness to Light
- p. 45 Greater Hamilton Exclusively Unamended "Follow Up"
- p. 48 Editorial Flyleaf

Back Cover: Subscription Notice

The Sanctuary-Keeper is published on a quarterly basis at \$10.00 per (U.S.) funds. The doctrinal position of this magazine is founded exclusively on the principles of Bible Truth as outlined and defined in The Christadelphian Unamended Statement of Faith. Subscriptions, correspondence and materials submitted for publication should be sent to the editors/publishers via email or the physical address of **"The Sanctuary-Keeper", P.O. Box 302, Greenbrier, AR 72058**

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THE ORIGIN AND EXTENT OF THE KINGDOM OF MEN

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

THE FEET OF THE IMAGE

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

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE IMAGE

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



THE SANCTUARY ~ KEEPER

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The Holy Scriptures*

"Ye shall keep the charge of the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar"

Num. 18:5

"Ye are...an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices."

I Peter 2:5

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

VOLUME 25

WINTER, 2015

NUMBER 4

COMPROMISE

THE Book of Judges stands as one of many sobering lessons of human spiritual failure in the presence of great spiritual gifts and benefits. The outstanding phrase found in the book, which we are all aware of, states - *"In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes."* There was in fact a ruler - but it was He who was and is invisible to the natural senses - Yahweh Himself. It was His people, rescued from the bonds of Egyptian slavery and deemed as even His "Firstborn", a "peculiar" or purchased people that stood as a great treasure to Yahweh; and it was His Nation that was to stand as a separate/holy nation apart from the descending and earthy nature of the Gentile kingdoms and people in belief and practice. There was no other people that have been rescued on such a large scale and in such a miraculous manner, and there has been no other nation whose conquests were to be so thorough in order to wipe the Land clean of ALL Gentile presence and influence.

To provide more context to our consideration, we need to mention that The Book of Judges itself fits into a recorded history that typifies the work of Christ as well as the state of the Christ ecclesia. There are four books in sequence that point to both the 1st and 2nd advents of Christ and the spiritual circumstances preceding and following those advents - Joshua, Judges, Ruth and the Books of Samuel.

Joshua is a book of salvation, which directly points to the 2nd appearance of Christ when the Gentile Sin Power is destroyed and the Christ ecclesia is saved out of death. We also see a direct correlation with Christ's atoning work at his 1st appearance - that which makes it possible for each individual Israelite (natural and spiritual) to gain their inheritance. Joshua conquered the reigning sin powers as did Christ conquer sin's flesh (Heb. 2:14) in his own self; and will ultimately destroy the political and religious manifestation of Sin by obliterating the Kingdom of Men. During his leadership Joshua acted as a force of righteousness, as we are told, "*And Israel served Yahweh all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that over lived Joshua (Josh. 24:31).*" The book of Judges goes on to record Israel's inability to maintain such righteousness through fulness of bread, self-satisfaction, and intermingling with the Gentile influences. So to, following Christ's ascension to the right hand of his Father, and the passing away of the Apostles, the Spiritual-Israelite ecclesia abused and corrupted access to the great inheritance that was set before them as a matter of promise. In the book of Ruth, we find a beautiful record of individuals who manifested outstanding faith, courage and kindness during a time of evil and great turbulence. Once we arrive to the record of Samuel we see a nation in spiritual and civil confusion due to a lack of leadership and clear vision. But this condition was displaced by the organization, consolidation and expansion of the kingdom under David - a man after God's own heart. Likewise, God's only begotten son will regather and rule over a united Israel, destroying and subjecting Gentile power with justice, and righteousness being the absolute standard of his reign.

We now live in a time antitypical of the historical record that came after the epoch of Joshua, but also preceding it. First, we see such a pattern played out by the 1st Century Ecclesia when it soon descended into apostasy after the passing of the Apostles - except for a very small remnant that separated itself. After a restoration of the Apostolic Faith in the mid 1800's, we find the Christ Ecclesia in a state of confusion and disrepair - compromised and corrupted. But it is our responsibility to stand up as those faithful few, such as the Judges, Boaz, Ruth or even Samuel, to continue our efforts to gain the inheritance promised while we await the Captain of our Salvation to lead us into the inheritance promised.

There is a recurring pattern found in the account of the Judges. The title of the book itself is from the verb "*to put right and then rule.*" The overriding pattern is one of SIN, SUFFERING, CORRECTION and SALVATION. And when such salvation occurred it was always done through elements of perceived weakness - *A left handed man and a dagger; An ox goad; a tent peg at the hands of a woman; three hundred with pitchers and lamps; an old woman and a stone; Jephtah - the social outcast; the jawbone of an ass; and deliverance at the hands of a blind man.*

But the underlying principal that led to Sin and Suffering in the first place was the spirit of **COMPROMISE**. The word itself means - *an agreement or a settlement of a dispute that is reached by each side making concessions*. But another definition, which provides additional clarity as demonstrated throughout Scriptural history - "***to bring into disrepute or danger by indiscreet, foolish, or reckless behavior.***" Such involves a compromise with sinful influence - whether it be on a personal or national level. But making concessions or compromise by reckless behavior is not something that we are at liberty to do as followers of Yahweh. His commands are specific and

His principles are all-pervading. In the case of the Children of Israel such compromise was strictly prohibited.

- **Exodus 23:32** - *“thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods. They shall not dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin against Me: for if thou serve their gods, it will surely be a snare unto thee.”*
- **Deut. 20:16** - *“But of the cities of these people, which the LORD thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth; But thou shalt utterly destroy them; namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.”*

But God’s commands were not strictly adhered to, and compromise was made. Ironically, the elements of sin do not compromise with the spirit of righteousness and obedience but continue to act as a weight that pulls downward until complete capitulation is achieved. **Psalms 106:34-36** - *“They did not destroy the nations concerning whom Yahweh commanded them: but were mingled among the heathen and learned their works, and served their idols: which were a snare unto them.”*

Moses foretold of a time (Deut. 32:15) when *“Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, and thou art grown thick, and thou art covered with fatness, then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.”* As much as we may desire compromise with the world along with success, strength and ease of life that such brings, we are repeatedly taught throughout the Scriptures that such is fatal to our spiritual wellbeing and fosters an extremely compromised condition.

When the ecclesia or called out ones ever feel self-sufficient or self confident in their own intellect, degree of righteousness, power of persuasion over or resistance to evil then that is when we are in fact at our weakest and when we are most likely to fall into compromise and failure (1st Cor. 10:12). The Israelites thought themselves to be strong, and they were, but they were not invincible - morally or otherwise. *“Yet it came to pass, when the Children of Israel were waxen strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute, but did not utterly drive them out.”* (Joshua 17:13)."

They thought that they could manage the Gentiles that were being allowed to live in the land. Having the upper hand they would initially see no threat. But they were wrong, grossly overestimating their ability to manage the influence...to manage the compromise. Through an attitude of SPIRITUAL RECKLESSNESS AND A LACK OF SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT they would have seen or discerned no danger in the defeated Gentiles that remained among them. Co-existence would lead to commerce and socialization, which would develop into enjoying their entertainments and religious practices. This process of descent has been continually repeated and is therefore quite predictable.

But have we, the modern day Ecclesia, also been reckless; grossly overestimating our own abilities to manage all that this world has to offer us? The answer to that is sadly obvious. We too, based upon our standing in relation to THE TRUTH can adopt an attitude of strength and invincibility or simply a sense of comfort or familiarity with our environment, giving us the false sense of spiritual security and confidence. This too is a failure in spiritual discernment. But we cannot succeed by repeating the mistakes of the Israelites. THE TRUTH does make us strong, it does put

us in a special position/relationship before our Heavenly Father. But such strength, status and comfort can only be maintained when compromise is resisted and our connection to the SOURCE of such strength is relentlessly guarded.

The spirit of compromise has very much plagued the modern day Christ ecclesia, giving way to influences that make it very difficult at times to differentiate a difference between ourselves and the world. Though we may not manifest the most horrid of worldly activities in our daily lives, we have to understand that we can still be living in a compromised, worldly condition. How we spend our time, how we think, how we speak, what affections we have and demonstrate - such can appear rather tame, but still be very much in tune with the spirit of this world. We wonder why we have problems in the Brotherhood today, but if we understand the subtle nature of spiritual compromise the answer is not difficult to understand.

Compromise and league with the Gentiles was a point of contention for Ezra and Nehemiah's day as well, in the efforts for the restoration of an Israelite colony in the Land. It acted as a canker weakening the very foundation of the Israelite hope and acting as a fatal drag upon the zeal and strength of the nation. But those of the Nehemiah class were not willing to compromise - not with the world **or even those within their own camp who had embraced the spirit of compromise**. Nehemiah's righteous zeal was demonstrated clearly when the local Gentiles (out of a spirit of deception) wished to help the Israelites in the reconstruction of Jerusalem's walls. What was Nehemiah's answer? - *"ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem."* How could Nehemiah be so seemingly "heartless" to repulse the appearance of "goodwill" of their neighbors (and it was only an appearance)? The principle and answer is found in Paul's statement : (2nd Cor. 6:14) *"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"*

There is no room for compromise afforded Believers of any age in the Scriptures. This goes for the world as well as any false spirits that arise with the Christ ecclesia itself. In regard to the world, we often hear the excuses, *"well we have to work among them, they are our neighbors, or we socialize with them so that we can have a positive influence on them, etc.,etc."* We may have to work among them, but it is not our place to socialize among them, to immerse ourselves in their recreations and entertainments, and to compromise ourselves for the sake of good business practices and "neighborliness". Such a spirit of separateness certainly has its negative consequences in regard to present status and comfort - as it has for Believers throughout the Ages. But such consequences do not compare to the ruin that comes from mixing light and darkness into some kind of form of grey. James stated in no plainer terms - *"the friendship with the world is enmity with God."*

There is an enormous challenge before us to, as the saying goes, *"be in the world but not of it."* We certainly cannot physically eliminate the sin influences of this world this side of Christ's return, and we are not at liberty to escape to isolation at the farthest reaches of the globe as our interaction with this world are a necessary part of our trial and spiritual development. But, we also are not to invite worldly influence and philosophy into our lives beyond what is absolutely necessary, and we are to exercise an extraordinary degree of discernment as to the dangers before us. As Christ commanded his apostles - *"be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."* What can

we control? We are required to control our thinking and affections, our friendships, our sources of entertainment, our use of our spare time and even the choice of employment to a certain extent. We are also to control our associations with those within the Household that have chosen to embrace and/or promote compromise in its various manifestations. To not be willing to compromise certainly comes with extremely difficult consequences, especially in an Age that functions on such a principle.

There is a repeated phrase found in the book of Judges - *“the Canaanites dwelt among them.”* But before too long, instead of the Canaanites being under tribute to the Israelites, the tables were turned and the Israelites became subservient to the heathen. We read in Judges 1:34 - *“the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain; for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley.”* (As a matter of hope, Zechariah revealed that *“there shall be no more Canaanite in the house of God”* 14:21).

Once the influences were not driven out of the Israelite ecclesia God stated (Judges 2:20-22) - *“I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died, that through them I may prove Israel whether they will keep the way of Yahweh to walk there in as their fathers did keep it, or not.”* This was a precise test to see of their spiritual fidelity and discernment - AND WHAT A TEST IT WAS. Very few were able to pass such a test.

Something similar comes to our mind when we read 1st Cor. 1:18,19 - *“For first of all, when ye come together in the ecclesia, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it (or I believe it of some part of you). For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.”* Such does not provide an excuse for error to be allowed to exist within the ecclesia, as some modern day Brethren would claim. (The Scriptures are very clear as to how error is to be handled and removed.) But, like the Children of Israel who did not carry out their duty; so to in the modern ecclesia, the tolerance of such things then turns into a test as to who is truly faithful in carrying out scriptural duty and resisting compromise, and those who are not willing or able to discern the danger.

Back in the Book of Judges, in the 3rd verse of the 3rd chapter, there are four specific nations that are mentioned as being left by Yahweh to prove the Israelites (though there are six more specific names given in the 5th verse). Out of these four, only one (the Philistines) posed a true military threat to Israel as the other three were not warlike. So Israel was not to be tried necessarily by military belligerence at first (that would of course come when they had been weakened) but by a threat more insidious and destructive than belligerent force. They were to be compromised and brought down by those influences that would appeal to the emotions and to the lust of the flesh. Such are the very same influences that we face without and within the Household.

The Philistines name means “an immigrant”, “migratory”. It also has been used to mean “to roll in the dust”. This was an earthy people, a war-like people, whose main deities were Dagon (the fish god); Ashteroth (sexual immorality) and Baalzebub (“lord of the flies” or dunghill). They later were labeled with the name “the uncircumcised”, which implied their contempt for the right of circumcision - an act of cleansing and

token of the Abrahamic Covenant.

The Canaanite name signified “to bend the knee”, “to bring down” and is rendered a “merchant and trafficker”. When the word is divided into two (according to Bullinger) it is also the “poor of the flock”. So through its corrupt practices it made merchandise of the “poor of the flock” - bending the knee of their opposition. They were the original settlers of Sodom and Gomorrah. Therefore the dangers of their influence should be obviously noticed. Through political and economic skill they were more dangerous than military might; and through flattery, greed and lust were able to overthrow the Israelites.

The Sidonian name signified “to lie in wait”, “to catch”, a “hunter”. They were cunning people that dwelt care free - quiet and secure. They had no formal judicial system of law and therefore VERY FREE to pursue their hearts desire. Such stands in contrast to the People of God who are to live according to the precise rule of Divine Law.

The Hivites signify “a villager”. These were a simple, happy go-lucky people. It was these that attempted to make league with Jacob through marriage to Dinah. They did not succeed in their attempts with Jacob and his sons, but they later would through his descendants.

Conclusion

It is easy to identify those dangers to ourselves and/or the Christ Ecclesia that are belligerent, but not those which are far more subtle, insidious and pleasant by all appearances. We no longer live under the hostile force of Catholicism (though it is still very much a spiritual threat and enemy), but in a world that is full of the lust of the flesh, lust of the eye and the pride of life in a relatively peaceful and accepting manifestation. When we, like the Israelites, live among and in friendship and affection with such influences we do so at great spiritual peril. 1st John 5:19 plainly states - *“The whole world lieth in wickedness.”* Do we really believe this? Do we understand it? Do we sense it with every fiber of our being? Or do we make exceptions and excuses for it, picking and choosing for ourselves that which we find pleasant or as something that we can “handle”? Fear can also be a driver of spiritual compromise - fear of losing the respect or friendship of others (even of fellow brethren) or the fear of losing present position and comfort. As the Apostle stated - “there is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear...” (1st John 4:18). The following article will deal in detail with the principal of love/agape. Our ability to develop a complete and full love for God and His ways will determine the degree in which we are able to resist the powerful tendency towards spiritual compromise, and its result of spiritual ruin.

A. Thomas

“For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous.” - 1st John 5:3

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF AGAPE LOVE αγάπη



BROTHER John Peake authored an article entitled “As I Have Loved You” in the book *Reflections on the Truth of God*. His article was based on this verse in John 15:12 – “*This is my commandment. That ye love one another, as I have loved you*”. Consideration of this verse leads to a very humbling self-inspection of one’s personal manifestation of the subject of AGAPE love in a believer’s life.

There are many aspects of love that are addressed in the Scriptures. There is the love that Yahweh has for his creation, the love for His only begotten Son, the love that Christ has for His Father, the love that Christ has for His brethren, the love that the sons and daughters have for Yahweh and for Christ, the love that believers have for each other, the love between a husband and his wife and the love between a parent and a child. In the opinion of the author, the scriptural love between brethren may be the hardest to consistently manifest in the probationary life of God’s servants. The practical manifestations of this type of spiritual love between the brethren of Christ will be the focus for the remaining comments in this article.

This subject and this type of study requires first and foremost a very comprehensive self-inspection. This type of subject makes one harshly realize one’s own shortcomings. As we study this verse in John 15:12 and all of the ways in which this verse could be applied to our lives, we quickly realize that a simple knowledge of the subject of AGAPE is not enough to say that doctrinally correct AGAPE is being correctly manifested.

We find this quote from Brother Thomas Williams on page 45 of the book entitled *Selected Works of Thomas Williams*. “*The truth is a glorious theme if believed and obeyed with all the heart. It is a duty to sound it out to a perishing world, and to hold it fast in its purity. But to simply teach it and believe it as a mere theory, without enkindling in the heart the love thereof, is as tasteless as the white of an egg without salt.*”

It is extremely important for us to understand some basic principles regarding this divine subject. We also need to consider some practical applications regarding the manifestation of AGAPE in regard to some of the problems that exist in the Household today. The examples that will be discussed are derived from real life events in regard to the problems within today’s Christ Body of believers.

I want to make a few statements at the beginning so that no one will misunderstand

where I stand on certain matters and issues that we face in the ecclesias of this generation.

- I believe that the first greatest commandment is to always love Yahweh with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength and that the second greatest commandment is to love our neighbor as ourselves.
- I believe that we should always defend the Truth even to the sacrifice of all that we hold dear.
- We should never sacrifice our convictions of the Truth
- Everything else is secondary to our work in the Lord's vineyard.

Let us look at a few basic doctrines regarding this subject:

1. The definition of AGAPE Love that will be used for these comments is- Doing what one can in a spiritual manner for the good of a brother or sister's spiritual welfare.
2. I John 4:16 - And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. **God is love**; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.
3. Matthew 22:36-40 – Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.
4. Exodus 20:6 - And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me (Yahweh), and keep my commandments.
5. John 14:15 - If ye love me (Christ), keep my commandments.
6. John 15:12 - This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.
7. I John 5:2 – By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments.
8. Ephesians 5:1-2 - Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor.
9. I John 4:10-11 - Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought (have a moral obligation- BH) also to love one another.

Let us now turn to 1st John. This epistle which was written by the disciple that Christ loved the most, provides a huge amount of instruction in regard to this subject of AGAPE love. This is an illustration of what we find in this little book.

- 1st John 2:5 – The keeping of God's commandments is how AGAPE is

manifested in our lives.

- 1st John 3:1 – The outcome of God’s AGAPE is that we become his sons and daughters.
- 1st John 3:14-15 – The correctness and consistency of our manifestation of correct AGAPE will determine our status when standing before Christ when he returns.
- 1st John 3:18 – We must understand and practice a practical application of this AGAPE love
- 1st John 4:7 – A correct manifestation of AGAPE love shows that we are truly begotten of God.
- 1st John 4:8 – A correct manifestation of AGAPE love shows our intimate knowledge of Yahweh and His requirements
- 1st John 4:9-10 – We see the ultimate definition of AGAPE with the example of God providing His Son to be our propitiation.
- 1st John 4:20 – We are liars if we say that we Love God, but do not AGAPE our Brethren
- 1st John 5:1-3 – If we love God and keep His commandments, then we must love the brethren

In regard to our responsibility to those who are not walking the straight and narrow way of the truth, Brother Robert Roberts makes these statements in an exhortation in Volume 1 of *Seasons of Comfort* entitled Love and Doctrine – pages 124 – 127. He uses the verse in Galatians 6:10 to put forth these comments.

“Does he therefore, shut up his bowels of compassion against those who are without God? By no means. He recognizes the obligation put upon him by the same law, to salute not his brethren only, but to do good unto all men, as he has opportunity, even to his enemies. **But there is a difference between doing good to unbelievers and cultivating friendships with them;** and the saint is careful to observe this difference, lest he come under the rebuke that greeted the ears of Jehoshaphat, on his return from friendly cooperation with Ahab, *“Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? Therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord”* (2 Chronicles 19:2). **We can have our conversation towards the world in all courtesy and benevolence without going on to their ground, and joining affinity in schemes of pleasure, profit, or friendship.**”

I believe that we should apply these same concepts to those in the Body who are erring in their walk or their doctrine or in their fellowship practices. We must realize that there is a balance in these matters. We cannot walk the same ground, we cannot take the same paths and we cannot believe the same false doctrines as those in opposition to God. However, we cannot ignore their spiritual needs either. If there is any way to use the Word of God along with the characteristics of Christ to provide counsel, warnings and edification to the errorists of today, then we should find that way. We also must realize that those that we may try to counsel, warn or edify may not want any part of our edification. In these instances, all we can do is pray for these erring brethren.

In the same article Brother Roberts continues - "Apostolic "love" is that state of enlightenment and appreciation in relation to the things of God that impels a man to be "a doer of the word"". The Scriptures teach us that in order to be a "doer of the word", we must keep the commandments of God, especially being obedient to the two greatest commandments.

We wish to now discuss some practical applications where we can strive to manifest the AGAPE love that is required between the brethren of Christ. We all know that in this generation the Body of Christ is splintered in many and diver's ways during these last days of Gentile times. Many of us are estranged from brethren to whom we were once very close. There are brethren who may personally offend us. There are brethren who are adding to and taking away from God's Word. There are brethren who are drawing other brethren away from the straight and narrow path. There are brethren who are totally opposed to an understanding of the Truth of God. There are brethren who we may not want to even be associated.

I hope and pray that as we contemplate these practical aspects of the manifestation of AGAPE manifestation that none will think that I am either accusing or pointing a finger at anyone. That we are commanded to "Strengthen the Things That Remain". With an honest examination of our individual actions in regard to the problems within the Christ Body, Lord willing, we can mutually strengthen each other and be a good Christ like example to those around us.

Practical aspects of manifesting *AGAPE*

Our verse that provided the foundation for these words of exhortation is John 15:12 - *"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you."* How did Christ love us? We see in the example of Christ that He always did these things for the benefit of His brethren. As Brother Peake stated in Reflection on the Truth of God - page 16 - *"True and endearing spiritual AGAPE love must involve practical virtues"*. Christ always manifested the qualities of AGAPE love in the most practical manner. In John 15:10, He states - *"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."* The root of Christ's love for His brethren was His love for His Father. Do we allow our love for the Father to stimulate us to manifest the correct love for our brethren? Do we earnestly seek to develop a love of the brethren for the same reasons and on the same basis that produced Jesus' love for His brethren?

Additional comment from Brother John Peake - Reflections of the Truth of God - page 112:

"The command to love our neighbor as one's self can be obeyed, even though no sentiment may be involved. Service both to God and on behalf of one's neighbor is required of us; but the service, whether or not sentiment plays a part, should be of such a kind that it will benefit the recipient in his relationship to God. We are not commanded to serve our neighbor's purely selfish needs or desires; this would not please God, but could possibly be displeasing to Him. Furthermore, it may

very well become impossible to have a sentimental attraction to our neighbor, since some neighbors (even brethren or sisters in Christ) can become almost impossible to like from the standpoint of human attraction. However, we can still render them any service within our powers that would be related to their eternal welfare. On the contrary, it is not a matter of showing love to our neighbor (brother or sister) to encourage such in doing what could endanger that person's hopes for salvation. Even a Scripturally inspired rebuke (2 Timothy 4:2) for wrong attitude or walk, while unpleasant to the one being rebuked, can be an act of true, Scriptural love.”

Another comment from Robert Roberts, Seasons of Comfort – Volume 1 - The Beauty of Christ.

“The love of Christ is not a mere phrase with the true saint; it is a reality – the leading sentiment of his mind. There is not a more powerful motive among men – nay, I will say, that as regards enduring effort and unconquerable perseverance, there is no motive among men at all equal to the love of Christ. Nothing binds men so firmly together as a mutual and concurring love of Christ; and nothing divides them so effectually as difference in sentiment with regard to Christ. The saint has every reason to love Christ. ... A right acquaintance with him will embrace all the features of his beauty, and will lead to the imitation of each of them in our own characters; for He is the example set for us to copy. The omission of any causes defect. Some try to imitate his kindness while forgetting his zeal. Others copy his severity while failing to remember his gentleness. Others extol his placability and charity while overlooking his righteousness and jealousy of the Father’s honor.”

Christ was perfectly balanced in his manifestation of this divine characteristic. We need to strive to remember His balanced actions. It is our duty and commandment to keep the manifestation and declaration of our Truth as pure as possible in our Ecclesial environments. However, we must always do so by manifesting all of the characteristics of Christ, not just the easier ones to follow.

How did Christ show His love for His brethren?

- He taught through His word and through His example.
- He shepherded
- He counseled
- He admonished and He never condoned behavior that was contrary to God’s will
- He warned
- He was longsuffering
- He was forgiving when there was repentance
- He was merciful
- He continued in prayer for His brethren until the day of His death

- He was compassionate

What are some ways that we can manifest AGAPE Love towards our brethren?

WHEN POSSIBLE, WE SHOULD ALWAYS BE READY TO HELP OUR BRETHREN REMOVE THEMSELVES FROM EVIL.

Jude 1:20-23 - *“But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.”*

Jude is telling us to discern the difference between those who are in doubt and may listen to the reasoning from the Word of God and those who are so stubbornly set in their prideful ways that no amount of reasoning can convince them of their un-Scriptural way of life. The problem for us is to learn how to be wise enough to know the difference. We need to help those who want to be helped, but not allow ourselves to be drug into the fires of apostate doctrines and false beliefs, either from those outside the Truth or those in the Truth.

WE SHOULD ALWAYS INSTRUCT OUR BRETHREN WITH THE GOAL OF RECOVERING THEM.

2nd Timothy 2:22-26 - *“Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”*

WE SHOULD TEACH AND ADMONISH EACH OTHER USING THE WISDOM OF THE WORD OF CHRIST AND DO ALL TO THE GLORY OF THE FATHER.

Colossians 3:16-17 - *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”*

THERE SHOULD BE NO CORRUPT COMMUNICATION IN REGARD TO OUR ERRING BRETHREN.

Ephesians 4:29 - *“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”*

WE SHOULD REMEMBER THE POWER OF THE TONGUE IN OUR DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN AND ABOUT OUR BRETHREN.

James 3:8 - *“But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.”*

WE SHOULD ALWAYS BE READY AND ABLE TO GIVE AN ANSWER FOR THE HOPE THAT LIETH WITHIN US.

2 Timothy 4:2 – Preach the word in favorable and unfavorable situations. I Peter 3:15 - *“Always be ready to give an answer for the hope that lieth within you.”*

I don't think that these two verses are only speaking of the opportunities that we have with those outside the Truth. We should be ready to speak of our hope and our understanding of the requirements that are set before us whenever the opportunity arises.

WE SHOULD NOT WORRY ABOUT WHAT SOME THINK OF US, RATHER, WE SHOULD BE CONCERNED WITH WHAT JESUS AND GOD THINK OF US. If we worry about what man thinks of us, we will usually respond in a flesh like manner. If we practice and manifest true AGAPE, then our thoughts will be on pleasing God and Christ. Philippians 4:8 - *“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”*

THERE SHOULD NEVER BE ANY MALICE OR HATRED TOWARDS ANY BROTHER OR SISTER.

- 1 Corinthians 5:8 - *“Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”*
- 1 Corinthians 14:20 - *“Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.”*
- Ephesians 4:31 - *“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:”*
- Colossians 3:8 - *“But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.”*
- Titus 3:3 - *“For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.”*
- 1Peter 2:1 - *“Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings...”*

WE SHOULD NEVER USE SARCASM, HURTFUL JOKES OR JESTING IN REGARD TO OUR BRETHREN. Eph 5:4 - *“Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.”*

WE SHOULD NEVER CARRY A GRUDGE AGAINST OUR BRETHREN.

- Leviticus 19:18 - *“Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the LORD.”*
- James 5:9 - *“Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.”*

WE SHOULD DO GOOD TO ALL MEN, ESPECIALLY THOSE OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH.

Galatians 6:10 - *“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”*

WE SHOULD NOT RECOMPENSE TO OUR BRETHREN EVIL FOR EVIL.

Romans 12:17 - *“Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.”*

WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR THE ERRING BROTHER/SISTER

Romans 10:1-4 - *“Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.”*

Do we have this same desire and continual prayer that our erring brethren may see the error of their ways? I fully believe that Paul continually counseled and warned the faithful of his age to remain separate to those who were in opposition to the Truth. However, I also believe that through his love for the brethren, he would have taken advantage of every opportunity to help the erring brother/sister recover from their spiritual failings.

IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN THE REMNANT, WE SHOULD MAKE SURE THAT THE FOCUS AND SUBJECT OF OUR DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE BRETHREN SHOULD BE MORE CENTERED ON THE WORD OF GOD THAN ON THE PROBLEMS OF INDIVIDUAL BRETHREN OR ECCLESIAS.

Malachi 3:16 - *“Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.”*

WE SHOULD NOT RUN DOWN A BROTHER OR SISTER WHO HAS STRAYED FROM THE PURITY OF THE GOSPEL.

Identify the problem, confirm the accuracy of the matter and try to snatch the brother from the fires of apostasy. Warn him and all others who may be impacted by the leaven and then move/press forward. If a new and different manifestation of the error emerges, then we should continue to warn those impacted by the errors and

continue to try to work with the brother in error, providing they will allow continual counseling. If they won't allow it, then all we can do is continue to pray that the brother/sister in error may see the matter from a scriptural standpoint and that they may become truly repentant in order that Yahweh will forgive them for their doctrinal errors and the harm that they may have caused the brotherhood.

Brother Jim Stanton, in the book titled "We Have an Advocate" – page 153, states *"Our love, our interest, our concern for the welfare of another is shown when we think enough of him to make the effort to detour him from a wayward trend."*

As we consider Christ's commandment to love our brethren as He has loved us, there is one powerful practical work that we should practice. Select the one individual from the Body with whom we are having the most problems with and examine ourselves to see if we are manifesting the same type of love toward that person as we pray that Yahweh and Christ are manifesting towards us. The Scriptures tell us that it is easy to AGAPE those who AGAPE us. What about those brethren who do not appear to AGAPE us? Do we treat them the same way or do we overcome that urge common to all mankind? Again, Brother Jim Stanton states on page 159 of the same book – "The AGAPE love that is required of us should be manifested to the brethren regardless if that AGAPE love is reciprocated back to us."

This subject of love is a complex matter to fully understand because it brings us to the very character of God Almighty. I think all of us should be able to understand the requirements of AGAPE. The hard matter is to apply these divine requirements in situations that are full of human emotions, good and bad. The manifestation of AGAPE love requires the brethren of Christ, individually and collectively, to understand that there is a balance that must be achieved. We should not demonstrate an attitude of tolerance of things that are in opposition to God's will, but we cannot be so intolerant that we do not manifest the correct measure of patience, endurance and long-suffering when opportunity arises. Where is this line? I don't know if it can be totally defined for each situation that we face or for each brother or sister in their own personal lives. I think the common agent in these matters is this question – "Are we helping or hindering a brother or sister into the Kingdom?" We can only answer that question for ourselves, not for anyone else.

In this age of liberality and every man doing what is right in his own eyes, the concept of Love may be used as an excuse for toleration of doctrinal errors and acts of un-Christ like behavior. It has been stated that those who stand against the errorists are harsh and unloving. Those brethren who make this statement are basically stating that they know the heart and intent of those who see a need to contend against the errorists of the day. Nobody knows the heart and intent other than Yahweh and Christ.

There comes a time when we have to warn, counsel, rebuke, reprove and maybe even separate from the errorists in our midst. If we are faced with these situations in our Ecclesias, in our Gatherings and in our Bible Schools, then we have to manifest true AGAPE love and help these erring brethren to the best of our ability. When the brethren have to take action on these matters, it should always be done with the hope

and continual prayer that the errorists may see the errors of their ways, if and when they change their direction and return to the one Truth, they should be welcomed back in true AGAPE love.

In closing, I would like for us to think about one more practical test that we could make part of our lives. Read I Corinthians 13 and read it with your name inserted into every verse. Hopefully, this test will help us to recognize any personal shortcomings and help us to overcome any issues that we may have in manifesting true AGAPE Love. 1st Corinthians 13:13 – *“And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”*

B. Henderson

Amos 1:3

The following comments come from Adam Clarke's commentary regarding Judah's ability to see and anticipate the need for judgment upon the Gentiles, but unable to see that they deserved the same judgments due to their own wickedness. Might there be a sobering lesson here for the Household in these Last Days?

“The order of God’s threatenings seems to have been addressed to gain the hearing of the people. The punishment is first denounced upon their enemies, and that, for their sins, directly or indirectly, against themselves, and God in them. Then, as to those enemies themselves, the order is not of place or time, but of their relation to God’s people. It begins with their most oppressive enemy, Syria; then Philistia, the old and ceaseless, although less powerful, enemy; then Tyre, not an oppressor, as these, yet violating a relation which they had not, the bonds of a former friendship and covenant; malicious also and hardhearted through covetousness. Then follow Edom, Ammon, Moab, who burst the bonds of blood also. Lastly and nearest of all, it falls on Judah, who had the true worship of the true God among them, but despised it. **Every infliction on those like ourselves finds an echo in our own consciences. Israel heard and readily believed God’s judgments upon others. It was not tempted to set itself against believing them. How then could it refuse to believe of itself, what it believed of others like itself?** “Change but the name, the tale is told of thee,” was a pagan saying which has almost passed into a proverb. The course of the prophecy convicted “them,” as the things written in Holy Scripture “for our ensamples” convict Christians. “If they” who “sinned without law, perished without law” Rom 2:12, how much more should they who “have sinned in the law, be judged by the law.” God’s judgments rolled round like a thunder-cloud, passing from land to land, giving warning of their approach, at last to gather and center on Israel itself, except it repent. In the visitations of others, it was to read its own; and that, the more, the nearer God was to them. “Israel” is placed the last, because on it the destruction was to fall to the uttermost, and rest there.” (emphasis added)

HABAKKUK'S PRAYER AND PSALM OF CONQUEST AND GLORY

Part 1 of 2



THIS final vision in chapter 3 is Yahweh's glorious plan revealed to Habakkuk in the mighty return of His Son accompanied with an immortalized host. Habakkuk, like Moses and Deborah, has put it into one of the most prophetically rich and beautiful songs ever recorded.

This 3rd chapter along with Hezekiah's Psalm in Isaiah 38:9-20 were the Rosetta stone for J.W. Thirtle whose research ordered the Psalms in their proper order in the Companion Bible. He discovered that these two Psalms were headed by a title: "A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet" and concluded with a subscription in verse 19 "*To the chief singer on my stringed instruments*". The arrangement of all other Psalms appears differently in our Bibles. An example is found in Ps 65 where the title is: "*To the chief Musician. A Psalm and Song of David.*" Actually, the first phrase "*To the chief musician*" is the subscription to Ps 64 (compare Hab 3:19), while "*A Psalm and song of David*" is the title to Ps 65 (compare Hab. 3:1).

The word ***Shigionoth*** has the meaning of giving instruction for how the song should be sung. It is in the plural and signifies songs that are enthusiastic and soul stirring. It is derived from the root sha'ag to cry aloud either in trouble, danger or pain, or in the joy of deliverance. Here it relates to the latter. The word is in the feminine gender which is appropriate for it will be the bride of Christ who will raise their voices in joyful Hallelujahs at the second advent of our Lord. (See Rev19:1-8).

Habakkuk was now a changed man (from his distress in chapter 1) but he still feared for his own people and the judgments that were about to befall them. He asks Yahweh to "*revive Thy work in the midst of the years.*" To "*revive*" is to quicken a thing, to make it live or to preserve a thing. Habakkuk was asking Yahweh to accelerate His ultimate plan and purpose concerning Israel to that time when the natural remnant of Israel will be united with the Spiritual. "*Israelites indeed*" of old (E.g. Abraham, Isaac and David) and, the Israelites called out of the Gentiles. "*Every one that is called by My name...I have created for My Glory*" is the declaration of the Almighty (Isa 43:7).

Habakkuk prays for the peace of Jerusalem in the phrase "*in wrath remember mercy*".

Verse 3 - Eloah “shall come” from Teman

Verse 3 begins with the Manifestation of the Mighty One in Glory and His march and victory in battle against the latter-day Nebuchadnezzar and the Gentile nations. We now want to capture some of the overriding themes contained in this wonderful chapter.

Let there be no doubt that the point of departure, the point of origin, the place of the commencement for this immortalized army is up from the South, from the land of Teman and Paran. It is Sinai-the place of resurrection and Judgment.

The English rendition misses a key translation here which changes the tense of this event from something in the past, to a future event still to occur. God or The Mighty One, Yahweh, manifested in His son Jesus “*shall come*” from Teman not “came” or has come. This is a future event. Bro. Thomas in Eureka vol 3, pg. 180 provides a remarkable narrative to properly understand the tense of this verse which illuminates the proper understanding of this passage, which in turn sheds light into the proper understanding of Deut. 33:2. He says,

“But Habakkuk has made certain what, without his testimony might be thought open to dispute. In the third chapter of his book, he prays that Yahweh would “revive his work in the midst of the years; in the midst of the years make known, or manifest; and in wrath remember mercy.” In response to this, he is favored with a vision, in describing which, he saith: “Eloah (singular *not Elohim*) came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth is full of his praise.” If this testimony had been faithfully translated, there would have been no obscurity in it. The prophet did not write, “Eloah came from Teman.” The word rendered *came* is not *bah*, as in Deut 33:2, where it is correctly translated, but *yahvo*, the future of the same verb, and, therefore to be rendered *shall come in*. The text should be rendered thus: “Eloah shall come in from the South, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. *Eloah* is the word used for the setter up of the kingdom, in Dan 2:44. It signifies the Adorable One, or the Strong One. It is the Deity made flesh, and justified by spirit, and equivalent to “the Holy One”-Messiah. I conclude, then, from this positive declaration of Habakkuk, that Moses spake not historically but prophetically. The coming of Yahweh to Sinai in the days of Moses was representative, as to power, place and purpose, of his coming in the latter day. Since Habakkuk wrote the words, “Eloah shall come in from the South and the Holy One from mount Paran,” the prediction has not been fulfilled in any sense. If it had, “His glory would now cover the heavens, and the earth be filled with his praise,” which is very far from being the fact.” (Bro. Thomas, Eureka Vol 3, pg. 180 Logos Ed).

(Compare Psalm 68:17 and Deuteronomy 33:1-2)

Verses 4 & 5 - His Brightness

Verse 4 reveals to us in figurative language the coming of Christ in his full battle array of brilliant brightness of light and in power, commanding his immortalized army to conquest and execute judgments upon the heathen. The figure of light is appropriate to Christ who is described as the Sun of Righteousness in Mal 4:2. Christ is the light of the world and the destroyer of darkness. The Psalmist likens the sun to a strong man and to a bridegroom emerging from his chamber and shining forth in such splendor that “nothing is hid from the heat thereof” (Ps 19:6). David spoke prophetically of him as the Sun that shall shine forth brightly out of a cloudless dawn of a new day. (2 Sam 23:3-6).

The Hebrew word for horns denotes visible rays of light coming forth or seen coming forth from the hands, hands which are open and ready for action. The symbolism represents the saints which

Christ will command, an extension of His power (Hab 3:11). The Cherubim apparatus which the Mighty Charioteer shall ride, shall accomplish all that its Commander will command. This is the vision of Ezekiel elaborated and augmented with its own symbolic language before us.



Ezekiel 1:13-14 & 24: “As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning. And

the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning”... “And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of THE ALMIGHTY, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings...” The angelic Elohim constituted the hand of Yahweh extended in action (Ps 10:12, 144:7) but, in the age to come they will be replaced by the glorified saints.

Back to Habakkuk 3:4 - the RSV renders the phrase “there was the hiding of his power” as “There He veiled His power.” H. P. Mansfield provides an interesting comment here: “The full shining forth of divine glory, even in a created, glorified being, is beyond what mortal man can look upon (Ex 33:20, 1 Tim 6:16, Ex 24:17). In the early stages of the conquest of the nations by Christ and the saints, the divine glory will be restrained and they will appear as mortal men (Zech 14:6-7). Later, the glory will be made more openly manifest.”

Some thoughts from Bro. Thomas add more clarity to this in Eureka vol. 1, page 186.

“From the illustration of the transfiguration, the personal appearance of the Saints will be splendid with brightness. But there is reason to believe that they will not be distinguishable from ordinary men in appearance until their labors are accomplished. When the angels visited Sodom, the citizens did not discern any difference between them and Lot. And so will it be with the Saints who arise to execute the judgment written upon ‘the Great City, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified’—Rev. 11:8. The nature of their work requires that they should have the aspect common to humanity, which is not at all incompatible with the symbolical glory of their Body Corporate. If they flashed light from their persons as the sun shoots forth his rays, their enemies would be so panic-stricken, that they would not stand and fight, by which their punishment would be greatly impeded. The resurrected saints will therefore appear upon the theatre of war, as Adam and Jesus when they first emerged from earth. Jesus was mistaken for the gardener. The Angel of the Lord who descended from heaven to open his grave, was of lightning-like countenance, and raiment white as snow; and the guards did shake, and became as dead men; but when Mary saw Jesus, she conversed with him without trepidation.”

*“Now, according to this arrangement, Zechariah testifies, saying, that when the Mount of Olives shall be rent asunder by an earthquake, ‘Yahweh, my Elohim, shall come in, all the Saints with thee. And it shall be in that day there shall be no brightness—the Splendid Ones shall draw in; and it shall be one day that shall be known to Yahweh, not day nor night; and it shall be at the time of evening there shall be brightness. * * * And Yahweh shall be King over all the earth. In that day there shall be One Yahweh, and his Name One’—Zech. 14:5–9. The ‘Splendid Ones’ of this passage are the Elohim, or Saints, who will not shine forth in the brightness of their glory until the time of evening; then, when the kingdom is restored to Israel, they will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, as Daniel, Zechariah, and Jesus have foretold.”*

The pestilence and plague which follows close behind is the meaning from the RSV as we read verse 5, but a deeper study reveals that this is symbolic language for the action of the saints as a “live coal” or to an arrow flashing through the air to destroy all that is antagonistic to Yahweh and his plan and purpose. The English and Hebrew Bible Student’s Concordance gives the meaning of *resheph* (Hebrew for “burning coals”) as a quick, rapid motion, as an arrow shot from a bow, or lightning. It is rendered arrows in Ps 76:3, burning heat Deut. 32:24, hot thunderbolts or lightning in Ps 78:48. It is therefore expressive of divine judgment in war.

Malachi 4:1-3, *“For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye*

shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts."

Belshazzar was *"weighed in the balances and found wanting"* - a type of measuring. Christ will do the same with the Gentile nations which oppose him and specifically the Gogian invader who will at that time be in control of Jerusalem. David provides a type. In his conquests he *"measured"* some for death and others for captivity (2nd Sam 8:2) and the Greater David will do likewise. He will also measure the Promised Land to divide it among the 12 tribes as described in Ezek. 38. Zech. 2 in symbolic language introduces us to a man with a measuring line in his hand to measure Jerusalem and gather her back to safety and to execute judgment on those nations that have spoiled her.

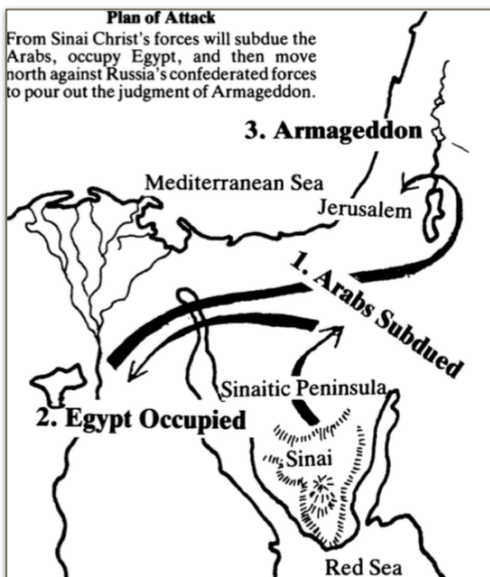
The Subjection of the Arabs and the Re-Gathering of the Jews from the south-lands

In verse 6, mountains are kingdoms of men who will be destroyed. The bowing hills *"or hills of the Olahm"* are those nations that will submit themselves to the rule of Christ and be incorporated into the Kingdom of God.

Next is the Subjection of the Arabs: the first peoples in this Rainbow Angel March to feel the power of the Christ Multitude.

In Chapter 42 of Isaiah, there is a sequence of events that shows that the people of Arabia give praise before Israel is saved. This chapter is part of a series starting at chapter 40, in which the main theme is Jesus, the Holy One and Redeemer of Israel, saving Israel in their time of distress. In the first part of this 42nd chapter, the redemptive work of his first coming is set out. *"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect in whom my soul delighteth."* *"I Yahweh*

have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light to the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." (vs 1, 6, 7). One aspect of prisoners coming out of the prison house is the resurrection (Zech 9:11). Another aspect of bringing prisoners out of the prison house is the salvation of the nation of Israel. Israel under the hand of their enemies is described in verse 22 of this chapter: *"But this is a people robbed and spoiled; they are all snared in holes and they are hid in prison houses."* Their deliverance is expressed in these words: *"Yahweh shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar: he shall prevail against his*



enemies...And I will bring the blind (ref back to vs. 7-“to open the blind eyes”) by a way they knew not...I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them” (vs. 13-16).

The point for giving this detail is to direct attention to verses 9 to 12 describing some events before Yahweh roars forth and leads “the blind” to safety. Taking verse 7 “*prisoners out of the prison house*” as a figure for the resurrection, verse 8 tells us that the time has at last come for Yahweh to make Himself known in His holiness. “*My glory will I not give to another; neither my praise to graven images*” (as Greek and Latin Catholicism has done for centuries). Then verse 9 - “*Behold the former things are come to pass and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I will tell you of them.*” And what is the first of the new things? Verse 10 - “*Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein: the isles and the inhabitants thereof.*” This is possibly a reference to the conversion of Britain and the young lions at this early stage, so that when the bride, the “Queen” is brought to the King (Ps 45) “The daughter of Tyre” is there with a gift of tribute. Then verse 11 - “*let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock (Petra rock = Jordan/Arabia) sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains.*”

Nebaioth was the firstborn son of Ishmael, and Kedar was his second son. We are told in Gen 25:6, 18 that Abraham sent Ishmael, and his sons by Keturah, and their families, away into the “*east country*”. These descendants of Abraham are the occupants of the extensive region, which we identify as Saudi Arabia. So Kedar belongs to this region. The other name mentioned in this passage, Arabia Petra, is the mountainous region of the Sinai Peninsula and the region lying between the Gulf of Elath and the Dead Sea. So, in clear terms, Isaiah tells us that this large region of the south, and the Arabs (the true Arabs as the descendants from Abraham) are brought into subjection to Christ before Israel is delivered. Those that oppose Christ are killed and there will be plenty of dead Arabs to say the least. Christ and the saints have been in battle when they come up from Bozrah (Isa 63). But those true Arabs that are not destroyed and subjugate themselves to Christ become obedient and enlightened; they sing praise to Yahweh. This is not so surprising, for they are the children of Abraham, though not in the line of the promised seed. And from a military and geographical angle it is very reasonable that Christ should first deal with the people near to his encampment at Sinai.

There is a suggestion of this early obedience of the wilderness peoples in Psalm 72. Verse 10 - “*The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.*”

We include in this view Hab. 3:7 where it says, “*I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction: and the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble.*” This is the very first detail in the prophecy, and from this we understand that these two peoples are the first to come under the power of Christ. Midian was a son of Abraham by Keturah, and his descendants occupied the region north of Mount Sinai, and around the Elanitic Gulf. So they represent the people nearest to the encampments of the Saints in Sinai. Cushan is usually taken as Ethiopia, and no doubt Ethiopia is a region reached by the children of Cush in their migration from Babel. But the Bible identification of Cush leads us to South Arabia rather than Ethiopia. 1 Chron 1:8 and Gen 10:6 tell us: “And the sons of

Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan. The sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sebtchah; and the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.” Although maps vary somewhat in the placings of these names, all agree in placing them in south Arabia. “Havilah to Shur” is the region occupied by the sons of Ishmael, and this places Havilah in Arabia. So it is probable that “Midian and Cushan” in Habakkuk take us to the east of Sinai, to Arabia. Bro Thomas makes this comment regarding the “tents of Cushan” and the “curtains of Midian”: “They (the Christ multitude) would, of course attack the peoples who were nearest to their encampment. These are the “tents of Cushan” and the “curtains of Midian” which are afflicted and made to tremble. This Cushan is east of the Tigris, and north of the Persian gulf; the Midianites are the Arabs of the desert, who are to “bow down before him” (Psalm 72:9-15).

Next we consider Isa 21:11-15: The 21st chapter of Isaiah is not easy to understand. The following follows a description of the fall of Babylon (vs 1-10). This was in the first place the work of Cyrus the Persian, and the “whirlwinds of the south sweeping through” (vs 1), was a figure for those from Elam coming against Babylon. But in the latter-day overthrow of Babylon the Great, Christ and the saints will be “whirlwinds of the south,” entering into Israel and overthrowing the Babylonian image on the mountains of Israel in their onward career to destroy the European Babylon (i.e the Harlot rider and the Beast). As to verses 11-15 we have no Biblical knowledge of their having a past fulfillment, and it is probable they belong to the future. In addition to Arabia and Seir, there is Dumah and Tema (Teman) who were sons of Ishmael, and Dedan a son of Keturah. All the sons of Abraham (apart from Isaac) went into this south-east country.



The “burden of Arabia” describes a time when the desert has been changed into a forest, a miraculous transformation and nomads are now dwelling in it; they are subject to Christ and are willing to care for the outcast Jews, supplying them with bread and water. As we have said, nothing like this is known in the past, and it indicates that these south lands of Arabia have to obey the word of God at a time when Israel is still in distress (scattered). The call to those in Arabia to care for the outcasts from the land of Judah—“the inhabitants of the land of Tema did meet the fugitives with their bread” is

similar to the call to latter-day Moab to hide the outcasts from the face of the spoiler in Isa 16:3-4, and this indicates Christ’s influence at this time, which will cover a wide area.

Quoting from R. Roberts and CC Walker in Ministry of the Prophets we read this regarding chapter 21:

“There are reasons for thinking that a latter-day application of this “burden upon Arabia” is intended, whatever fulfillment it may have found in the past; and that its coupling with “the burden of Dumah” is not undersigned. The Revised Version tells us in the margin that “according to ancient versions” we may read: “In the

forest at evening shall ye lodge (J.T. “dwell”) O ye traveling company of Dedanites.” Also the margin suggests that the succeeding words may be construed as an admonition instead of an historical record, thus: “Unto him (the Jews) that is thirsty bring ye water; ye inhabitants of the land of Tema meet the fugitives with their bread.”

“The difference between “Arabia” and “evening” wide enough in English, is not so in Hebrew, ereb standing for both. We have only to ask; Have the prophets anything else to say about Dedanites and Temanites “at evening” succouring fugitives who flee into their country from the grievousness of war? The answer is Yes. Isaiah had previously spoken of “evening-tide” trouble,” and of the scattering of Israel’s spoilers like thistledown “before the morning” (17:14). “At evening” also, that is, just before the dawn of “Zion’s glad morning,” Ezekiel speaking of the crisis, says that Sheba and Dedan, and the Merchants of Tarshish” an Arabian coalition interpose in Israelitish (think Shiite-Sunni split!) affairs against Gog and his northern confederacy who overrun the land (Ezek 38). A British confederacy of the south opposes a Russian confederacy of the North at this great crisis, and the latter (Gog) prevails to the taking of Jerusalem and the scattering of the Zionist colonies then well rooted in the land.

“We have already drawn attention to what others have previously established, namely that Edom and Moab of the latter days represent the British power at the crisis of Christ’s revelation to Israel. In Isa 16 God exhorts Moab , in the time when the throne of David is to be re-established in righteousness, to let His outcasts dwell with him. Britain the natural protector of the Jews for every political reason and the natural enemy of Russia in the same way will do this-not for any love of Israel’s God, or of Israel in the highest sense. Necessities which know no law and which are controlled only by God Himself, will compel it. A strong enemy will drive Britain out of Egypt into the Arabian countries south of Jerusalem (Dan 11:40-43) and Jewish fugitives will naturally take the hosts of their protector. But Sheba and Dedan and the Merchants of Tarshish do not save Israel or themselves. Were it not for the super-natural intervention of divine power, which is most emphatically announced in Ezek 38, a fifth Universal Empire would arise to dominate the earth, namely, the Russian-“Colossus.” But Christ and the saints come into the inheritance at this crisis, and the kingdoms of men are soon “broken to pieces together” as Daniel saw in chapter 2. “The glory of Kedar” falls for the last time and he is transformed and adopted with all other “hirelings” into an obedient member of the family of nations that shall be joined to the Lord in that day.”

“The tribute of Arabia, as of all countries-the gold, spices and flocks are rendered joyfully to the greater than Solomon in his capital Jerusalem, then “the joy of the whole earth.” (Isa 42:10-12 & Isa 60:6-7).

Verses 8-13

Rivers = nations/peoples (think Euphrates & Nile)

Seas = nations/kingdoms/peoples (Gentile power)

Israel is described as a people “*whose land the rivers have spoiled*” (Isa 18:2&7).

In Isa 8:7, the invasion of Assyria is symbolized as the flooding of the Euphrates. The same symbol is used in Rev 9:14 and in 16:12 where we have the familiar symbol of the “drying” river, representing the decline of the Turkish power. The two great rivers of the Land of Promise represent those two ancient dominant powers that ruled the world: Assyro-Babylonian and Egyptian. In their latter-day manifestation they will be replaced by the Gogian confederacy and the Catholic West. Bro. Thomas gives a good summary of what this symbolic language describes in Eureka, vol. 5 pg. 310:

When Habakkuk saw “Eloahh come from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran,” he had a glimpse of the military armament of Apoc. 19. He inquires in ch. 3:8 saying, “Was Yahweh displeased against the rivers? Was thine anger against the rivers? Was thy wrath against the sea that thou didst ride upon thy horses, thy vehicles of salvation? Thou didst march through the sea with thine horses, through the mire of great waters” (verse 15). The time of this movement against the nations he terms “the Day of Trouble”, and prays that he may rest in it; and adds concerning it, “when he cometh up against the people, he will cut them in pieces with his troops”. Moses also, in Deut. 33:26, alludes to the same military display of power, saying, “there is none like the Ail of Yeshurun riding the heavens in thy help, and in his majesty the clouds. A refuge is the Elohim of old, and underneath the powers of Olahm; and He shall thrust out the enemy; and shall say, Destroy!”

Here then we have a complete army exhibited for the conquest of the nations, and the salvation of the Twelve Tribes of Israel—the Lord Jesus Christ the Commander, “the called, chosen, and faithful” his brethren and companions, filling all the offices of the army; and the men of the Hebrew race the goodly soldiery of the kingdom. The heavenly hosts, or immortal saints, are “the heavens” ridden by the Ail of Yeshurun; while these heavens ride upon their goodly Hebrew horses to the destruction of all the governments of the world. An armament like this, in which every soldier of the ranks shall be able to “chase a thousand, and to put ten thousand to flight” (Deut. 32:30; Lev. 26:8) - an army of Samson’s - cannot but be invincible. It will be just the force the necessities of the situation demand. These soldiers of the king of Israel will not only be the goodly horses ridden by the Saints, but they will be the long, or far reaching, sword of their Commander, and his bow and arrow, battle axe, and new sharp threshing instrument with teeth. “I declare,” saith the Spirit, “that I will render double to thee; when I have bent Judah for me, and filled the (Judah) bow with (the) Ephraim (arrow), and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man. And Yahweh shall be seen over them, and his arrow (Ephraim) shall go forth as the lightning: and Adonai Yahweh shall blow the trumpet, and shall go forth with the whirlwinds of Teman” (Zech. 9:13).”

This verse has interesting language used here; *“Thou woudest the head out of the house of the wicked.”* The RSV renders, “Thou wilt crush the head of the wicked.” This of course is the promise of Gen. 3:15 and in the defeat of Gog it will be accomplished in the political sense. Gen. 3:15 sets the foundation for an ages long battle between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. They have been, and will be for a short time longer, locked in enmity, utterly antagonistic to one another. As regards Christ personally he was afflicted and wounded by the power of the seed of the serpent, the diabolos in the flesh, sin in the flesh, but the grave could not hold him and he was raised to glory thus dealing a death blow to the power for himself first. As the first fruits from the grave and the opener of the prison house for all those who shall live by “his faith” he has now opened up the way for all who would come under the covenant made possible by his death through his shed blood. As the king and the commander of this new political order he will crush the head of the serpent system and thereafter continue to grind all its remnants to powder as this new order takes over the entire earth.

“Discovering the foundation of the neck” means, making naked or exposing the foundation unto the supports. The very foundation of the house (we could insert image here as well, as in Nebuchadnezzar’s Image, will be destroyed by the judgments of Armageddon and its aftermath (Ps 18:37-50; 68:21; 74:13-14; 110:6; Prov. 12:7; 14:11; 15:25.)



Verse 14

The word “villages” = warriors

The overthrow of Gog will not immediately end all resistance to Christ’s rule. When we study the sequence in Scripture we see that Yahweh is a God of process and justice. The Armageddon phase will result in the utter, dramatic destruction of Gog - an epoch military defeat resulting in a body count of casualties that has never been witnessed (Ezek. 38:18-39:11-15). But the Stone power will still have more work to do. Christ will declare his rule and proclaim the Name of Yahweh from Zion to the entire world (Mid-Heaven Gospel proclamation, Rev. 14:6), but there will still be a power - a Beast, and False Prophet power that will resist and require destruction. Luke 20:18 is a simple and somewhat obscure verse that provides a significant meaning, *“Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.”*

Brethren, I believe this reinforces the clear pattern of Scripture which prophesies the next phase of conquest by Christ and the Saints and now to include the remnant of natural Israel as Yahweh’s goodly horse in battle, to participate and execute vengeance upon her enemies which have spoiled her, robbed her, killed her and despised her throughout the centuries (the consummate anti-semitic enemy of the Jews, the Catholic Apostasy). This is the second phase of conquest described in Daniel 2:34 and described by the vision of Zechariah 6:1-8.

To be continued (Yahweh willing) in Part 2.

Tom Northey

FELLOWSHIP AND DIVISION

BY ROBERT ROBERTS

THERE is such a thing as “the Truth.” There is such a thing as “coming out from among” and “having no fellowship with” the indifference and error and evil that prevail, however many may have become insensible to the obligation.

It is the recognition of these that leads to division, and not any insensibility to the advantages of union. The many are indifferent; a few are faithful. Hence the fermentation. It was Christ's understanding of men, and his foresight of the working of things among them that led him to say - “From henceforth there shall be division” (Luke 12:51-52).



The result is inevitable in an evil world, so long as there's any faithfulness left. It is insinuated that withdrawal from errorists is an evil thing. This is a fashionable sentiment, but it is not in accord with the mind of Christ as expressed through the apostles. Love and union are beautiful. They are the most exquisite manifestations of intelligent life possible upon earth, and the earth will yet see their universal triumph when the purpose of God is finished.

But meanwhile, there are other duties. The loving John says concerning those who “bring not the doctrine of Christ” that the faithful are to “receive them not into their house” (2 John 10). And Jesus, in his message through the same John, commends one ecclesia for acting on this discrimination, and condemns one for not -

“Thou (Ephesus) CANST NOT BEAR them that are evil, but have tried them that say they are apostles, and hast found them liars” (Rev. 2:2).

“Thou (Thyatira) sufferest that woman Jezebel, who calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants...” (Rev. 2:20).

Schism is the result of acting out these principles, and it is a good thing, if intelligently and faithfully done. It is a painful and apparently unfriendly process: but there is no choice with those who would be friendly to God first.

The Truth has been an obscure and weak thing from the beginning. From its nature it cannot become popular, because it runs counter to human feeling in so many practical ways not seen at first. Its true friends know this, and they are not working to obtain public success, or even public notice. They are simply carrying out orders. Christ calls for the exhibition of the Light, and they exhibit it.

- February 1891

THE TRUE DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE



ON Friday, June 26th, 2015, the United States Supreme Court in a 5-4 decision imposed so-called “same-sex marriage” upon the entire country, thereby completing our society’s long journey to becoming Sodom and Gomorrah by judicial fiat. We have no desire to give time of day to this egregious abomination. Nonetheless, this is a good time to review The True Definition of Marriage. What is it? Where did it come from? What is its meaning? And are fraudulent varieties of marriage acceptable in the sight of Yahweh? Finally, what are we as Christadelphians to do in the face of such an assault on the Word of God as we are seeing in the world around us? We hope to answer these questions through this article.



Let’s start at the beginning. What is marriage and where did it come from? If we turn to some of the first pages in our Bibles, we will find that marriage was invented by Yahweh our God in the Garden of Eden as a special relationship between one man and one woman, the latter a special vessel created out of man himself. Let’s read

Genesis 2:18-25. In the verses that we’ve just read, we see that a man is to leave his parents and cleave unto his wife. Cleaving can be otherwise translated “*to cling or adhere*”; the English Standard Version uses the phrase “*hold fast*”. As they hold fast to each other, the man and woman become “*one flesh*”, which can also be translated “*united body*”.

Our Lord Jesus Christ further expounds upon the meaning of marriage in Mark 10:1-12 in a response to the Pharisees' attempt to test him. In his response, Jesus clearly stresses that marriage is between a man and a woman, where the two come together to be one flesh. The phrase "*hath joined together*" comes from one Greek word that means "*to yoke together; conjoin (in marriage)*" according to Strong's Concordance. A man and woman are thus yoked together by God when they enter into a marriage relationship and nothing but death can divide or "*put asunder*" that covenant.

Between Genesis and Mark, the Bible gives a clear and concise definition to marriage. Marriage is not a mere viewpoint that can change with the times, but the inspired work of Yahweh our Creator intended for the good of man and woman. It is a divine institution, a covenant relationship that is spiritual, physical and legal all in one. God joins the man and woman together and Jesus specifically points out that man's ways such as divorce, and remarriage following divorce are both clearly wrong, breaking the design that God has had from the beginning.

Marriage as a type

While the Scriptures that we have quoted are clear as to what marriage is and what it is not, there is so much more to this beautiful Divine institution. Let's turn over to a similar passage in Ephesians 5:22-33. In verse 31 we see a similar verse to that recorded in Genesis and Mark, that being the basic definition of marriage whereby "*a man [shall] leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh*". However, Ephesians 5 adds even more important details about this Divine institution. First of all, marriage is clearly a type of Christ and his Bride, the Ecclesia. Just as Adam went into a typical death state in order to bring forth a wife, so too "*Christ also loved the ecclesia, and gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word*". As Jesus died as the propitiation for our sins (1st John 2:2), he has purchased and covered those who take advantage of it through baptism such that we become "*members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*" as Eve was to Adam – literally.

The design of marriage thus becomes even more important when seen through the lens of the type. In 1st Corinthians 11, a chapter we read most every Sunday as we come to remember our Lord Jesus and his precious sacrifice, has more to say about this type. Let's turn to 1st Corinthians 11:3,8-9. In the verses that we have just reviewed, Paul states that "*the head of every man is Christ*". Collectively, all covenanted men and women make up the ecclesia that is to be submissive to their prospective groom, Jesus the Messiah. Quite literally, the woman was made "*of the man*" and "*for the man*". Therefore, typically speaking, the ecclesial Bride will come forth of Jesus as only due to his work can they have life – and ultimately the redeemed will be *for* Jesus, part of his reward, the joy set before him, to be with a great cloud of witnesses that he has redeemed for the glory of the Father.

Lest there be any doubt in our minds that Jesus is the Bridegroom, let us remember his words to the Pharisees in Luke 5 following the feast of Levi. Luke 5:33-35. Here Jesus clearly is referring to himself as the Bridegroom. The Bridegroom was among the disciples so they had no need to fast, but certainly we fast today in the days spoken of where Jesus is away. Someday, however, our Bridegroom will return to his faithful as is so clearly illustrated in the Parable of the Ten Virgins in Matthew 25:1-13.

Ultimately, the faithful of Christ's ecclesia will be presented unto him as a perfected ecclesia, without spot or blemish. Those men and women who have stayed faithful to Christ throughout their lifetimes – 'til death do them part or the Lord doth come – will through the grace of God be able to join their Bridegroom in the post-judgment marriage of the Lamb. We read these beautiful Scriptures in the poetic books of the Old Testament as well as the Apocalypse. For example, please turn to -

- **Psalms 45:13-15** - *"The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace."*
- **Song of Solomon 1:2-4** - *"Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine. Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee. Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee."*
- **Song of Solomon 3:1-4** - *"By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. The watchmen that go about the city found me: to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me."*
- **Revelation 19:5-9** - *"And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which*

are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation...

In these verses that we've just reviewed we have seen the Bride clothed in needlework of fine linen, representing the righteousness of the saints. Collectively they have yearned for their groom for millennia – "*Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?*" – and at last the marriage of the Lamb will have come as the Bride will have made herself ready. They will have a "*love better than wine*" and as much as she has yearned for him, he will have yearned for her as well: Song of Solomon 4:9-10.

We see then that truly marriage is a wonderful Divine institution that was created by God for a specific purpose, that being for one man and one woman to cleave to each other in a legal, physical and spiritual union that typifies that of Christ and His Bride. What a beautiful design to an antitype of grandeur. Truly marriage is a gift that we should never, ever under appreciate or corrupt through the liberal thinking of man. There are many other verses and examples that could be looked at throughout the Scriptures describing the proper characteristics that a man and his wife, a Brother and Sister joined "*only in the Lord*" (1 Corinthians 7:39), must develop in type of Christ and His Bride. However, this is a topic for another day.

Perversion of the Divine institution

For now, we would like to come full circle to the beginning of this exhortation. In the world around us we see a full scale war being declared upon the Biblical definition of marriage – the ONLY DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE – for marriage cannot be changed at the whims of man. And so we ask the question again, are fraudulent views of marriage acceptable in the sight of Yahweh? Earlier in this exhortation we read from Mark 10 where Jesus clearly stated the unacceptability of divorce as well as marriage following divorce. However, there are many other forms of sexual immorality all of which were called out by Paul in 1st Corinthians 6:9. As we read this we see many forms of deviant behavior called out including fornication (pre-marital relations), adultery (extra-marital relations) and "*abusers of themselves with mankind*". This phrase comes from one Greek word that Strong's simply translates "*a sodomite*". Young's Literal says "*sodomites*" and the English Standard Version translated this word as "*men who practice homosexuality*", leaving no ambiguity. Perhaps the only form of marital immorality that is not mentioned is marriage outside of the Truth, a topic clearly covered in Genesis and Nehemiah amongst other books. In any case, it is important that we separate ourselves completely from these forms of immorality. We cannot have compromise on these issues and we cannot give in unless we desire to lose the race for the Kingdom.

In this modern world, many have sought to say that the Bible and the sin of Sodom

as well as other forms of sexual immorality are compatible and that God loves us anyway. They seem to think the Scriptures are silent on this issue. But are they truly silent? While we will not review these chapters in detail at the current time, can anyone read Genesis 18 and 19 without realizing God's view towards Sodomy? What about a read of Judges 19 and 20, the awful record of the deeds of the children of Benjamin and its results? Why was King Asa praised for taking "*away the sodomites out of the land*" (1 Kings 15:12), and his son King Jehoshaphat on record for taking the remnant of them out of the land (1 Kings 22:46)? What about good King Josiah who "*brake down the houses of the sodomites*" (2 Kings 23:7)? These chapters are as clear as day. Just as Abraham woke up in Genesis 19:28 to see "*the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace*", we too should see a clear message from the Word of God's guiding light regarding this issue that the world has forced into our faces.

Unfortunately, until Christ's return it is doubtful that the United States will ever return to any semblance of respect for the Scriptures whatsoever. The dam has broken and the flood of blasphemy and immorality is on the rise. We must not expect the situation to get better as it will almost certainly get worse. The political system has

been taken over by this agenda of Sodom as has much of Corporate America. Recently we've seen corporate giants and brands like Tylenol, Wells Fargo, Southwest Airlines, American Airlines, Chipotle, Apple and others go "all in" with support and even advertising in an effort to normalize "alternative" life styles. Perhaps most striking of all, we have already seen the rise

Companies with a 100% "pro-gay" rating by the Human Rights Campaign:



of militant activists intent on ridding the world of Christianity and "restrictive" or "bigoted" beliefs. Christian businesses that refuse to cater to so-called "same-sex marriages" are being taken to court, fined or put out of business. The tolerance that Sodom seeks is of course not tolerant of Yahweh, His Son, His Bible or His followers. How long will it be before true Brothers and Sisters are impacted? We don't know. While the Christadelphian community is small and off the radar, the persecution seems ever more likely to come. Will there come a day when ecclesias with buildings or Brothers with marriage licenses are taken to court because of their refusal to participate in the ceremonies of sin? Will any of us lose our businesses or our jobs unless we deny the faith? It is a real possibility and only time will tell. We must be

ready to stand with the whole armor of God.

Our duty in the face of evil

And so we come to our final question posed at the beginning of our work, that being, what are we as Christadelphians to do in the face of such an assault on the Word of God as we are seeing in the world around us? Are we to suddenly get involved in politics and make a mad dash to the polls to help change this society? Of course not. Ultimately we believe the answer to this issue comes down to a topic that has defined Christadelphians throughout the ages, that being conscientious objection. If there is but one verse that defines our worldview on everything, it is Acts 5:29. *“We ought to obey God rather than man”* – what a simple statement and yet so very important in these last days. When the laws of God and man coincide, we follow both. For example, we follow laws to not kill firstly because God said them but also because man has adopted them. However, when man would have us go to war in contrast with the commandment *“thou shalt not kill”* (Exodus 20:13), we will have no part of it. This principle of course is one defined throughout Scripture, but perhaps the most well known example is that spoken by Jesus in Mark 12:13-17. Can there be any doubt as to which category that marriage – a Divine institution – falls under. Should we obey man or God?

Ultimately, the world will continue in its downward spiral to death, but we have our warning from Scripture not to go with it. These things are aptly stated in Peter’s second epistle. 2 Peter 2:5-9. Fear not, Brethren, the righteous will be delivered and the wicked will be condemned. We, like just Lot, are vexed every day with the filthy conduct of the wicked and their belligerent blasphemy, but their end will come. We, like Abraham, should do everything we can to stay away from this sin of the cities of the plain as strangers and sojourners looking *“for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God”* (Hebrews 11:10). We must also keep our families and especially our children out of the harmful, destructive hands of this world as it seeks to corrupt them and make them good “citizens of the world”. However, though we try to stay as separate as possible, nonetheless we will find ourselves inevitably surrounded by Sodom like Lot was, and in these tough times may we stand resolute in our faith as *“the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations”* (2 Peter 2:9).

Courage, Brethren. The end is almost here. The world has no moral compass and as such it is doomed to sink as a millstone in the midst of the sea. However, we *“are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone”* (Ephesians 2:20), certainly a rock that can never be shaken. The world is certainly becoming darker by the day, *“but the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day”*. So *“until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts”* (2 Peter 1:19), let us all be *“redeeming the time, for the days are evil”* (Ephesians 5:16), honoring God in our marriages and our espousal to His Beloved Son.

As we close this consideration, we bring to mind the words of the Ecclesial Bride in Song of Solomon 3:3 as she yearned for the Bridegroom: “*Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?*” Soon the answer for us will be a resounding ‘YES!’ “*My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away*” (Song of Solomon 2:8-13).

Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

David Bryan

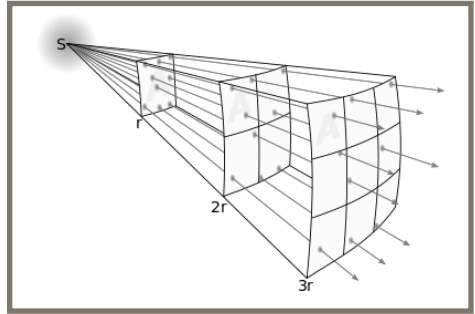
“Man is for strength, judgment and achievement. Woman is for grace, sympathy and ministration. Between them they form a beautiful unit: ‘heirs together of the grace of life’.” So wrote R. Roberts in *The Law of Moses*. The law of marriage was established in the beginning, before sin obtruded. Adam was supposed to take care of his wife. She was a *helpmeet*; not an inferior servant but an indispensable, inseparable part of his life. She was given attributes unique to her. She was given a body and a mind and a set of emotions unequalled by any man. And he was given a body and mind and a set of emotions unequalled by any woman. Adam and Eve delighted each other. They talked, walked and worked together, because they were united by something stronger than mere flesh. They spoke with God. God never intended man and woman to compete against each other; but to supplement what the other had, uniting both a common objective in life, and a common future that of eternity. That unity was destroyed by the serpent with its specious reasoning. So sin entered the world, and with it every problem including those relating to married life.

Excerpt from - *Preparing for Marriage*

THE NUMBER “4”

INTRIGUED by the use of the number **four** in Ezekiel chapters 1 and 10, here are some interesting associations.

The Inverse-Square Law - simply stated, for any such description of the source (for example a flashlight shining on a wall), if you have determined the amount of radiation per unit area reaching 1 meter, then it will be **one fourth** as much at 2 meters. The amazing thing about this law is that it applies to most, if not all elements underlying our natural world: gravitational force, electric field, light, sound or radiation all obey the inverse square law.



This is the principle that allowed Isaac Newton to discover the existence of gravity and how the earth revolves around the sun. And the principle of gravity holds throughout the universe, from the smallest things among us as far as the outer reaches of the universe. There are **four** fundamental forces: gravity, electromagnetism, the weak nuclear force and the strong nuclear force. There are **four** basic states of matter: solid, liquid, gas and plasma. Although we live in a three dimensional world (space having three dimensions), when time is considered as a dimension there are **four** dimensions.



Other associations: there are **four** rocky planets in our solar system (Earth, Mercury, Venus and Mars) and **four** gas giants (that incidentally hold Earth in place from the Sun: Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune). The hearts of all mammals have **four** chambers and there are **four** different blood types among humans (A, B, AB, O).

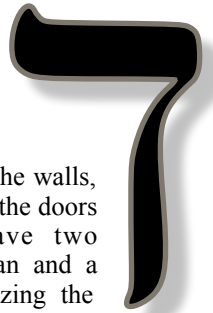
The number **four** could be described as a foundation number, implying stability. Humans have four limbs and four supporting elements, like the legs of a table or the wheels of cars, which are **four** in number.

The number four is so stable that in a so-called 4 x4 magic square displaying four primes, one can turn the square 180 degrees and it still works out the same:

4 x 4 Magic Square

18	99	86	61
66	81	98	19
91	16	69	88
89	68	11	96

The fourth number on the Hebrew alphabet is *dalet* (ד), the original symbol of which was a swinging door. In later Hebrew it was used as the number **four**. In Ezekiel 41: 23-24, the sanctuary is to have two doors, each with two leaves (**four** altogether) that will be decorated with cherubim and palm trees.



Like those on the walls, the cherubs on the doors will each have two faces: of a man and a lion - symbolizing the Son of Man of the house of Judah in Gen.

49:9-11 - *“Judah is a lion's whelp, from the prey, my son, you are gone up. He stooped down, he crouched as a lion, and as a lioness, who shall rouse him up? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor shall the ruler's staff from between his feet until Shiloh come, and to him shall the obedience of the peoples be. Binding his foal to the vine, and his ass's colt to the choice vine,*

He has washed his garments in wine and his garment in the blood of grapes.”

A communication from someone of the Household

Should Believers Vote or Participate in Politics?

An Answer Based Upon Scripture

THUS SAITH THE LORD; THOU SHALT VOTE!
THUS SAITH THE LORD; THOU SHALT NOT VOTE!

N **EITHER** of the above statements is given in Scripture, thus we have to understand the subject as it relates to other Biblical teachings.

The Kingdom of Jesus is not of this world

What is the primary role of the Federal Government in the U.S.? A modern president seems to have answered the question.

“Our government must provide equal justice under law..and most importantly, guarantee our national security”. (President Ronald Reagan, Page 106 of *Popular Mechanics*, July 1986).

Question: How do believers understand from Scripture that the United States or any nation is destined to last forever, or even for some finite time? To guarantee, or desire to guarantee “national security/longevity” indicates ‘to last forever, or the desire to last forever’.

In John 18:28-36 we find a powerful passage which is instructive on the subject of Christ’s relationship to the Kingdom of men and thus what our relationship should be to the Kingdom of men. We note in particular two things in verse 36, “*Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence*”.

“*My kingdom is not of this world*”. The times of the Gentiles were not full. When the times of the Gentiles are full, then Christ’s Kingdom will be of this world (although a much changed world). Jesus was (and still is) the chief Ambassador of another kingdom; that is the Kingdom of God. In our days upon earth, we should likewise be Ambassadors of another kingdom, that is, the Kingdom of God.

“*If my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews.*” Servants do not tell the king when to fight, rather they

follow his orders. Another interesting point is, if Jesus had not wanted to be delivered unto the Jews, he would not have been delivered unto the Jews. When his kingdom is under preparation, then will his servants fight. Psalm 149 refers in clear language to a time in which the servants of Jesus will in fact fight, (in some fashion) then under the direction of Jesus Christ.

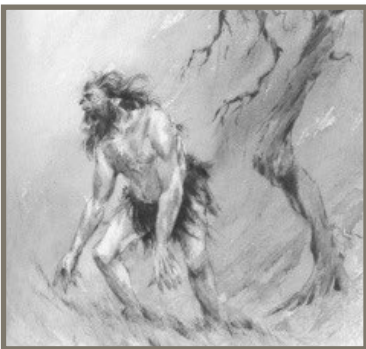
We note also, in John 19 verse 11, Jesus answered Pilate, (after Pilate had told him that he had power to crucify him) ***“Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.”*** (emphasis by writer).

Are believers ambassadors for the ‘temporal’ kingdom of men (of whatever nation or alliance of nations) all of which are to be broken into pieces by The Almighty as we are told in Daniel 2:44, or should believers consider themselves Ambassadors of the Kingdom of God? We note again, one of these Kingdoms is to last forever, the other is to be destroyed. Which kingdom do we desire, the one that is to last forever, or the one that is to be destroyed?

God places men and women in positions of political leadership

Referring to the Old Testament, we note five passages in particular:

1. The prophet Daniel was told in a vision that he was about to have revealed unto him the secret of the dream which Nebuchadnezzar had of the “metallic image”. The king, although greatly troubled by the dream forgot the dream. Daniel, therefore, in this account told Nebuchadnezzar the dream and its interpretation. Daniel 2:19-21 states, *“Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding.”*
2. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon from approximately 605 B. C. until 562 B. C., was informed quite forcefully that “God rules in the affairs of mankind”. Nebuchadnezzar, because he acted with pride and arrogance, learned a very difficult lesson and in the process taught all believers that God truly rules in the affairs of mankind. Looking at Daniel chapter 4, particularly verses 17, 22, 24-25 we read the following: *“This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men” ... “It is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth.” ...*



3. *“This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king: That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.”* We might add, this prophecy against King Nebuchadnezzar did overtake him and he was thus brought terribly low, in fact he crawled upon all fours, grew claws and hair as a beast and ate grass as an oxen for seven full years. God did abase him for his prideful attitude and behavior (Dan. 4:37).
4. In Psalm 75 the same teaching is reinforced. Psalm 75:6-7 *“For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.”* Could it be stated any more clearly? Who sets up rulers? Did God set up kings only, or does Scripture teach here that he sets up rulers, what ever their title?
5. In Proverbs 21:1 we read that God directs the hearts of Kings. *“The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.”*
6. In Proverbs 8: 13, we read, *“The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate. Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength. By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.”*

Mortal leaders can promise to try to effect, for example, national sovereignty or peace on a small or large scale. President Bush in late 2002 said, ‘we will defend freedom regardless of the cost’. I am thoroughly convinced that he does not know, nor does any mortal or group (to the extent of all mankind upon earth) know what the next moment will bring, let alone the next few months or years. I am, however, personally convinced that God alone knows the future, from this very moment to all moments. God has much more control and influence over world affairs than, in my observation, most people fully appreciate. Let us allow HIM to run the world! God has and will continue to “run the world” regardless of the efforts of fallen mankind. The end to which believers look is the Kingdom of God upon earth – the one thousand years reign of Jesus Christ and the Saints. We note how beautiful all the words of Isaiah 35 are. Verse 4 specifically states, *“Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you.”*

The Jews who often tried to trick and discredit Jesus, asked him if they should pay tribute money to Caesar. Jesus answered them with a clear statement, *“....Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.”* We are likewise to render unto our modern day rulers tribute money, but notice that Jesus also told them to render unto God the things that are God's (Matt. 22:17-21). How far more important are the “things that are God's”. If the demands of Caesar are in conflict with those of God, we are always and under all circumstances to follow the Higher Power, that is God.

Over the years, a few people have told the writer God needs us to do thus and such, for example, “*followers are to help God conquer sin by destroying present day enemies.*” Quite in contrast to such a line of reasoning, the Apostle Paul makes it abundantly clear that God has no **need** of any thing. We read in Acts 17:24-25, “*God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he **needed any thing**, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.*”

We are not to strive nor take up causes in this world order, because this world order and its causes will pass away. Paul instructed Timothy, “*I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.*” (1st Tim. 2:1-2).

The following paragraph is quoted from “Why Christadelphians Should Not Vote”, The Christadelphian Advocate, September 1989.

“One who participates in a human effort to establish a government not only betrays a lack of trust in God’s ability to handle things, but it may put us in the position of opposing God. It is sometimes His will to put cruel and unjust men in power, which He will do regardless of our efforts. It would be awkward for the believer to find himself politically opposed to the One who can save him.”

Psalm 146 plainly teaches that God is to be trusted to direct our steps. Verses 3 – 5 praise God and point out the fact that in mankind, we will find no help. The verses read, “*Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day, his thoughts perish, Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD His God.*”

Harold Thomas

“Since no man can serve two masters at the same time a person cannot bear allegiance to an Earthly Commander and a Heavenly Commander simultaneously. Since we have chosen to obey and honour our Heavenly Commander, we are precluded from taking an Oath of Allegiance to an Earthly Commander. We are not pacifists. We are under the orders and command of our Heavenly Commander. At the present time our service to Him demands that we do not kill; that we love our enemies; that we do good to those who despitefully use us and persecute us. But if our Heavenly Commander gives us an order to kill the enemies of the Almighty, then it is our duty to do just that. The Bible tells us that such an order will arrive when, in the hands of the immortalized saints, a two-edged sword will be placed “to execute vengeance upon the heathen and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written. This honour have all his saints” (Psalm 149:6-9).” Edward Farrar, *The Christadelphian Advocate*, October 2000

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT



June 30

My Dear Mother:

I was looking over an old copy of Barnes' notes on Revelation to-day which I found among my books, and I find that in his comment on the twentieth chapter he states that the primitive Christians believed that Christ was to return personally to the earth, raise the dead, and establish a kingdom on the earth with Jerusalem as its capital. That he and his saints, who were then to be immortal, were to reign over the nations of the earth for a thousand years, after which all the wicked would be destroyed and the righteous made immortal and the kingdom of the saints would then extend itself into one of eternal duration.

Mr. Barnes, of course, being "orthodox," does not agree with the primitive Christians on this subject, and labors hard to establish a theory that the reign of saints spoken of in this chapter does not mean that the departed saints are to be raised from the dead to sit on literal thrones, for he believes they are now reigning with Christ in heaven; but that the spirit which animated the early martyrs would again be shown in the church in some marked manner and would result in great good to the world.

Mr. Evans says the same account of the vies of the early Christians is found in Gibbon's "History of rome," a standard work. This seems to give some color to Mr. Evan's claim that Christadelphianism is really a revival of primitive Christianity and the Christendom is in a state of apostasy from the faith once delivered unto the saints.

I do not think I could ever accept that claim, at least, not without considerable qualification. The Christadelphians may be right on some points; and our churches may have more or less error in their creeds, but I cannot believe that we are entirely wrong, and that a few ordinary people like the Christadelphians have found the whole truth.

June 31

My Dear Mother:

Mr. Kennedy called last evening to see why I have not attended the holiness meeting lately. He looked troubled when I told him of the conclusions to which I have come, but he did not attempt much of any reply to the scriptures I quoted. He says he knows he is entirely free from inbred sin. I asked him the same questions that Mr. Evans asked me in regard to the gospel and found that he is as much in the dark as to what the gospel really is as I was myself. He seems to know very little about the Bible, although he claims to have been sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost (which was

given to "lead us into all truth") for twenty years. Before going away he prayed earnestly for me that I might see the light. That that prayer I can heartily say, amen.

July 3

My Dear Mother:

Mr. Evans has invited me to attend his meeting and I would very much like to go as I am curious to know how they conduct their meetings without a minister, and what sort of an assembly they have collected. The fact is, I do not like to be seen going into their hall. They are looked upon by many Christians as the scum of the earth. One minister says that "Christadelphianism is the lowest depth." Some say they are "worse than Catholics," and even Mr. Wilson says they are "semi-infidels."

Now I really cannot see any truth in such charges. I do not agree with all they teach, but I know that Mr. Evans is a good man. He naturally shrinks from strife and contention, and antagonizes other peoples ideas only because he thinks it is his duty to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints."

Still, although I do not sympathize with the harsh criticisms against the Christadelphians, I feel backward about allowing myself to be identified with them in the estimation of my friends. If I were sure they had the whole truth it would be different.

July 10

I have made an agreement with Mr. Evans that if he will go to church with me tomorrow, I will go to his meeting the following Sunday. Who knows what effect a good rousing sermon may have upon him? The Christadelphian meetings are held in the afternoon, so I shall not be obliged to neglect our own service. I believe the Salvation Army has meetings in the same building as the Christadelphians and at about the same time. If any of my Methodist friends see me going in they may think I am going to the Salvation Army meeting.

July 12

I feel very much disappointed with our pastor's sermon of yesterday. I had hoped for a strong, rousing sermon, but Mr. Wilson preached from the forty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel, where the prophet sees water issuing out from under the temple and forming a stream which gradually increases from ankle-depth until it becomes a large sea abounding in fish like the fish of the great sea, or Mediterranean. Fisherman are also said to ply their vocation along this sea from Engedi even to Eneglaim.

Mr. Wilson labored hard to spiritualize the whole chapter, but I could not see it that way. He said these waters represented the gradual increase of the church from a small beginning, and the fishermen were the pastors, who are fishers of men. I felt sorry I had brought Mr. Evans with me for I imagined that he must feel amused. He said nothing, however, but left the church immediately after the service, saying that he had an engagement. After the meeting I heard quite a number of people say "Wasn't that a splendid sermon?" It really seems as if most religious people never think at all, but are quite content to accept whatever their pastors may say without question.

July 13

My Dear Mother:

In conversation with Mr. Evans today I asked him his opinion as to the meaning of the chapter in Ezekiel referred to by our pastor. He says it has reference to events in

connection with Israel's restoration in the near future. The last nine chapters in Ezekiel's prophecy are all unfulfilled but will be fulfilled at the coming of Christ.

He says that a certain architect named Henry Sulley, of Nottingham, England, has published a wonderful book called "The Temple of Ezekiel's Prophecy," in which he thoroughly explains these chapters which are an enigma to the clergy because they are ignorant of the true "hope of Israel." Mr. Sulley's book contains elaborate engravings showing the ground plan and elevation of a wonderful temple which is to be erected in Palestine, the like of which has never yet been seen upon the earth. These plans were drawn from the specifications and measurements given by Ezekiel. Mr. Evans says he can show from the prophets that there will be great physical changes in the topography of the Holy Land at the epoch of Christ's return; that Jerusalem is to be lifted up and inhabited in her place; that a waterway will be opened up between the Mediterranean sea and the Persian gulf which will result in the formation of the sea containing fish similar to those of the Mediterranean, referred to by our pastor; and that then Jerusalem will become the metropolis of the whole world, and her king (Jesus) reigning in Zion, will execute judgment and justice in the earth, resulting in blessing all the families of the earth, as promised to Abraham.

Whatever people may say against the Christadelphians it cannot be defined that they know the Holy Scriptures which are able to make wise unto salvation, and the more I look into their teachings the more I am convinced that they have the true idea of the kingdom of God.

If the kingdom of God is not to be established on the earth, if Israel is not to be restored to their own land with Christ as their king, how can any of those prophecies ever be fulfilled? I am far from being a Christadelphian, but I must admit that so far as I have been able to comprehend their teachings they seem to be in perfect harmony with the Scriptures. I do not see how they ever discovered these truths seeing they have not many learned men among them. I wonder why none of our theologians ever saw these truths? When I asked Mr. Evans about it, he smiled, and quoted what Christ said when he thanked God that he had "hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes:" also where Paul wrote that "not many wise, not many rich, not many noble are called;" and also what James said, that "God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith to be heirs of the kingdom that God hath promised to them that love him."

I wish my Methodist friends and especially my dear wife would look into these things, but they seem to be totally indifferent on these subjects, and if you press them they get angry. I can see that my wife is worrying over me for fear that I shall be led astray, but I see no reason for fear as long as I believe only what can be plainly proved from the Scriptures.

July 18

I have kept my agreement with Mr. Evans and attended the Christadelphian meeting today. They meet on the third floor, in a small hall directly over the Salvation Army which made such a noise that I could hardly hear at times what was being said. There were twenty persons in the hall, eight of whom were strangers, or "aliens," as the Christadelphians sometimes call them. When it was time to open the meeting, a man whom I judged to be Scotch by his speech, took the chair. He first gave out a hymn which was started by Mr. Evans, and in which the congregation rather feebly

joined. Mr. Evans, however, made the best of it, and carried it through bravely, although I could not help contrasting it with the magnificent singing at our church.

The chairman then read a chapter in the Bible, and then offered a brief prayer, after which he announced as the subject of the lecture, "Life in Christ," Mr. Evans then took the platform and spoke rapidly and earnestly for about forty-five minutes on that subject; after which, another hymn was sung and the meeting closed with prayer by the chairman.

A Christadelphian "lecture" is about as unlike a "sermon" as can be imagined. They do not take a "text" and "preach" from it as the clergy do. they select some Bible subject, then "reason out of the Scriptures," so that what they say really seems like the, "Oracles of God." They profess to care nothing for men's opinions, but entertain a great reverence for the word of God.

Mr. Evans began his lecture by quoting several passages from the Bible to prove that man is a weak, perishing creature of dust formation, under sentence to return to the dust out of which he came. He claimed that when the serpent told Eve she should "not surely die" he told a lie, as proven by subsequent events, and that those who teach that man has an immortal soul were teaching the same old lie. He said the immortality of the soul was not taught in the Bible, but that eternal life or immortality is promised conditionally. This "life" is to be obtained only through Christ, who will bestow it at the resurrection after judgment. Those who do not come into connection with the Saving Name through belief of the gospel and baptism will perish like the beasts of the field, for Jesus said, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life."

There was no attempt at oratory, but the matter was presented in such a manner as to almost compel belief where the Bible is recognized as the only rule of faith. I wish I could remember the whole lecture, but Mr. Evans says he will lend me a book called the "Problem of Life," by Thos. Williams, of Chicago, which treats on the same subject. If you would like to read it I will send you a copy.

It appears that the Christadelphians have another meeting after the lecture for the purpose of breaking bread together in memory of Christ's death "until he come." I did not remain to this meeting but stayed through the half-hour's intermission between the two meetings and conversed with Mr. O'Neil, the young man I wrote you about, whom Mr. Evans converted from Catholicism. I asked him to tell me what he could about the people present; what was their nationality and previous religious convictions. He smiled and said, "Well, we are pretty well mixed up here, Although few in number as yet, we have English, Irish, Swedes, French and Americans among us. We have come out of various religions. Some were Baptists, some Methodists, a few Episcopalians, and two Catholics. That man over there (pointing to a tall man across the hall) was a rabid Orangeman a few months ago, and I was a Catholic, probably as radically opposite in our views and sympathies as any two men could possibly be, but now we are brethren in Christ Jesus and sit side by side around the table of the Lord each first day of the week in loving harmony."

He also pointed out a man who had been brought up an Episcopalian, but, being a thinking man, had gradually lost his faith and was almost an infidel when he became interested in Christadelphian teachings and joyfully embraced them. It was a strange gathering truly, but no one could doubt their sincerity or honesty.

When I left the hall I stepped into the Salvation Army meeting a few minutes. I used to enjoy such meetings, but now, for some reason, I actually felt disgusted. I could not help drawing a contrast between the two meetings. Upstairs all was quiet and orderly, with the Bible very much in evidence. In the other hall they were laughing, and shouting and crying; praying in a sort of frenzy, and jumping up to “tell their experience” in a rambling, taunting, disconnected way; and not a Bible to be seen in the hall except the one used by the leader. There was no attempt to explain the teachings of the Bible. Sinners were continually exhorted to “come to Jesus” but they were not informed how to come except to go forward and be prayed for.

If i had to choose between the Christadelphians and the Salvation Army I certainly would choose the former.

I finally went home in a strange state of mind, wishing above all things that I knew positively who is right in such a conflict of doctrines. May the Lord in his mercy lead me into the true light.

W.H. Clough, The Christadelphian Advocate, February, 1901

“GREATER HAMILTON EXCLUSIVELY UNAMENDED” ECCLESIAL “FOLLOW-UP”

Many brethren received the following information from bro. John Manson through e-mail recently, but we provide the following sample, excluding their Statement of Faith document and Contact Information page they provide.

1st - The Introductory e-mail dated January 13th:

To the members of the Unamended Christadelphian community,

Please find attached a followup to the announcement in the Advocate December 2014 for the Greater Hamilton Exclusively Unamended ecclesia.

Included in PDF form are a letter of introduction, a copy of our statement of faith (originally adopted by the Hamilton ecclesia in 1907), and a contact list for our brothers. This is being sent out to the email addresses that we have

identified and as such many are missing. It is our intent to reach all of the unamended community so please pass this along to others.

In our Masters Service;

John Manson

2nd - Letter to the “members of the Unamended Christadelphian community:

As a follow-up to the Advocate announcement in the December 2014 issue regarding the formation of the new Greater Hamilton Exclusively Unamended ecclesia, we are pleased to provide this information update. The Greater Hamilton ecclesia was formed for the purpose of providing a light stand for those seeking to serve God in accordance with the admonition contained in Matthew 7:

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

It seems that many ecclesias are following a path that is as close to the edge of the spiritual cliff as they can go, rationalizing that the Lord will sort it all out at his return. These ecclesias, and their members, have strayed from the doctrines expressed by early writers such as Bro. Thomas Williams, and have invited, welcomed and accepted Amended and UA08 visitors to partake in their services. They have tolerated, welcomed and accepted members involved in divorce and remarriage, and other adulterous relationships. There are a few brothers and sisters, however, that understand that the only safe path to travel is as close to the center of the “strait and narrow” path as we can be.

This is why the Greater Hamilton Exclusively Unamended ecclesia was formed, to provide a meeting where those of like mind (spiritual fellows) might meet together for mutual study and encouragement in our walk to serve and honor God. We meet on the basis of being exclusively Unamended, understanding that the description of “exclusive” does not apply to anyone who will partake of the memorial emblems with those who believe and/or teach false doctrine. We further understand that the Amended, UA08, NASU and CGAF communities, as well as the OO and WCF organizations believe and teach false doctrines and do not fall under the definition of “exclusive”. Christadelphians, Brethren in Christ, must surely understand God’s

requirement of “forsaking all others”, spiritually and morally. To do otherwise is to perhaps risk not being in fellowship with God.

Our statement of faith is the 1877 Birmingham Statement of Faith (attached). This is the very same statement which was adopted by the Hamilton Christadelphian Ecclesia in 1902. Any who agree with and support a consistently exclusive position will be welcomed to meet and fellowship with us each Sunday.

In the true Hope of Israel,

Signed - Don L. Lockard, John Manson, David Manson

For the Greater Hamilton Exclusively Unamended Ecclesia

A negative response was soon received regarding their Ecclesial Statement claiming that the authoring brothers were not truly “unamended” but that *the original Unamended position was about fellowshiping the most amount of believers possible and not about cutting brethren off*. This is an ignorant and dangerous misconception. But many are not interested in the facts, are they? Though it is true that the “Unamended” brethren were the ones being cut off by Birmingham, this was not an entirely one way matter as many, especially Bro. Thomas Williams, understood that fundamental doctrines had been compromised leading up to the “amendment” push. When there were pleas for unity bro. Williams was quick to counter those cries when he wrote in June of 1901:

“...there are real doctrinal differences of a serious character, and these cannot be compromised for union, however much we may naturally desire to see an end of all contentions...it is to be feared that the danger we are now speaking of is overlooked by some who are crying out for ‘unity’ ... disregard of duties incumbent upon a faithful maintenance of the Truth and pure fellowship based upon fundamental principles must be condemned and carefully guarded against.”

The correspondent goes on to claim that *Christ did not isolate himself*, in order to promote the false idea that Christ was open to everyone. A very loose claim when Christ laid very specific parameters when he stated - *“Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?...whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister and mother”* (Matt. 12:47-50).

We only point out such a response to demonstrate the ongoing ignorance regarding what the Unamended position is and its historical roots; as well as the serious misrepresentations that exist regarding Fellowship. While conservative brethren continue to openly state where they stand in belief and practice, those opposed to the exclusive nature of the THE TRUTH continue to respond with humanistic, social based emotion. No doubt that in these last days a “veil” of flesh has been put over many eyes. Stand fast brethren! - S.K.

EDITORIAL FLYLEAF



SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

This issue of the S.K. marks the final magazine of the 2015 subscription year. Please refer to the information on the back cover as well as the included subscription slip for renewal information.

NOTE FROM A SUBSCRIBER

“Just finished the latest SK and noted the message on the copies of Worlds Redemption still available. I was in contact with my sister who is now part of the UAO8 group. She passed me several copies of Selected Works by Thomas Williams as she said they are not appropriate any more and contain controversial issues. I suspect this is a general feeling with the majority of the former unamended ecclesia. Remember they signed on that they would not teach controversial subjects. It appears that the writings of TW fall into that category and are not recommended reading any more. So sad!”

“CHRISTADELPHIAN CHURCH”?

It was recently brought to our attention that an Unamended Ecclesia in Canada has a sign outside of their meeting hall that proclaims - “Woodstock Christadelphian Church”.



We understand that no such sign existed in the not so distant past. When this was erected, we do not know. But, when did Unamended ecclesias start becoming “churches”? We have heard of such a practice within Amended circles, and maybe there have been isolated cases within the Unamended community. But it is very sad if not tragic to see this openly embraced in the Unamended Community, especially with all that is known of the word “church” and all that it represents. Even in their opening description of themselves on their web page they describe themselves as a “church”. They do go on to say in their “About Us” section that they are *“The Woodstock Christadelphian Ecclesia (the official name).”* But go on to reveal that *“like most Christian*

churches, is a registered Canadian charitable organization.” We guess that the spiritual climate that deems it acceptable to identify itself as a “church” goes hand in hand with all other worldly philanthropies and schemes. Do we desire to be truly separate, a group of “called out ones” firmly allied with Christ, understanding the consequences that go with such a stand, and trusting that though we may plant the seed God will give the increase? OR, do we wish to blur the lines between ourselves and the world with the excuse that it will make Christadelphianism more palatable to the alien? If we choose to compromise ourselves to be more attractive, then what exactly are we inviting the alien to be a part of? The snowball of Unamended Christadelphian dissolution is quickly turning into an avalanche - as this is only one example of many. - S.K.