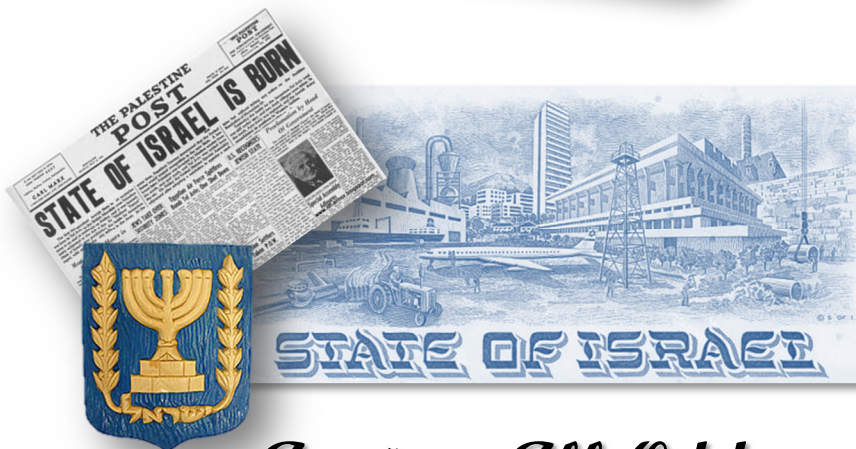
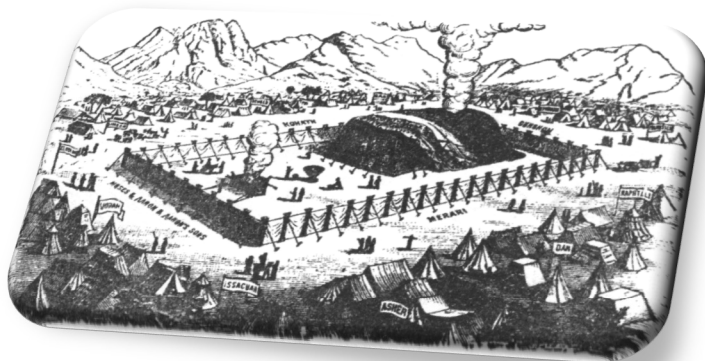


THE SANCTUARY-KEEPER

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



Against All Odds

The Sanctuary-Keeper is published on a quarterly basis. 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*

Printing & Distribution:
Bobby Henderson
bobdebhend@aol.com

Compilation & Publishing:
Aaron Thomas
aaronthomas2@juno.com

Please mail
subscriptions to:

The Sanctuary-Keeper
P.O. Box 13045
Maumelle, AR 72113

Internet Version
www.sanctuary-keeper.com

CONTENTS

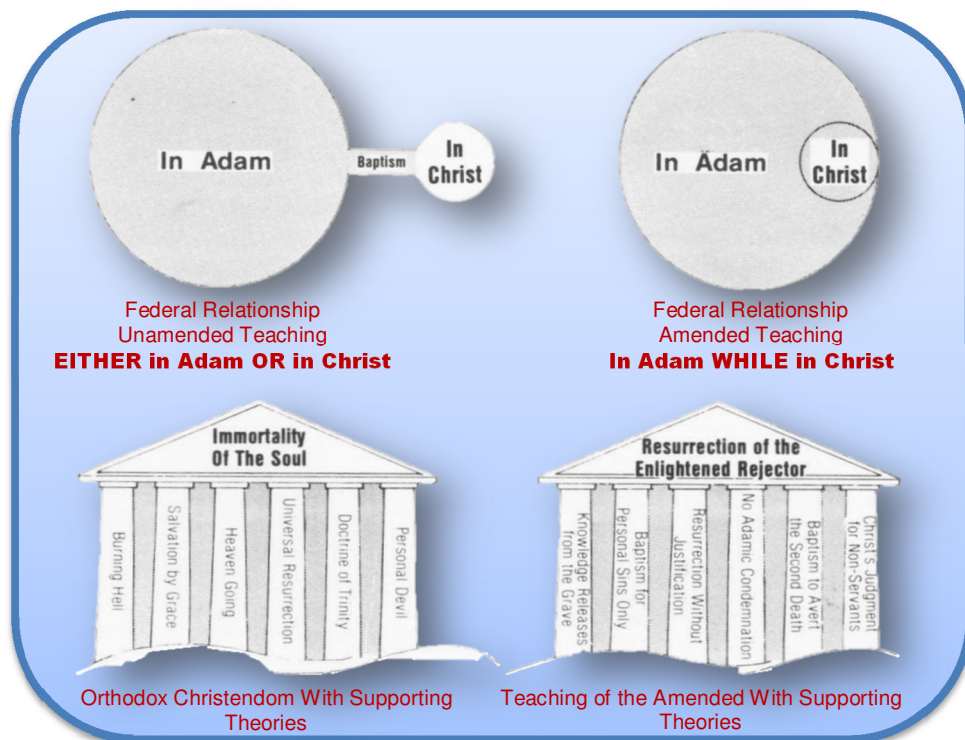
3rd Quarter 2011

- 1 Lessons Learned From Providence
- 13 A Study In Black and White
- 15 Summoned Before Jury Duty
- 20 "Against All Odds" – The Establishment of The Nation of Israel
- 33 The Doctrine of Fellowship
- 39 "Selah"
- 39 Editorial Comment – "Demoralizing Statements"
- 44 Editorial Flyleaf

Back Inside Cover - Illustrations

Back Cover – "Not Of this World"





THE ORIGIN AND EXTENT OF THE KINGDOM OF MEN

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

THE FEET OF THE IMAGE

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

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE IMAGE

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

**HEAD OF GOLD
BABYLON**

**BREAST/ARMS
OF SILVER
PERSIA**

**THIGHS OF BRASS
GREECE**

**LEGS OF IRON
ROME**

**FEET OF IRON
AND CLAY
NATIONS OF EUROPE**



Not Of This World

We are not at liberty to unite with the present world as regards its aims and principles and pleasures. We do not belong to it if we belong to Christ; for he expressly said, "I am not of this world;" and he affirmed the same fact of his disciples, saying, "Ye are not of this world." There are some who say "That was all very well for Christ and his apostles." Those who speak in this style give evidence that they are yet strangers and foreigners, and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; for the house of God is one, and the principle appertaining to one part belongs to all. John says, "He that saith he abideth in him, *ought himself so to walk EVEN AS HE WALKED;*" and Paul tells us as concerning his own case, that he obtained mercy that Christ might set him forth "for a *pattern to them that should hereafter believe on him* to life everlasting (1 Tim. 1:16)." He also plainly commands us to be followers of him as he was of Christ (1 Cor. 11:1)." From this it will appear how unscriptural and dangerous is that style of talk which would seek to excuse modern believers from aiming at the standard exhibited in Christ and the apostles. There is no other saving standard. If we fail of this, we fail altogether: for it is by this we are to be tried. The standard men set up for themselves and one another, will be nowhere in the great day of judgment. They will vanish as the snow does before the heat. Men may comfort themselves now in measuring themselves by themselves and by the wicked world outside; but where will be their consolation when Christ refuses to try men by any rule but his own?

Therefore it remains that the saints are not of this world. Their sentiment is the one expressed in the Psalm read: "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." The world as at present constituted is in its aggregate "the tents of wickedness." It is founded on "the lust of the eye, and the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life." It is, therefore, impossible that a man of God can be a dweller among them or even be content to enjoy their recognition. The saints cannot be friends with the world. The world hated Christ and it will hate his friends if they are so in deed and in truth. The world's friendship is a dangerous thing. Its countenance is almost certain death. A man may say "I like it," but it is the old man that says that. The new man, who counts all things but dung that he may win Christ, would feel he was betraying Christ if he accepted recognition at the hands of those who despise God. What the old man likes is something to be on our guard against. The new man should be allowed to rule in all things. Nay, he will rule in the elect of God, for where he rules not, God's choice does not lie. Christ's words on this point are plain: "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be." It is not sufficient that man enroll himself as a servant; he must be a servant in more than name if he is to be of any acceptance with the Father who sent Christ as one who served. He must "follow" Christ, and, following him, is doing as he did, in all the particulars he had indicated for our guidance. Preaching true doctrine is a part, but only a part of this service: it largely includes righteous and benevolent deeds performed in the glory of Him from whom comes all power to perform deeds of any kind, and to whom, therefore, all glory belongs.

Robert Roberts, *The Christadelphian*, January, 1876, pp. 16,17

THE SANCTUARY – KEEPER

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

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

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

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

VOLUME 21

3rd QUARTER, 2011

NUMBER 3

LESSONS LEARNED FROM PROVIDENCE

Continued from the 2nd Quarter

JOSEPH is another example of one who displayed great faith and patience while waiting for the Providential Will of Yahweh to be revealed. As will be seen, there is perhaps no stronger illustration in scripture of a man who persevered so faithfully and patiently for such long periods of time, even when it would have appeared to all others that he had been forsaken by Yahweh. Throughout the account of his life, it is not once recorded that he questioned, complained, or lost faith and hope while enduring great physical difficulty and mental anguish. Rather, the Scriptures detail the manner in which he patiently waited for the Providential Will and Plan of Yahweh to be revealed to him.

Joseph's character as a young man of 17 years old is described throughout Gen 37 as one who could not tolerate sin and evil character, being greatly influenced by the Word of God that most certainly had been taught to him

throughout his childhood, and proving the validity of **Proverbs 22:6** that states, “train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.” It was surely this well-grounded belief and the faith that enabled Joseph to continue steadfastly throughout a lifetime filled with great adversity. This adversity faced, however, was for ultimate good, not only for him but for his entire household, though it was impossible for him to know this while enduring his severe trials.

Brother Roberts expounds upon this principal, saying that there are cases, “of calamity divinely permitted to faithful men for the accomplishment of certain moral results with reference to God's ultimate purpose with them in the time of the end. This is a principal of very frequent illustration throughout the scriptures. It is condensed into the saying, ‘Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.’ As this chastening is by means of evil it follows that circumstances of an utterly vexatious and apparently fortuitous character may be of God, though His voice and hand may be unmanifest, and worse—hid in the storm. We shall not in all things be able to read present experience aright till we can look upon it from the serene atmosphere of the kingdom of God.”

The traumatic events that occurred continually throughout Joseph's life were instigated in order to accomplish a specific purpose, which Joseph ultimately recognized, but only after the events were completed. In **Gen 45:7-8**, he acknowledges this fact, stating to his brethren, “God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me here, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and the lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.” He later reiterates this recognition in **Gen 50:20**, again saying to his brethren, “But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save many people alive.”

As we have all experienced, it is easy to look back retrospectively at events that have occurred in our lives and realize why certain events transpired or why certain trials were necessary for our learning. However, while going through the experience, it is easy to be confused or at a loss regarding the intended lesson that we are to learn or in regard to the direction that Yahweh intends our lives to take. The life of Joseph is no different. Certainly he would have experienced much confusion as to why events in his life transpired the way they did; nevertheless, as stated earlier, the Scriptural record of his life discloses no time in which he lost faith or hope in Yahweh. Rather, he continued in patient and faithful perseverance. We must seek to follow this example throughout our lives if we are to ultimately be greatly blessed as was Joseph. With this in mind, we will now look to the specific events of Joseph's life in seeking to derive the strength necessary to overcome the difficulties that are intended to mold and shape us into polished stones fit for the kingdom.

Hatred against Righteousness

The first point that should be noted in Joseph's life is a very simple lesson that all believers will do well to recognize and learn at a young age: that he was hated because he sought righteousness and a possessed faithful character. Christ declares in **John 3:19-20**, *"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."* Joseph's attempts to walk in righteousness prompted his brethren to hate him because it contrasted and exposed their evil, being an example of the concept spoken of by Christ. Those who desire to abide in sin will react with anger and hatred to those who seek to expose their evil doing. Rather than being illuminated and enlightened by the light of Truth and righteousness, they seek to extinguish the light so that they can feel more at ease in the state of darkness in which they abide.

As we know, jealousy also played a large role in the fierce and violent reaction towards Joseph by his brethren, as they came to the recognition that he was special. Not just in the eyes of Jacob by whom he was beloved, but by Yahweh who revealed through dreams Joseph's future position of prominence among his brethren.

Regarding Joseph's brethren, **Gen 37:18-20** records, *"And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him. And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams."* Such were the malicious plans that sprung from envy and hatred towards their brother. Envy turned into hatred and hatred ultimately leads to violence.

This sinful process is displayed throughout Scriptures, beginning with Cain's jealousy, hatred and murder of Abel and again being exemplified in the Jews' envy, hatred and crucifixion of Christ. Though his brethren conspired to murder Joseph, this was not Yahweh's intended course for him. His life was therefore spared, though certainly Joseph would not have been consoled by this fact while in the midst of this great trial. **Gen 37:23** states that, *"It came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his coat of colors that was on him; and they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it. And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead with their camels, bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content."*

What agony these words must have caused Joseph! Certainly his pleas with tears would have cried out from the pit, begging his brethren not to carry out this wicked deed upon him! Surely his despair and anguish would have been heard for hours by his brethren, as it is likely that Joseph heard their hard-hearted and malicious plots against him. Did Joseph recognize the hand of Yahweh guiding his life at that time? Surely he would have felt if far from him during his great despair. However, Yahweh was indeed with him, preparing him for a future great blessing and his brethren for great deliverance through his intervention. A less faithful man would have wondered what good his obedience and faithfulness were to him now, as he was taken from the pit by his hard-hearted and malicious brethren and sold to his captors. What agony of spirit would he have encountered! What betrayal he would have felt! Surely a young man of lesser conviction would have, *"cursed God,"* as Job's wife challenged him to do. Joseph, however, remained faithful, knowing that Yahweh would not forsake him if he did so, though **Gen 37:36** records that, *"the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard."*

Faithful and Patient Endurance

Paul writes in **1st Cor 10:13** that, *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."* Certainly this is a testimonial to the faith of Joseph, who was not tested beyond what he could endure. Therefore **Gen 39:2-4** states that, *"the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand."*

Let us take a moment to review the weight of the content of these verses. They describe Joseph as a prosperous man! Joseph prosperous? A slave who had been ripped away from his loving father and sold into a strange land? How could this be so? The reason is, Brothers and Sisters, that prosperity is not measured by the size of one's house or the balance in one's bank account. Prosperity is measured in the blessings from Yahweh: and the fact that Joseph was loved and blessed by Yahweh was apparent not only to Joseph but by those around him, including Potiphar. There is a great lesson for the Believer to learn from this: That our lives – attitude, outlook, character, and walk – should be a reflection of the great blessings that have been bestowed upon us by Yahweh. Those around us – our colleagues, bosses, and yes, our brethren – should recognize this. We should be a reflection of Yahweh's light to all those that we come in contact with, no matter what our earthly situation is. Paul expounds upon this concept in **Phil 4:11-13**, writing, *"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know*

both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Brothers and Sisters, lest at any time we forget, we have been called to be Sons and Daughters of the Lord! Is the recognition of this fact apparent to those around us, as it was in Joseph's life? Or do we cast a black cloud around ourselves and those around us because of our dissatisfaction with the various events and circumstances in our lives? Brother Roberts writes in regard to Joseph at this time that he, **"cheerily and faithfully addresses himself to the duties of his position. Had he been like some, he might have considered himself justified in sulking and dawdling, seeing that he was stolen and unjustly brought into this position. In that case, the Lord would not have been with Joseph; for the Lord is not with those who are slothful and contemptuous, from whatever cause. He is only with those who faithfully act their part in the circumstances into which He may bring them."**

Acceptable Service

The record of Joseph as written in the Scriptures describes him faithfully and patiently making the best of his situation, being comforted and strengthened in the knowledge that Yahweh was always with him. He did not know *why* he was a slave in Egypt, but he nevertheless faithfully endured while in that situation. An additional lesson from this passage should be recognized by the fact that it describes how Joseph willfully, graciously, and humbly *served* Potiphar – an Unbeliever – not begrudgingly but because he understood another concept promoted by Paul in **Col 3:22-24**: *"Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God, and whatever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ."* The account of Joseph's life demonstrates his understanding of this concept – that the LORD had put him in his current situation and even though he did not comprehend why, he still continued to make the best of the situation by doing all things to the best of his abilities. This was pleasing to the LORD. There is a consistent message demonstrated throughout the Scriptures and in most powerful fashion when Christ washed the feet of his disciples: that before one is deemed fit to reign, he must first learn to serve. It appears that Joseph understood this concept well, and we must also come to an understanding of it if we are to follow his example.

Times of Peace and Rest from Trial

Another important concept demonstrated in Joseph's life is that the LORD grants the faithful believer respites after perseverance through times of great trial. Joseph, having faithfully persisted though being sold into slavery, was then given a brief time period of peace while in Potiphar's house, though it was

not intended to last long. In like manner, we must accept the fact that peace will not last long during our probationary lifetimes. Therefore, when we are granted even a measure of it, it is imperative that we use the time wisely in an effort to gain strength and resolve in the Ways of Yahweh so that we might be adequately prepared for the next trial that we must certainly face – trial that is necessary for our character growth.

This concept of *"difficulty before growth"* is found in the physical law of nature as well, being evidenced in the human body through athletic training, and showing that it is a concept that was created by Yahweh. Growth and endurance is predicated upon subjecting the body to intense discomfort and sometimes pain. However, it is not during the intense training session that the body grows and improves, but rather during the subsequent period of rest and recuperation. If the athlete continues in vigorous labor without rest, then his body will ultimately fail. On the converse, if the athlete continues in a restful state, then all of the physical gains that he worked for will decline and eventually disappear. Therefore, for optimal results, there must be a balance between intense difficulty and recuperation. Our Father who wonderfully created us also knows that in order to achieve optimal spiritual growth, there must be a balance of trial and peaceful recuperation for the Believer. If there was only trial, then we would eventually be broken. If there were only rest, then there would be no spiritual or character growth that is required of all believers who are in need of being molded and shaped for future glory.

In Joseph's case, as with ours, the respite from difficulty must be used wisely and faithfully in an effort to *"gird up our loins,"* so that we are able to take on the next difficulty that must surely be faced for the promotion of our spiritual growth. Joseph must have understood this concept, for he used his God-given respite to wisely build up his spiritual strength and was therefore able to withstand the next grievous trial that he faced – being falsely accused by Potiphar's wife and subsequently being cast into prison.

Temptation avoided but trial continues

Gen 39:7-9 records that, *"It came to pass after these things (Joseph's respite and blessings) that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master knoweth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; there is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back anything from me but thee, because thou art his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"* Joseph's response to Potiphar's wife reveals the depth of his faithful character, as he refuses to not only sin against Potiphar, but more importantly against Yahweh. A faithless man would have succumbed to her continual temptation, believing that Yahweh had forsaken him and seeing no reason to continue in belief and righteous action. Joseph, however, continued to believe, though unvisited either by angelic presence or by vision, because he had faith that the unseen Hand of

Yahweh continued to guide and direct his life, again demonstrating the topic at hand: the display of Faith & Patience while waiting to witness and understand the lofty Providential ways of Yahweh.

His efforts to repel the daily advances of Potiphar's wife left her undeterred, however, as her persistence is recorded in **Gen 39:10-12**: *"It came to pass, as she spoke to Joseph day by day that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her. And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his work; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by the garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got out."* By this righteous action, Joseph obeyed the instruction later written by Paul in **1st Cor 6:18** to, *"flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body."* He did what we should all do when confronted by what we know is a sinful situation – he ran from it, not tarrying around it, considering it, or partaking of it in any way.

As faulty mortals, we desire instant reward for what we believe to be a job well done, but this is not always the way of Yahweh. How many times, after we think we have made the right decision or done what we believe is Biblically correct, do we then demonstrate an attitude directed toward Yahweh of, *"I've done what I was supposed to do, now give me the blessing that I deserve"*? And how many times are we subsequently frustrated when we don't receive the blessing or answers that we think we are deserving of? The fact of the matter is that we *deserve nothing* from Yahweh. Rather, all is grace, or an undeserved gift from Him. Joseph's understanding of this principal allowed him to remain faithful during the difficult time that followed his, *"doing the right thing,"* as we know that he was *not* immediately blessed for doing so, but was in fact faced with more trial and hardship.

Gen 39:20 records, *"And Joseph's master took him, and put him into prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison."* A lesser man would have questioned the wisdom of Yahweh in what would appear as a punishment for trying to act righteously during trial. A less faithful man would have, like Cain, become angry with the Lord for what would seem to be an unfair situation. A lesser man would have come to the conclusion that the LORD had forsaken him these two times of his life, so that he would then forsake the LORD. Faithful and patient Joseph was not destroyed by this grievous trial, but rather remained strong and resolute in his beliefs and convictions. He knew that ultimately he would be blessed if he remained righteous in trial, though surely he was confused and not fully understanding of the reason for his continued difficulty. Perhaps, being introspective regarding the situation, he would have gained a measure of comfort by reasoning that, since the crime he was accused of was punishable by death and he had been spared, it was Yahweh's hand that spared him. Whatever the case, because of

his continued faithfulness, he was again blessed and given a respite that would allow him time to be strengthened before the next trial commenced.

In **Gen 39:21-23** it is written, *"But the LORD was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. The keeper of the prison looked not to anything that was under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper."* Though in prison, Joseph was blessed by Yahweh. Perhaps he felt that his life was slowly wasting away and it would be easy for us to sympathize if he began to doubt the fulfillment of the dreams that he had as a young man that prophesied that he would rise to preeminence amongst his brethren and they would do homage to him. After all, not only was he far away from them in the land of Egypt, but it would appear that he was just rotting away in a dungeon! The record never indicates that this was Joseph's understanding, which alludes to his comprehension that it is necessary to exhibit patience during tribulation, while always looking forward to the coming blessing that will be granted by Yahweh for those who do so. This concept is verified by Paul in **Heb 6:12**, when he wrote, *"That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."* James also writes regarding this most important concept in **1:2-4**, saying, *"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."*

Because Joseph continued to demonstrate faith and patience, he was rewarded when Pharaoh became displeased with his Chief Butler and Baker and had them cast into the dungeon with Joseph. **Gen 40:4-5** says, *"And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them: and they continued a season in prison. And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were bound in prison."* Verse 8 says, *"And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me them, I pray you."*

The continued faithfulness of Joseph during trial is again displayed in his interaction with the Butler and Baker. By his response it is clear that Joseph believed that Yahweh continued with him, though unseen and unvisited throughout his time in the dungeon, for his response shows his surety that Yahweh will provide him with the interpretation of the dreams. He also acts as a witness to Yahweh, even during this time of distress, by making sure that the Butler and Baker understand that the interpretation is of the LORD and not by his own doing.

The Believer's own duty of action

After interpreting the dream for the Chief Butler and understanding from it that he would soon be released from the dungeon and allowed back into service with Pharaoh, Joseph takes the opportunity to petition the Chief Butler to act on his behalf, saying in **Gen 40:14-15**, *"But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house. For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon."*

Here is an important lesson when considering the unseen Providential Ways of Yahweh as demonstrated by Joseph's *action* – for the Believer is *expected and required to take action when given the opportunity*. It is not acceptable for the Believer to sit back and ask for Yahweh's help while making no attempt to discern the situation and act in accordance with what he believes the LORD would have him do. It is certainly understood that we cannot know and perfectly discern the mind and plan of Yahweh regarding us. However, it must also be understood that the LORD *will* bless our actions and guide us in the right direction—but *first we must act!* Brother Roberts writes in regard to this principal that, *"We ought never to neglect those reasonable measures which are calculated to bring about any result we may desire. When we have committed the matter to God, and taken care to avoid every element of wrong doing in our proceedings, we may go ahead with the assurance that God will prosper us, if the enterprise upon which we may be engaged is for our good in relation to Him. If we sit down supinely and act the part of the sluggard or the fool, our prayers will ascend to heaven as un-regarded as the lowing of oxen."*

Many times in our prayers we ask the LORD to, "bless the works of our hands." How then, can we expect Him to bless us when our hands do no work or we take no action? Joseph was ready and willing to act when presented with the opportunity to be set free from the dungeon in which he was imprisoned. When the interpretation of the dream was fulfilled and Pharaoh restored the Chief Baker to his prior position, certainly Joseph would have believed that his time of imprisonment would be short and that he would be freed from his wrongful bonds. But a week passed and Joseph heard nothing. Then a month; then two; then six, and then a year and then two, as **Gen 40:23** records, *"Yet did not the Chief Butler remember Joseph, but forgot him."*

Patient waiting

How utterly devastating the passing of the weeks and months, and then two years must have been to Joseph! As the hope for his soon release turned to the recognition that Yahweh had determined that his freedom would be delayed, a man of lesser faith and patience would have been utterly crushed. But as Brother Roberts writes in regard to the patience that is required of us while Yahweh's Providential Plan is worked out, *"We have to ponder the gradualness*

of the divine operations, and the faith required of those who are the subject of them." This particular account of Joseph's life is a strong example to Believers of all ages and particularly during these latter times that precede the return of Jesus Christ. We must be like Joseph and not become discouraged and have our faith crushed when the signs of the times seem to indicate that we, too, will soon be released from the dungeon of sin and this body of mortality only to have Yahweh seemingly "delay" Christ's return because it is not yet the appropriate time. Like Joseph, we must display the unwavering patience and faith that is necessary while awaiting that great day, knowing of a surety that what has been promised will be fulfilled. Joseph's recognition that his release from prison was only a matter of time enabled him to patiently wait for its fulfillment. In like manner, the return of the Messiah is a certainty and we must remain faithful and patient in waiting for this glorious event to become a reality, though days, weeks, years, and yes, decades may pass while the Elohim continue to work out Yahweh's Plan in secret until the time is appropriate for his return.

And so it is that after two long years had passed in which Joseph continued to faithfully serve not only Yahweh but his earthly master, the LORD rewarded his patience. As the account specifies, Pharaoh himself dreamed two dreams that troubled him because he could sense their importance, but not one person in his kingdom had the ability to decipher. The Chief Baker, now having remembered the manner in which Joseph had accurately and completely translated the meaning of his dream some two years previously, relays this information to Pharaoh and Joseph's long-awaited release from the dungeon becomes a reality. As Joseph had surmised two years prior, the Chief Butler was indeed the source of his freedom and the means by which he was released, but only now was the time appropriate for its accomplishment. The lesson of this example is so important for the Believer to understand! Yes, by faith and awareness of the situation, Joseph was able to rightly discern the means by which he would gain his freedom. His timing, however, was inaccurate, necessitating that he continue to patiently wait and faithfully work until *Yahweh* determined that the time was appropriate! As Believers who seek to discern the signs of the times from a prophetic viewpoint, we may recognize the events that will culminate in the return of Christ and we may even witness these events beginning to take place. However, it is imperative that we, like Joseph, continue to patiently wait and faithfully walk while waiting for the day when *Yahweh* determines to send His Son back to the earth to set up the kingdom. Only by following the example given to us in Joseph's life will we be rewarded as was Joseph: after long and arduous probation in which we seek to remain faithful to Yahweh and His Commandments will He mercifully elevate us to great blessing in the kingdom age.

Within a day Joseph rose from the depths of imprisonment in the dungeon to a position of great power and authority in the land of Egypt. What a great demonstration of how quickly events can be fulfilled and completed when

Yahweh has determined that the time is appropriate – yet another lesson that the present-day Believer should take to heart. As **Gen 41:38-42** records, “*And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such an one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is? And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shown thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art. Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.*”

This authority and power granted to Joseph became the means by which he became savior to his brethren and the fulfillment of the dreams that had helped maintain his faith over the prior 13 years. Of course, as is the Way of Providence, only in retrospect was Joseph able to completely recognize how Yahweh, through the Elohim, had worked on his behalf over the course of those long 13 years in order to accomplish His Plan. Because he remained patient and faithful throughout this troublesome time even though he certainly did not understand the meaning of the events in his life, Joseph was ultimately blessed richly. We, brothers and sisters, must seek to do the same throughout our lives if we are to receive the blessings that have been promised to those who are found so-doing.

The character traits that an understanding of Providence are meant to cultivate are clearly demonstrated throughout Joseph’s life:

1. **Faithfulness and complete trust in the Lord**, though believing that he was utterly alone throughout his 13-year trial in Egypt and although experiencing great difficulty while persevering through seemingly tragic events in his life. As Brother Roberts writes in regard to persevering through what we believe are evil circumstances, “*We must never forget that the present life in its best state is a state of exile from Eden; therefore a state of separation from divine fellowship and perfect blessedness. Out of evil, and by means of it, God is bringing great good, but till the good arrive, evil will remain the characteristic of our present experience. The occurrence of evil is one of the necessities involved in the development of saints from a race of unjustified sinners. Let us rightly interpret our lives, and not imagine ourselves God-forsaken if we are called upon to drink perhaps many a bitter cup. In everything consider the end. The end will be joy and gladness unutterable.*”
2. **Patience in waiting for the Will of Yahweh to be revealed**; Joseph knew that the Lord intended great blessing for him as evidenced by his dreams as a young man. However, in order to receive these great blessings it was necessary for him to patiently endure much hardship and disappointment.

3. **Prayerful Consideration and contemplation of the Will of Yahweh**, while always giving credit to the LORD, to whom all credit is due. At every opportunity Joseph made sure that all of those around him understood that all talents and blessings that he received were from Yahweh. Only through continual prayer can this faithfulness be manifested.
4. **Faithful Action in accordance with the Will of Yahweh**, and
5. **Peace and contentment** in the recognition that Yahweh never left or forsook him, even in his darkest days. The result of these lessons learned prepared Joseph for the blessing that was given not only in his natural life, but allowed him to remain faithful until his life’s end while looking forward to the future establishment of the Kingdom. It is because of this hope of Abraham that Joseph left instruction not to leave his bones in the land of Egypt, but as written in Gen 50:25, “*And Joseph took an oath of the Children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from here,*” as he understood that the blessings of Abraham were yet future and in the Land of Promise.

Arthur Sankey

(Yahweh willing, next installment to consider the life of the Apostle Paul)

The Effect of Trouble

Sufferings make or mar one’s character. Troubles make men either love or hate God. Grief will turn them into either optimists or pessimists in proportion as they see an economy, a ministration in suffering. Pain will sweeten or sour their disposition in proportion as they see a service in it. Sorrow may make men melancholy and morose; and it may give them a chastened joy, a refined happiness. We can only justify suffering in that we see in it a purpose, a mission, necessary and beneficial. April, 1895, Christadelphian Advocate

A STUDY IN BLACK AND WHITE

IN Western culture, the colors black and white have come to be equated with certain meanings – black symbolizing evil and white symbolizing good. Both of these words evoke certain images that support these concepts. We think of the black hat on the bad cowboy, the black clothing of the melodramatic villain, the idea of someone being blackballed or blacklisted, or the person known as the black sheep of the family. Likewise, the word white brings to mind images of the bride dressed in white, the robes of the angels, the pristine brightness of freshly fallen snow, the clouds of heaven.

Even the definitions to the accepted understanding of the concepts these words present. According to the online encyclopedia Wikipedia, “*black is the color of objects that do not emit or reflect light in any part of the visible spectrum; they absorb all such frequencies of light.*” Is this not a perfect description of one whose life is darkness? “But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness.” (Matt. 6:23). The definition for white also embodies the accepted concept. According to Wikipedia, “White is a color, the perception of which is evoked by light that stimulates all three types of color sensitive cone cells in the human eye in nearly equal amounts and with high brightness compared to the surroundings. A white visual stimulation will be void of hue and grayness.” This brings to mind the “children of light.” “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.” (Eph. 5:8)

Of course, all these cultural icons and even the definitions themselves have their root in Yahweh and His Holy Writ. It is there, in the Scriptures, that we see the establishment of these precepts. The color black symbolizes sin, death, and famine and is one of the most commonly used colors in the Bible. It describes the color in the middle of the night (Prov. 7:9); diseased skin (Job 30:30); healthy hair (Song of Solomon 5:11; Matt. 5:36); corpses faces (Lamentations 4:8); the sky (Jeremiah 4:8); the darkening of the sun and the moon (Joel 2:10); horses (Zechariah 6:2; Revelation 6:5); and marble (Esther 1:6). The color white symbolizes purity, righteousness, joy, light and a white horse symbolizes victory. It is used in the Bible to describe the color of animals (Gen. 30:35); manna (Exodus 16:31); both hair and pustules located in plague sores (Lev. 13:3-39); garments (Ecc. 9:8; Dan. 7:9); the robes of the righteous (Rev. 19:8); horses (Zech. 1:8; Rev. 6:2; Rev. 19:8); forgiven sins (Psalm 5:7; Isaiah 1:8); a refined remnant (Dan. 11:35; 12:10); the beloved one (Song of Solomon 5:10); the white of an egg (Job 6:6); the shining garments of angels

(Rev. 15:6); and of the transfigured Christ (Matt. 17:2); hair (Matt. 5:36); gravestones (Matt. 23:27); and the great throne of Judgment (Rev. 20:11). So, it is Yahweh, in His Infinite Wisdom, who first established that these two colors would have these connotations: black for evil; white for purity. Yahweh created Black and White.

These two colors, when mixed together, create gray. When used in a moral sense, gray describes situations that have no clear moral value or is used to describe a balance between an all-black or all-white view (for example, shades of gray represent magnitudes of good or bad.) In Scripture, gray is used only to describe the hair of the elderly (Genesis 42:38, Psalms 71:18, Prov. 20:29), a sign of an aging, mortal creature. Man caused Gray, by mixing sin (black) with the purity (white) of the Creation.

Moving now to a higher plane, we can think of white as representing the purity of the Truth, while black represents the impurities and false doctrines of the flesh. In arguments, things can be black and white, meaning that the issue at hand is dichotomized (having two clear, opposing sides with no middle ground). Either the fundamental doctrines that we have had our eyes and hearts opened to by the writings of Brethren Thomas, Roberts, Williams and Andrew is the Truth or “we are of all men most miserable.” (1st Cor. 15:19). Is it the Truth or have we followed “cunningly devised fables”? Is our understanding of the Truth white or has it been tinged with enough black to make it gray?

Consider! Imagine a gallon of pure white paint, opened and ready. Picture an eyedropper of black paint, dropping a few drops on the surface of the white paint. Not yet stirred, the black droplets just sit there, bleeding slightly into the white paint surrounding them, contaminating the immediate area, but not permeating the whole. At this point, they could be carefully skimmed off the surface with little or no damage to the white paint as a whole. But instead, stir them in. Depending on the number of black drops, the previously pristine white paint now takes on a dull, gray appearance. Once stirred in, the pristine white paint is polluted permanently – it cannot be made white again. If Yahweh’s Word is pure, if it is the Truth, then polluting it with false doctrines is the same as polluting white paint with drops of black. It makes the Truth gray and it can never be made pure again.

From one of our readers

"I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live by the light that I have. I must stand with anybody that stands right, and stand with him while he is right, and part with him when he goes wrong." Abraham Lincoln

SUMMONED BEFORE JURY DUTY

IN these latter days of the Kingdom of Men, the Christadelphian Body is facing many challenges to our faith, our hope and our position before the Creator of the universe. Many of us face problems caused by the declining health of our natural families; the diseases of our own natural bodies; the declining health of the spiritual body of Christ and problems arising from the worldly environment in which we must live in until our Master returns. All of these issues and problems are very taxing to our patience, to our endurance and to our ability to be merciful, kind and forgiving towards others. As we face these problems, we should always remember that we have a great High Priest who knows the feelings of our infirmities and a heavenly Father who has manifested unlimited mercy and longsuffering to His children of all ages.

The specific matter that we wish to address within this article is the situation of a brother or sister in Christ who has received a summons from the local authorities to serve on a jury of the court. This subject along with many others that impact our relation with the governmental authorities of the land is one that all brethren should know how to address if the situation ever arises.

As we contemplate this subject along with other related matters such as voting in a political election, serving in the military, selection of a career, association with those not in covenant relation with Yahweh, we should keep in mind that there are at least two primary bodies of law that should govern our actions. We must understand and keep the laws of the land in which we live until they interfere or violate or contradict the laws, commandments, testimonies, requirements of the laws of our heavenly Father. When that conflict happens, we must be led, guided and directed by Yahweh's laws and always be ready to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear (1st Peter 3:15).

We should always keep in mind that our conduct with those in the Brotherhood and with those in the world may impact the decisions of the judicial administrators. We should never be hypocrites. The apostle James teaches us that our faith should be supported by our works and our works by our faith. Our actions and our speech should never contradict each other.

Let us first review our responsibilities in regards to the law of the land. In Romans 13:1-7 and Titus 3:1, we are commanded to be subject unto the higher powers or authorities of the land. We receive this commandment because all

authoritative powers of the Kingdom of Men are put in place by Yahweh himself. We are commanded to "*Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's*" – Luke 20:25. And this we should always do without complaint, murmuring or whining unless the obedience to the laws of the land would cause us to become disobedient to the laws of the eternal Deity. We are taught in Acts 5:29 to obey God rather than man.

What should we do if we are summoned to Jury Duty?

- We should never ignore the summons. To do so, would be to create a legal offense in the eyes of the authorities and we may be charged with contempt of the Court or suffer other actions of the court that they may require, such as fines or imprisonment. However, we know of no brother or sister who has had to pay fines or suffer imprisonment due to their refusal to serve on a jury.
- We should prepare an individual letter which states our convictions regarding this matter. The letter should be to the point, with scriptural references as appropriate. The letter should indicate that you are a member of the Christadelphian community who has historically and continuously refrained from participation in voting or politics.
- It is also advisable to obtain a letter from the Serving Brethren of your local Ecclesia. This letter should also state our beliefs regarding our refusal to participate in the governmental affairs of the land. The Ecclesial letter should also indicate that you are a member in good standing in the Ecclesia. The Christadelphian National Service Committee has examples of both of these letters that can be used as a template for those in need.
- Be prepared. You should be firmly convinced that your stand is in accordance with the commandments of Yahweh. If you are steadfast in your beliefs, you will be able to better face any tough questions that may come your way.

What can our Ecclesias do to help their members overcome the pressure of these situations?

- The Ecclesia should sponsor and support classes and exhortations regarding our requirements to be obedient to the commandments of Yahweh and our requirements to remain strangers and pilgrims.
- Individuals who have experienced these situations should be willing to share their experiences with others.

Why do we believe that we cannot serve on juries? What are our requirements to God?

- We cannot support the judicial branch of local, state or federal governments. The prophet Daniel tells us that the Kingdoms of this world will be destroyed and broken in pieces and consumed by the kingdom of God when the King of Kings and Lord of Lords returns to set up the Kingdom of God. How can we support something that we know will be destroyed? Daniel 2:44
- Under the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, we are commanded to love our enemies, bless them that curse you and do good to them that hate you. Matthew 5:44
- In Romans 12:17, we are commanded to recompense to no man evil for evil.
- In I Corinthians 5:12-13, we are told that God judgeth them that are without (outside the Brotherhood).
- We are commanded to manifest mercy, forgiveness and kindness.

These spiritual characteristics are in direct conflict with the requirements of civil and criminal laws – which are based on justice, recompense, equal rights to all and resistance to evil.

Our beliefs on this subject and our position before the authorities may cause some very hard questions to be thrown at us. The authorities of the land may use every guise possible to trip us up and show that we are not as faithful as we want to be. What would you answer if these questions were raised during your interview with the judicial authorities?

- Would you want a suspect who is accused of murder or rape of your wife, daughter, mother, sister to go unpunished?
- Would you want someone to go unpunished who is accused of brutally beating an infant?
- Would you want someone to go unpunished who stole your life savings?

There are many more very hard questions and scenarios that you may have to respond to when your faith is tested regarding these matters. We have used some very graphic scenarios to show what may be used against us. These questions may or may not be asked. However, as we have already stated – we must always be ready to give an answer for the hope that is within us. We believe that it would be profitable and strengthening to discuss these types of scenarios with other members of your Ecclesia. These brotherly discussions may provide much help in understanding the correct scriptural and faithful responses to these types of questions.

We have tried to provide some scriptures that support our individual faith and the historical position of the Christadelphian body in regard to the subject of serving on the Juries of the world and pronouncing sentence and condemnation on the wickedness of the inhabitants of the world. We hope and pray that each reader of this article will take the responsibility to study this

subject and become firmly entrenched in the Word of God so that we can be firm and steadfast if ever placed in this situation.

Many juror lists are now selected from voter lists, drivers' license lists or other lists in which our names may appear in the governmental records of our country. Knowing that each of us may be summoned to jury duty at any time, it is imperative that we live our lives after the example of our Lord and Savior. We must always be doing our Father's will to the best of our ability. We now provide a few examples of the things that we should be concerned about in our daily spiritual and natural lives (which should never conflict with each other).

- In Hebrews 5, we are told that as we mature in the Truth, each and every individual is commanded to always discern between good and evil. This is not an option but a commandment. When we discern evil, we are commanded in other parts of the Holy Scriptures to take certain actions. Discernment is different than judging to sentence or condemn someone. The requirement to be a spiritual discerner does not conflict with our stand against serving on a Jury. When we exercise spiritual discernment in the brotherhood, our purpose is to manifest our love to God and also to our brethren. We express our love to God by upholding and defending His truth. We express our love to our brethren by helping them return from the evil path that they have chosen to travel. Quoting from a booklet published by the Advocate Committee entitled "Judge Not", we read – *"To call attention to someone's sin is a kindness both to the sinner and to others who might be made to fall because of that sin, besides being a duty toward God"* *"It is not condemnation to call attention to unbelief, misconduct and walking disorderly, but judging righteous judgment for the sake of Truth."* Spiritual discernment is our duty and responsibility. We must do this with the right spiritual attitude and for the right spiritual reasons. We must not condemn our brethren. If we do condemn our brethren, then we are hypocrites when we stand before the authorities and state that we cannot serve on a jury with the purpose to condemn or pronounce sentence on the accused.
- We must not protest the actions of our governments or speak evil of those in authorities.
- We must not complain about the taxes that we are required to pay.
- We must be obedient to the laws of the land, including all traffic laws, all licensing requirements of the businesses that we operate, and other similar laws that may impact our daily lives.
- We must never take our brother or sister to court or initiate any lawsuit against anyone for the purpose of restitution of a perceived wrong.
- We must be careful about what we post on the current social networking systems such as Facebook, Twitter, and other similar methods (or stay away from these mediums altogether – S.K.). We cannot support any political event, rally or candidate in person or through the internet.

The scriptural list below provides a very good summary of many glorious and precious commandments from Yahweh:

Romans 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; Acts 5:29; Daniel 2:44; Luke 12:13-14; I Corinthians 5:12-13; Matthew 7:1-2; Matthew 5:33-40, 44; Romans 12:17, 19; James 2:13; Luke 6:37; Matthew 6:24; II Timothy 2:24; Daniel 4:17; Matthew 26:52; Daniel 2:20-21; Colossians 3:12-14; Acts 4:19; Ephesians 5:15; I Corinthians 6:7

The Christadelphian National Service Committee can provide much more material regarding this subject if needed. Many more scriptures can be referenced to support our position as a stranger and sojourner in this probationary life in which we live. The important thing that we should remember is that we are to love our God with all our heart, soul and mind. If we love Him, we will be obedient to His commandments. We realize that if we are summoned to Jury Duty, we will be tried and tested. As in all cases when our faith is tested, let us remember the commandments of Yahweh and remember that Yahweh will never place more on us than we are able to bear. Our speech and our behavior must always be consistent within the Brotherhood with and without. Let us let our light shine so that others may see the hope that lies within us.

The Christadelphian National Service Committee

Additional comments on Jury Service

The laws and principles by which we must live transcend the laws of any state in every way. The Christadelphian's attitude and conduct are governed by higher principles than the enacted laws of a political state, and it is therefore unthinkable that we should agree to dispense with Christ's principles in order to sit in judgment upon other men according to the state's code of law. To do so would be to adopt a double set of standards: one for ourselves and an entirely different one for others. This we cannot do with a clear conscience before God.

Our only course of action is to disqualify ourselves from jury service. This can be easily achieved by advising the sheriff of the court that our religious convictions make it absolutely impossible for us to judge any matter purely from the point of view of the enacted laws of the state. Potential jurors are required to advise any reason as to why they might not be suitable for jury service and may claim exemption on various grounds. There are few who can claim more palpable reasons for disqualification than Christadelphians, and it is our wisdom and duty to do so.

Pamphlet: *Conscientious Objection to Military Service*

“AGAINST ALL ODDS” The Establishment of the Nation of Israel



“**S**OMETHING unique occurred yesterday in Israel, and only future generations will be able to evaluate the full historical significance of the event. It is now up to all of us, acting out of a sense of Jewish fraternity, to devote, every ounce of our strength to building and defending the State of Israel, which still faces a titanic political and military struggle.”

“Now is not the time for boasting. Whatever we have achieved is the result of the efforts of earlier generations no less than those of our own. It is also the result of an unwavering fidelity to our precious heritage, the heritage of a small nation that has suffered much, but at the same time has won for itself a special place in the history of mankind because of its spirit, faith and vision.”

“The State of Israel was established yesterday and its Provisional Government has already turned to the nations of the world, great and small, in the East and in the West, announcing its existence and its desire to co-operate with the United Nations in the interests of international peace and progress. We have received unofficial reports that several countries have recognized the State of Israel. The first official recognition came from the government of the United States of America. We hope that other nations in the East and in the West soon will follow suit. We are in contact in this matter with all members of the United Nations and with the United Nations itself.”

“But we should not deceive ourselves by thinking that formal diplomatic recognition will solve all our problems. **We have a long thorny path ahead of us.** The day after the State of Israel was established, Tel Aviv was bombed by Egyptian planes. Our gunners brought down one of the planes. Its pilot was

*taken prisoner, and the plane added to our fledgling Air Force. We have also received reports that our country is being invaded from the north, east, and south by the regular armies of the neighbouring Arab States. We face a troubled and dangerous time. The Provisional Government has already complained to the Security Council about the aggression committed by members of the United Nations, and by Britain's ally, Trans-Jordan. It is inconceivable that the Security Council will ignore these wanton acts, which violate the peace, international law, and UN decisions. **But we must never forget that our security ultimately depends on our own might.***

"Finally, we must prepare to receive our brethren from the far-flung corners of the Diaspora; from the camps of Cyprus, Germany, and Austria, as well as from all the other lands where the message of liberation has arrived. We will receive them with open arms and help them to strike roots here in the soil of the Homeland. The State of Israel calls on everyone to faithfully fulfil his duties in defense, construction, and immigrant absorption. Only in this way can we prove ourselves worthy of the hour."

This message was spoken over 63 years ago on May 15, 1948 by the first Prime Minister of Israel, David Ben-Gurion, soon after the invasion of the Arab countries into the newly established state of Israel. (These quotes were obtained from the website www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org which obtained the verbiage from the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs.)

As we read and listen to these comments from this Israeli diplomat, there are some statements that bring our mind to the prophetic plan that has been revealed by our Heavenly Father. It is very interesting that he used the concept of the thorny path. Although, Ben-Gurion may or may not have recognized the significance of these words, we see a modern day fulfillment of the divine words that we read in **Numbers 33:51-55**. *"And the LORD spake unto Moses in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye are passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan; Then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places: And ye shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein: for I have given you the land to possess it. And ye shall divide the land by lot for an inheritance among your families: and to the more ye shall give the more inheritance, and to the fewer ye shall give the less inheritance: every man's inheritance shall be in the place where his lot falleth; according to the tribes of your fathers ye shall inherit. But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell"*.

These verses describe the nations round about Israel as pricks in their eyes and thorns in the Jewish side and that these nations would be a vex unto them. We have definitely seen the fulfillment of this prophecy in this modern age.

The Muslim neighbors of Israel have always wanted to drive Israel out of their land. However, in the latter days of the Kingdom of Men, they do not have the organization or the skills to make their desires come to pass. In every war that Israel has fought with their neighbors in the last few decades, Israel has always been victorious. There should never be any doubt that Israel will continue to hold the upper hand during any future Israel/Arab wars. The Islam/Moslem countries will never be able to bring the Jewish nation to their knees. History bears this out, but more importantly, God has stated that these nations round about His chosen people will be nothing more than thorns in the sides of the Jew.

Another interesting comment made by Ben-Gurion on the day of the invasion from the countries round about Israel is where he and other Israeli leaders in the past have placed their trust. The nation of Israel has and will continue to only trust in their own strength and might. There is no official recognition of their true Deliverer and Savior. This has always been a major problem with the Jewish national leaders. They fail to recognize their God and have forsaken Him who is their place of refuge and protection. Again, we see a modern day fulfillment of the position of their fathers of old. **2nd Chronicles 29:6** reads as follows: *"For our fathers have trespassed, and done that which was evil in the eyes of the LORD our God, and have forsaken him, and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the LORD, and turned their backs."* We also find these words in **Jeremiah 17:13**: *"O LORD, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters."*

We should notice the result of forsaking their God throughout the ages. They would live in a state of shame. The nation of Israel will continue to do so, until He comes whose right it is to rule over them. Israel lives in this state of shame until they finally come to know their God. **Ezekiel 39:26-29** speaks of this situation. *"After that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid. When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations; Then shall they know that I am the LORD their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them anymore there. Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD"*. According to verse 22 of Ezekiel 39, Israel will not know their God and will not be removed from their state of shame until after they are saved from the grasp of the northern Gogian invader.

The events that occurred in the month of May, 1948 changed the entire world from that time forward. In regard to God's Plan and Purpose and the

promises made to the Jewish fathers, this was probably the most dramatic event that the world will witness prior to the return of the Jewish Messiah and the future establishment of the Kingdom of God. All who understand the Abrahamic promises and God's purpose with Israel rejoiced exceedingly and has continued to do so since that momentous event. All who were or are in opposition to God's purposes have cursed that fateful day when the nation of Israel was established.

We would like to briefly review those historical events with the purpose of strengthening the faith of those in covenant relationship with Yahweh, and to encourage those who are not yet in covenant relationship that God has a plan and purpose for His chosen nation and that plan is moving swiftly along the stream of time.

God's Witness

In Isaiah 43:10-12, we read that God declared this nation of Israel was His witness. This was true not only in the days of the prophet, but has been true ever since God choose a special man, Abraham, and made some very unique promises to him. Those promises include a land that would be given to the natural seed of Abraham, the people of the nation of Israel; that those people would be blessed, not because of the individual righteousness, but because of God's love and faithfulness towards Abraham, his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob. In **Genesis 22:16-18**, we read where Yahweh stated – *“That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”*

Israel has been God's witnesses throughout their existence. Let us read of the words of Rahab in **Joshua 2:8-11** – *“And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.”* **Deuteronomy 2:25** also has this to say about this subject – *“This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee.”* The Scriptures teaches that their position as God's witnesses will continue right through the Kingdom Age.

As individuals and nations look at this event in 1948, one must ask how this nation can defeat their mortal enemies over and over and over, even when the

odds of winning and surviving are stacked against the Jewish people? The only place to find this answer is in the divinely inspired Word of God. Let us read Romans 11:1; 1st Samuel 12:22; Isaiah 62:1; and Ezekiel 36:22-24. There are many other places where we can read of the special position that Israel holds in God's heart.

- **Romans 11:1** – *“Hath God cast away His people? God forbid.”*
- **I Samuel 12:22** – *“For THE LORD WILL NOT FORSAKE HIS PEOPLE for His great name's sake; because it hath pleased the LORD to make you His people.”*
- **Isaiah 62:1** – *“For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.”*
- **Ezekiel 36:22-24** – *“Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.”*

The events in 1948 are only a pre-cursor to what is promised to this chosen nation of the great Yahweh. **Micah 4:8** reads – *“And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem”.* We also find this beautiful message in **Zechariah 8:23** – *“Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you”.*

Regardless of their self-reliance, their continual stubbornness, we understand that the Scriptures teaches us that the nation of Israel has to exist before Christ can save them from their latter day enemies and use them as His battle –axe in the initial creation of the Kingdom of God, centered on this small nation of Israel, the first dominion of the world wide Kingdom.

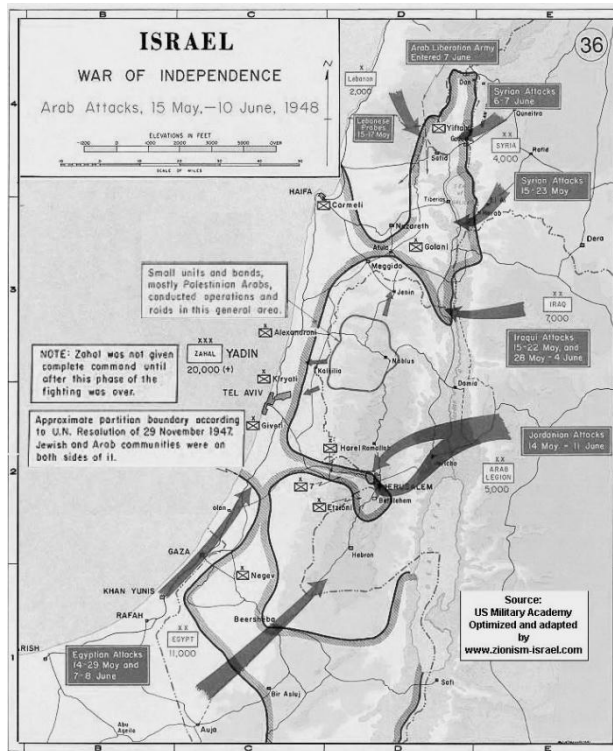
During the initial stages of this historic Israeli War of Independence, we find that the military position of the Jewish nation was not prepared to fight a war against all of its neighbors. On the website www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/myths/mf4.html, we find this information: *“They did not have a single cannon or tank; its Air Force consisted of nine obsolete planes; the Haganah (army) had 60,000 trained fighters, of which only 18,900 were fully mobilized, armed and prepared for war. (There are different numbers provided on different websites). The Israeli Chief of Operations told his leader Ben Gurion that Israel, at best, had only a 50/50 chance of success”.*

There were many notable and courageous battles fought by this fledgling nation. Here are a few that should make the world ask – How could this happen? The information noted below regarding these battles was obtained from the website www.Zionism-israel.com/War_of_Independence.

- **Battle of Nirim** – 45 defenders in Nirim and 30 defenders in Kfar Darom withstood major attack by the Egyptians on May 15.
- **Battle of Yad Mordechai** – May 19-24 – About 110 poorly armed defenders, reinforced at different times by an Israeli platoon and two squads, held off a major, concerted Egyptian attack for five days with two battalions, tanks, artillery and air attacks. The kibbutz finally fell on May 24.
- **First Battle of Negba** – About 140 defenders hold off 1,000 Egyptians who attacked with tank, infantry, and armored cars.
- **Second Battle of Negba** – Again, a small group of defenders withstood a massive Egyptian attack. This was considered a turning point in the battle against the Egyptians in the second period of fighting during July 9 – 18, 1948.

When we look at a map of the invading armies, we are amazed at how Israel could survive against the odds that were stacked against her. The invading nations came at her from all directions except from the west. This map was obtained from the website www.Zionism-israel.com/dic/War_of_Independence.htm.

As we think back on this monumental event, there are several dates before and after this event that the student of prophecy and the lover of Israel should remember and understand.



- **First Zionist Congress – 1897** (see comments below)
- **Balfour Declaration – November 2, 1917** (see comments below)
- **British Mandate – September 26, 1923** (see comments below)
- **Actual Beginning of War – December 1, 1947**
- **Independence of nation of Israel – May 14, 1948**
- **Arab Countries Invaded Israel on May 15, 1948**
- **Armistices –**
 - **Egypt – signed February 24, 1949**
 - **Lebanon – March 23, 1949**
 - **Jordan – April 3, 1949**
- **Six Day War – Recapture of East Jerusalem – June 5 - 10, 1967**

The First Zionist Congress - 1897

The First Zionist Congress was the inaugural congress that was held in Basel (Basle), Switzerland, from August 29 to August 31, 1897. It was convened and chaired by Theodor Herzl, the founder of the modern Zionism movement. The Congress formulated a Zionist platform, known as the Basel program, and founded the Zionist Organization. The program, which came to be known as the Basel program, set out the goals of the Zionist movement. It was adopted on the following terms:

“Zionism aims at establishing for the Jewish people a publicly and legally assured home in Palestine. For the attainment of this purpose, the Congress considers the following means serviceable:

1. The promotion of the settlement of Jewish agriculturists, artisans, and tradesmen in Palestine.
2. The federation of all Jews into local or general groups, according to the laws of the various countries.
3. The strengthening of the Jewish feeling and consciousness.
4. Preparatory steps for the attainment of those governmental grants which are necessary to the achievement of the Zionist purpose.”

Theodor Herzl wrote in his diary (September 1, 1897): “Were I to sum up the Basel Congress in a word - which I shall guard against pronouncing publicly - it would be this: At Basel I founded the Jewish State. If I said this out loud today I would be greeted by universal laughter. In five years perhaps, and certainly in fifty years, everyone will perceive it.” (SK Note: - Once again, we find no reference to the providential hand of Yahweh in these matters.)

The Balfour Declaration of 1917

The Balfour Declaration of 1917 (dated 2 November 1917) was a formal statement of policy by the British government stating that:

“His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours

to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

The British Mandate of 1923

The mandate formalized British rule in the Southern part of Ottoman Syria from 1923–1948. With the League of Nations' consent on 16 September 1922, the UK divided the Mandate territory into two administrative areas, Palestine, under direct British rule, and autonomous Transjordan, under the rule of the Hashemite family from the Kingdom of Hejaz in present-day Saudi Arabia... (Basically east and west of the river Jordan).

The preamble of the mandate declared:

"Whereas the Principal Allied Powers have also agreed that the Mandatory should be responsible for putting into effect the declaration originally made on November 2nd, 1917, by the Government of His Britannic Majesty, and adopted by the said Powers, in favour of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, it being clearly understood that nothing should be done which might prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country".

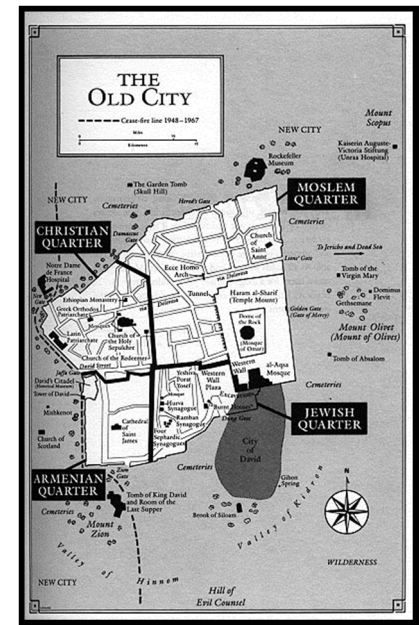
Of course, the most important date that impacts the lives of the covenanted people of God is the return of our Saviour. **Acts 17:31** reads: *"Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."*



Jerusalem

One of the Holiest sites in Jerusalem was the area known as "The Old City". This city was divided into four quarters – the Christian Quarter, the Moslem Quarter, the Armenian Quarter and the Jewish Quarter.

The Jordanian national army overran the Jewish quarter of this Old City of Jerusalem during the course of the 1948 War. After this territory was captured, most of the Jewish inhabitants of the Jewish sector were exiled to the New City. The Jordanians occupied the Old City until the subsequent war of 1967. This Jordanian occupancy of the Old City prevented the Jewish people from access to the Temple Mount and the Western Wall of the original Temple. In order for us to properly understand this war of independence and the subsequent changes to the world's political structure caused by this War of Independence, I think it is important for us to understand a little about the demographics of this area of the City. A brief look at the population statistics of the city at this time provides a good glimpse of the city at that time.



Year	1880	1900	1910	1931	1948
Old City	19,000	15,000	16,000	5,500	2,000
New City	2,000	16,000	29,000	48,500	98,000
Total Jews in Jerusalem	21,000	31,000	45,000	54,000	100,000

In 1948, when the Jewish sector of the Old City was overrun by the Jordanians, there were only about 2,000 Jews that lived in this area. Most of the Jewish population was already living in the area known as the New City.

These facts and circumstances of the capture of the Old City should make us consider whether this event has been revealed through God's prophetic Word. It has been stated in some prophetic expositions that the capture of east Jerusalem by the Jordanians was an exact fulfillment of Zechariah 14:2. Let us turn to and read **Zechariah 14:1-5** – *"Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled,*

and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee”.

What are the divine requirements of Zechariah 14:2? Did the actual events of the Jordanian invasion of East Jerusalem fulfill all of these divine requirements? Let us compare these divine requirements to the historical facts.

Divine Requirements of Zechariah 14:2

1. **All nations to be gathered against Jerusalem**
 - Fact – Only the nation of Jordan attacked the city of Jerusalem
2. **The City shall be taken**
 - Fact - Only one half of the city was given to the Jordanians
3. **The houses rifled – the women ravished**
 - Fact - The Jewish quarter of the Old City was destroyed. There is no, or very little references to the degrading of the women in the Old City section or the section of East Jerusalem given to Jordan.
4. **Half of the city shall go forth into captivity**
 - Fact – This statement when combined with the next phase appears to be in reference to the people of the city, not just the territory. The Jews in the Jewish sector of the Old City were either killed or sent to the “New City”. I have found no indication that the Jews that lived in the territory known as East Jerusalem were treated like captives, as we would define captives.
 - How do we define captivity? If we define captivity as being under the ruler ship of a foreign power, then shouldn't we be able to conclude that the entire city was already in captivity during the period of 1923 through May 13, 1948 when Israel and Jerusalem was under British control? If it was already under captivity, then how could it “go” into captivity at the time of the 1948 war?
5. **The residue of the People shall not be cut off from the city.**
 - Fact – This statement appears to be talking about not being cut off from the entire city, not just the half city that came under the control of the Jewish authorities. If this was referencing the Jews that lived in West Jerusalem, then the verse would be better stated as such – “*The residue of the People shall not be cut off from the rest of the city.*”

The context of Zechariah 14:1-5 seems to indicate that whatever conditions the Jews would be in at the end of the events outlined in verse 3; they should be in the same conditions at the beginning of the events listed in verse 5. If verse 3 was historically fulfilled during the 1948 War of Independence when Jordan took over East Jerusalem, then Jordan should still be ruling over East Jerusalem when Christ returns to set His feet on the Mount of Olives, as listed in verse 5. We know that this is not historically correct. We know that Israel re-captured East Jerusalem and the Old City in 1967. **Therefore, it appears that the 1948 War of Independence was not the historical fulfillment of these verses.** The fulfillment is still in the future when Christ returns to His people, His land and His City to set up God's everlasting Kingdom.

Conflict not finished

At the end of the War, David Ben-Gurion again addressed his people with some very significant comments. I think the most significant portion of these comments is found in the last sentence of his address. These comments were made on January 12, 1949, which was five days after the end of the fighting. These comments were obtained from the same web source that was used for the comments that were used to begin this article.

“Let us not be intoxicated with victory. To many people and not only among ourselves, it would appear to be a miracle: a small nation of 700,000 persons stood up against six nations numbering 30 million. However, none of us knows whether the trial by bloodshed has yet ended. The enemy forces in the neighboring countries and in the world at large have not yet despaired of their scheme to annihilate Israel in its own land or at least to pare away its borders. And we do not yet know whether the recent war, which we fought in the Negev and which ended in victory for the IDF, is the last battle or not, and as long as we cannot be confident that we have won the last battle, let us not glory.”

We should note that even after the wonderful victories that were achieved by the fledgling nation, their leaders still failed to give credit to Him who rules in the governments of men and causes events to happen that will further His Purpose. And, history has proven that the Jews did not fight their last battle in 1948. They have and will continue to struggle as a world power against many other nations until He comes whose right it is to rule over the entire nation of Israel – those currently within the land and those who are still dispersed throughout the entire world. The Jews will continue to fight for their existence until the latter day northern invader overruns their territory. Ultimately, a remnant of the Jews living at the time of the Second Advent will recognize their long waited for Messiah and will finally achieve the true peace that only God's Son can provide. The Scriptures provide an excellent description of this glory that the Jews will ultimately enjoy when they indeed win their last battle, with their Captain and Commander at their side. Let us read these scriptures.

Zechariah 12:1 – “*The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him. Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it*”.

Zechariah 12:8-10 – “*In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn*”.

Micah 4:1-8 – “*But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it. For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever. In that day, saith the LORD, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever. And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem*”.

Zechariah 8:22-23 – “*Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you*”.

As truly as I live, all of the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD. (Numbers 14:21) This is the ultimate objective to the great and glorious Plan and Purpose of Yahweh. The initial and partial return of the Jews to their promised land during the last century was very important to God’s ultimate goal. Should we be waiting for any more critical events before that predetermined day when Christ will leave the right hand of His father? We think not. We should be getting our house in order, patiently waiting for the call to come to the Judgment Seat of our Lord. We should be building our character through the trials and tribulations that each of us face. Until the return of our Master, we should be building and defending the Holy/Spiritual temple of the Lord; which we know to be the Body and Ecclesia of Christ. Even so come, Lord Jesus.

As we contemplate these matters and current events, let us always remember that God’s Plan for this earth is centered around the promises that He made to the one man that Yahweh has called His Friend – the patriarch Abraham. He has promised to establish the singular, natural and spiritual seed of Abraham in a specific land that He has chosen and that land and the entire world will ultimately be governed by divine laws coming forth from the Mountains of Zion. The scriptures teach us that there will be additional trials, tribulations and destructions that Yahweh will send on the unbelieving and stubborn people of the Jewish nation. However, Yahweh will never forsake them regardless of the degree of trust that they may or may not place in the Divine Creator. The Jews will always be a blessed people and will ultimately become the first dominion of the Kingdom of God. What a privilege for these people!! The covenant of God from the Gentile race has been graciously allowed to be part of this glorious plan that God has established for His chosen nation. Let us always give thanks that we have been called out of the Gentile darkness and allowed to have the same hopes and desires as the worthies of old that we read about in God’s inspired Word.

B. Henderson

“Israel is a nation of miracles. Its history is a standing miracle before an astonished world. Its survival of all the persecutions and oppressions which have been heaped upon it is a greater miracle still... Divinity is written upon every page of Israel’s Book; and it is also written upon every page of Israel’s history, whether we consider it in the Bible or out of the Bible. Indeed they cannot be separated. What has been the history of the Bible has been the history of the nation, and we might add that, to some extent, it has been the history of Israel’s King, the man of the Bible, the essence of the Bible, the subject of it from Alpha to Omega, the beginning and end – Christ. The nation has suffered at the hands of every nation, and every attempt possible has been put forth to destroy it, yet it has been providentially preserved.” Thomas Williams, *The World’s Redemption*, pp. 93,94

THE DOCTRINE OF FELLOWSHIP

Fundamental Considerations

“The gospel believed and obeyed restores the mind to a oneness with God, and by the act of baptism we are inducted into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, a complete oneness in the whole family in heaven and in earth. Here is a “family circle”. A circle drawn by the truth, inside of which there is fellowship; but no fellowship with any or anything outside. The church (ecclesia) is thus the pillar and ground of the Truth and refuses to support, allow room for or to compromise with the unfruitful works of darkness in the outer world.” Thomas Williams, Life and Works – “Fellowship and the Breaking of Bread”, p. 74.

We begin a series of considerations on the Doctrine of Fellowship adapted from classes that we have presented in the past. It is our great concern that this is a subject that has been very much neglected in recent years resulting in a great deal of confusion and lack of knowledge on the matter, further resulting in the disintegration of the soundness and vitality of The Faith as we further descend into the Laodicean epoch.

Before we proceed any further, we must outline why it is that the subject is so important.

1. If accepted by God, through His Son, such fellowship and acceptance by the Creator provides us with the hope of salvation.
2. Fellowship provides a united community to bear witness to the Truth and to glorify Yahweh's Name – it is in fact a vital aspect of God Manifestation.
3. Fellowship with others of “like precious faith” helps to instruct, encourage and strengthen us all in our efforts to please our heavenly Father.
4. Provides a defensive means to “keep the way” of righteousness and salvation intact.
5. The Scriptures give numerous and explicit commands in regard to its purity and preservation.

It is the Doctrine of Fellowship that helps us to understand the nature and basis of our commonality with Deity, His Son and with each other, and the natural outcome to come together one with another as commanded. It is an understanding of fellowship that assists us to understand the nature, parameters, responsibilities and privileges as to the exclusivity of our association. It draws clear lines as to what is and what is not acceptable. It is an understanding of the

doctrine of fellowship that equips us to effectively preserve the Truth and therefore the Body of Believers as a whole from anyone and anything that would do it harm – therefore along with its positive characteristics it acts as a defensive mechanism as well. Without this understanding as to the sanctified and holy nature of Fellowship our association based upon the Truth is without defense – allowing harm to be done to the Truth and as a result, ourselves.

Defining Fellowship

Amos 3:3 – “*Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*” What are the implications of this verse? – That in order for two to walk together in mutual association and harmony there must be agreement as to the direction, speed and destination of their walk.

In Acts 2:42 we read regarding the early stages of the 1st Century Ecclesia that, “*they continued stedfastly in the apostles doctrine and **fellowship**, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*” The word “fellowship” itself is from the Greek word “*koinonia*” and according to Strong's Concordance represents “*partnership*”. This indicates a sharing in common and by implication “*oneness of mind*”. It is derived from the Greek word “*koinonos*”, which means a “*sharer or associate*”, and can be found translated as “*partner(s)*”, “*companions*”, and “*partakers*”. **It does not merely indicate social or personal interaction.**

The early Believers were enlightened in the Gospel message (THE TRUTH) and were baptized. Having this in common they continued in:

1. “The Apostles Doctrine” → the vital teachings making up “The Truth”
2. “Fellowship” → partnership based upon common belief
3. “Breaking of Bread” → shared understanding in and appreciation for the sacrificial work of Christ
4. “Prayers” → Access to God through Christ for praise, thanksgiving, petitions, and forgiveness of sins.

Here we see fellowship in practice. We have here the agreement and commonality necessary so that a “walking together” can be successfully applied.

Scriptural Applications

There are different scriptural applications of the word “fellowship” that we need to consider as the word is not exclusive to the act of breaking bread at the memorial service, which is sometimes misunderstood. In regard to **positive applications** we have:

1. Philippians 1:3-5 – “*fellowship in the gospel*”
2. 3:10 – “*the fellowship of (Jesus') sufferings*”
3. 2nd Cor. 8:4 – a “*fellowship of the ministering to the saints*”

4. Galatians 2:9 – “*the right hand of fellowship*”
5. Romans 15:26,27 – Fellowship in charitable effort, or what is referred to as “contribution”, which is *koinonia* in the original.

Negative applications:

1. 2nd Corinthians 6:14 – Fellowship with the world
2. Ephesians 5:11 – Fellowship with “*the works of darkness*”
3. 1st Corinthians 10:20 – “*Fellowship with devils*”

Before moving on, we will state here that there are all kinds of “fellowship” applications found in the world. Where there is commonality of interests such as hobbies, financial status, philanthropic endeavors, etc. – we can attribute such to a commonality of goals and partnership based upon mutual relations to such things. What we have commonality with and shared affection for determines what we are in partnership with. Unions, Masons, political parties, religious affiliations, social clubs - all such things (and the list is endless) represent a type of fellowship. And with all of these come **certain PARAMETERS, GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS** that are anticipated in order for such partnership to continue. As these are things of the world that Believers are to have no fellowship with, they do provide a tangible example of what makes up the infinitely higher spiritual level and value of “*fellowship in the gospel*.”

The formation and continuation of Scriptural fellowship

We now consider a three part question: *what brings fellowship into being, who does it involve* and *what allows it to continue*? We first refer to Romans 10:17 for the needed pre-requisite of fellowship - faith. “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” It is this Faith that is throughout the scriptures referred to as the Truth and is also described as “the light” (e.g. 1st John 1:7). So faith – the Truth/Light - in the plan and purpose of Deity provides the indispensable foundation for scriptural fellowship or partnership.

We read in 2nd Timothy 1:8,9 – “*Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.*” The words “*call*” and “*calling*” are from the Greek *kaleo*, which is derived from the word “*klesis*”, and when the prefix “*e*” is added we have “*ekklēsis*” or “*ekklesia*”, which means “*ones called out*.”

So, there is a calling or taking out of a people with shared purpose or partnership to the glorification and “purpose” of Deity. The basis of this called out position is simply stated in Acts 8:12, “*when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.*”

Who does it involve? In 1st John 1:3-7 we read: “*That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.*” ... “*This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another...*” So scriptural fellowship involves God, His Son, and those who fall under this association, deemed “*one with another*.” The Scriptures more succinctly refer to this in another place as “*the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord*” (1st Cor. 1:9).

The principal of God manifestation is inseparably tied to this question as to who scriptural fellowship involves as we read Christ’s words in John 17:21-23; “*That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us...And the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one...*”

What are the conditions? We again refer back to 1st John 1, where in verse 7 we are told that such fellowship is dependent upon walking “*in the light*”. Therefore, if we walk “*in the light*” we have the fellowship that is to be desired. Such light is synonymous with Truth – both in belief and action. If we do not walk in this light, as revealed throughout the scriptures, then what is our status? The answer is clearly revealed in verse 6 – “*If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.*” So where there is a failure to walk according to the principles of the Light, there is no fellowship. Taking this even further: if fellowship is disrupted between an individual and God and His Son, what then is the condition of fellowship (commonality/partnership) with such an individual and the rest of the Christ Ecclesia (i.e., the “one with another”)? Clearly, such a condition of fellowship is disrupted here as well.

Unity and Fellowship

The scriptures are very explicit as to the necessity of unity of mind and purpose in order for a true condition of commonality to exist and continue, for the intent purpose of the glorification of God. Please note the following verses:

- **Romans 15:6** – “*That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*”
- **1st Corinthians 1:10** – “*Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment* (i.e. sentiment, opinion or

resolve).” In other words, be united in belief and how such belief should be applied.

- **Ephesians 4:3** – Before being told that there is only “one body, and one Spirit, one hope”, the Believers are exhorted to “*keep the unity of the Spirit.*”
- **Philippians 1:27** – “*let your conversation (manner of life) be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.*”
- **Philippians 2:2** – “*Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.*”
- **1st Peter 3:8** – “*be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another.*”

Summarization

In closing this portion of our consideration we here summarize the points made so far:

1. In order for there to be “fellowship”, there must be commonality of shared beliefs and goals.
2. Calling, belief, and baptism bring men into fellowship with God through Jesus Christ.
3. That fellowship begins with the Father and Son.
4. Those that have been “called out” make up an assembly or Ecclesia.
5. That “fellowship” among this Ecclesia is initially dependent on #2.
6. That God is “light”, and that fellowship with Him and others associated with Him and His Son cannot exist without an initial and continued walking in “the light”.
7. Fellowship within the Ecclesia requires that we hold in common the doctrines and the practices of the Apostles – “the apostles doctrine”, or in other words “*The things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ.*”

Fellowship is not something that is forced, but is a natural outgrowth of that which is much more fundamental. Holding things in common (whatever that might be) acts as a magnet in bringing together those of shared understanding. If there is commonality then there is fellowship. If the required understanding exists for spiritual commonality as Divinely revealed, then we have “Scriptural Fellowship.” If there is a commonality to participate in the actions and desires of the flesh or to hold doctrines that are not in common with those of the Apostles, then there exists fellowship with the world or with “*the works of*

darkness.” (Yahweh willing, in the next quarter we wish to consider *Fellowship and the Breaking of Bread.*)

A. Thomas

Closing Question

Based upon an accurate definition of “fellowship” (i.e. commonality or partnership), does fellowship only involve those we are directly in contact with? If not, who does fellowship include? Please consider the following comments from bro. Robert Roberts:

Some inaccurate ideas appear to be entertained by some on the subject of fellowship. They think they are not in fellowship with a meeting or ecclesia if they do not pay or receive a visit from it, and that they are only in fellowship with those actually in their midst.

If this were correct, there would be no “fellowship one with another” in personal absence, whereas John declares this to have been the case with those from whom he was personally absent. (1st John 1:7)

Fellowship is that recognized mutual relation of harmony that only waits the opportunity of personal intercourse for its fullest enjoyment. This harmony exists, or does not exist, quite irrespective of the opportunity of its practical illustration.

Suppose, when an ecclesia is asked, “Are you in fellowship with the Mormons?” it should answer that they cannot settle the question as to the Mormons as a body, but must wait for individual Mormons to apply for each individual case to be decided on its own merits. SUCH AN ANSWER IS AN EVASION OF THE QUESTION.

An ecclesia that is notable to say whether they are in fellowship with such, but must wait for individual applications, is evidently in such a doubtful relation to the question as to prevent confidence on the part of men of straight purpose.

Men do not require to come within so many yards of each other to know whether they are friends. Friendship of this circumscribed order would be a relapse into barbarism. And so a body of men professing to receive the Truth in its uncompromised fullness and integrity do not require to pay or receive visits from another body or members of it (who are in a doubtful attitude), to say whether they are or are not in fellowship.

A little reflection on this ought to clear honest men of all difficulty in defining their position – a process which had become necessary before the apostle John had closed his eyes.

“Ecclesial Notes”, The Christadelphian, July, 1887, pp. 328,329

SELAH סְלַח

THE translators of the Bible have left the Hebrew word *selah*, which occurs so often in the Psalms, as they found it, and of course the English reader often asks his minister or learned friend what it means. And the minister or learned friend has most often been obliged to confess ignorance, because it is a matter in regard to which the most learned have by no means been of one mind. The Targums, and most of the Jewish commentators, give to the word the meaning of *eternally, for ever*. Rabbi Kimchi regards it as a sign to elevate the voice. The authors of the Septuagint translation appear to have regarded it as a musical or rhythmical note. Hentler regarded it as indicating a change of note; Matthewson as a musical note, equivalent to the word *repeat*. According to Luther and others, it means *silence*! Gesenius explains it to mean, “Let the instruments play and the singers stop.” “Woher regards it as equivalent to *sursum corda* – up, my soul! Sommer, after examining all the seventy-four passages in which the word occurs, recognizes, in every case, “an actual appeal or summons to Jehovah.” They are calls for aid and prayers to be heard, expressed either with entire directness, or if not in the imperative “Hear, Jehovah,” or “Awake, Jehovah!” and the like, still earnest addresses to God that he would remember and hear, &c. The word itself he regards as indicating a blast of the trumpets by the priests. *Selah* itself he thinks an abridged expression, used for *Higgaion Selah* – *Higgaion* indicating the sound of the stringed instruments, and *Selah* a vigorous blast of trumpets.

סְלַח is properly the imperative from the root *sahlah*, which signifies to *lift up*, to *raise*; hence, to *suspend* a balance, to *weigh*; to *with*; and, therefore metaphorically to *consider*.

John Thomas (*The Christadelphian*, April, 1874)

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Demoralizing Statements

It is with great reluctance that we address several statements and observations that appeared in the October, Christadelphian Advocate guest editorial – “*Wisdom, Knowledge and Stability*”. We do not want to make a habit of such critical commentary but there are statements that need to be addressed that raise serious red flags and that, we believe, sends mixed messages regarding a contending for the Faith in these last days as well as being

demoralizing to those who are trying to stand firm according to the “old paths”. This is not a criticism of the work of The Advocate, but specific concerns with the guest editorial in question.

The editorial addresses the fact that the Unamended community is becoming further splintered, and it offers a call for repentance – points we agree with. But the given explanation by the editorial as to the why and its solution give reason for concern.

We cannot reproduce the entire editorial here, but provide in underlined, bold quotes several comments of concern. We refer the reader back to the editorial in question for full comparative context.

1. “**An increasing number of ecclesias are redefining their fellowship standards** (p. 263).” We have heard this charge of “*redefining*” along with the accusation of “*adding to the statement of faith*” more recently being leveled at those ecclesias who have come out with statements in opposition to various influences, such as: *the “eternal life now”/ “present spiritual Kingdom” errors and associated falsehoods; present “unity” movements; reaffirmation of fellowship upon the BUSF and clarification of fellowship practices in relation to those outside of the Unamended community; and confirmation of the Continuous Historical Interpretation of the Apocalypse*. Whether such ecclesias who have taken such stands are being specifically addressed in the editorial or not, we are fully aware that such a perception exists and that such accusations are being leveled at more conservative ecclesias and Gathering/Bible School functions. (As the rest of the quoted comments demonstrate, the editorial cannot be talking about more liberal ecclesias who are opening up the doors of fellowship in the spirit of inclusivity and tolerance.) To “*redefine*” means to change, but there has been no change by those ecclesias standing where they always have stood in relation to The Truth. When errors that undermine fundamental belief and practice assert themselves, it becomes necessary for ecclesias and communities at large to address such things and to clearly express where they stand in relation to fellowship. It should be noted that the *Doctrines to be Rejected* in the back of our Statement of Faith was not in existence in totality from the beginning, but the list grew as various errors came to the fore – necessitating an adding to the Doctrines To Be Rejected list. Such additions did not constitute a “redefining” of fellowship practices, but a demonstration of a responsible rejection of beliefs that undermine long held doctrines. When new errors are introduced or old ones reassert themselves, we all have a responsibility to declare and clarify where we stand in regard to belief and fellowship.
2. “**it is becoming increasingly obvious that our passion for exclusivity is becoming our downfall** (p. 263).” It is with this statement that we begin to see where the finger is being pointed, and it certainly is not against those with more inclusive and tolerant fellowship standards. But surely no one,

even the most conservative among us, is passionate for “exclusivity” for exclusivity’s sake? None the less, our service is not about the preservation of a social organization and its ties, but *the keeping of the way of the Tree of Life* from anything that might conceal its life saving path from clear view. The Truth itself is exclusive in nature as it is at odds and incompatible with the world – and it isn’t palatable to the taste of very many. We are commanded “*to be holy*”, in other words *set apart*. When beliefs and practices encroach upon the exercise of Truth in its purity, it is imperative to put away such leaven (1st Cor. 5:6-8). It comes down to the fact that faithful brethren are to have a passion for the preservation of the Truth. Was the “exclusivity” of the family of eight that entered the Ark a positive or a negative? Such, no doubt, led to the True Remnant not counting themselves among the various factions of “Christianity” by the 4th Century A.D. And as there is growing diversity as to the definition of “The Truth” in these last times **it should be clearly understood that “exclusivity” is not to blame**, but the fleshly tendency of “itching ears” (2nd Tim. 4:3) that pull brethren away from “the traditions” (2nd Thess. 2:15) that we have been taught. The political parties of the world talk about having a “big tent” in order to include as many as possible – but the tent of the Household of God can only be as big as those who wish to enter and remain are willing to hold to the exclusive principles of that House.

3. **“More than ever before we have “new” and “old” Christadelphians (Not necessarily defined by their ages), who are at odds one another on a number of walk and doctrinal issues** (p. 263).” This is very true, and expresses so very much about where we are today in Unamended Christadelphia, but it would be hoped that it would be recognized that there is in fact a condition of **incompatibility** evident by the very expression of “new” and “old”, or what others might refer to as “liberal” and “conservative”. The editorial admits that these two elements “*are at odds with one another on a number of walk and doctrinal issues*” – and we agree. But then it expresses that this enmity sometimes descends into a “**straining at gnats**” which “**diverts attention from other serious threat to our walk.**” As the editorial already admits that enmity exists between “new” and “old” Christadelphians based upon “walk and doctrinal issues”, we find the rest of the observation puzzling. What “straining at gnats” are being referenced? And, as “walk and doctrinal issues” are at the heart of growing divisions – the serious threats to our walk (referred to as “*materialism, immorality, and the love of the things of the world*”) are not being ignored by those who are addressing current problems. It is the material and philosophical influences of the world/flesh that are at the very heart of the erosion and splintering in both belief and walk that we see taking place.
4. **“Interestingly, at the end of every age of corruption, there has been a preaching effort and a call to repentance; do we need one today?”** (p.

263).” Yes, we do! And this call has been going out from spiritual watchmen for some time – “*Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls* (Jeremiah 6:16).” But as in the days of our Israelite counterparts, so to in our time most reply with, “*We will not walk therein...We will not hearken.* (vv. 16,17).” See bullet point #6 as further evidence of this fact.

5. In order to accomplish a change of heart under this call of repentance, the editorial goes on to conclude that “**We must be willing to turn our hearts away from strategies that promote division rather than resolution and healing** (p. 264).” There seems to be a serious misunderstanding in the editorial as to what promotes division. It is error and difference of belief that promotes division. The Scriptures command us to be “of one mind” (1st Cor. 1:10; Rom. 15:5,6; Phill. 1:27). Therefore, it is MOST DESIRABLE that resolution and healing can be accomplished, and the wayward recovered – with a humble disposition that we too can easily falter and be drawn away. But when those in error cannot be persuaded as to the nature of their falsehood, then the Faithful have to part ways from them – for the preservation of the Truth and for the safety of the flock that follows that Truth (Acts 20:29,30). As we read in Amos – “*Can two walk together lest they be agreed?*” Healing between two or more adversarial parties is not possible when those in error refuse to turn away from the error they either promote or tolerate. And, it is something that should not be trifled with or drawn out with long, seemingly never ending processes that do not quickly get to the heart of disagreement. For example: in the case of personal offense of one brother against another (Matt. 18:15-17), it clearly reveals that there is a final end to the process. If unity of mind cannot be achieved, the only scriptural resolution is found in passages such as **Titus 3:10** – “*a man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject*”; **Gal. 5:12** – “*I would they were cut off which trouble you*”; **2nd Thess. 3:6** – “*withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly*”; **3:14** – “*if any man obey not our word...note that man, and have no company with him*”; **2nd John 9-11** – “*receive him not unto your house*”, “*neither bid him God speed.*” Unfortunately, it is the consistent Scriptural command that we are given to part from error that is not being widely practiced within our community, allowing the tolerance and continuation of errorists in our midst where they can continue to garner a following and the sympathies of others - creating further strains and conflict between those who see a need for something to be done and those who do not.
6. **“I think we all appreciate that the methods used in the days of Dr. Thomas and Thomas Williams may not always be the best strategies for use today** (p. 264).” This sounds like the cries we here from the “new Christadelphians” rather than the thoughts of those who appreciate the

examples and spiritual discernment of earlier and pioneering brethren. Whatever “methods” are being referenced here, the vagueness and loose reference to bro. Thomas and Williams is troubling. Were brethren during these times too strict, too exclusive in their views of Scriptural teaching? We are hearing more and more a desire to disconnect from what some/many perceive as the “outdated” views and practices of a different time. Times may change, but the application of Scriptural teaching cannot change. Yes, there is an appeal in the editorial in question for use of the Scriptures, but not without being preceded by the red flag suggestion to “think out of the box” – that goes along with the strong tendency in our times to interpret Scriptures through the lens of humanistic reasoning and to devalue the zealous nature of our earlier brethren.

7. In reference to Job’s three friends, it is stated that, “They leaned to their own understanding and stubbornly defended their own interpretations relative to how God deals with the wicked. Their contentions were around some of the same issues that divide brethren today”... “Does it ever occur to us that we often come across as pious experts on the intimate details of responsibility, atonement, prophecy, etc.?” (p. 264).” We all fight the elements of pride (along with lust) out of our own flesh – but whatever our own difficulties, THE TRUTH is **THE TRUTH**. Is it prideful to believe that the 19th century development of the Christadelphian Body represented a revival of THE TRUTH? If we do not believe such then we are without faith (The Faith), and certainly in serious jeopardy. We are to have great humility and self-abasement that God has allowed us to be connected to The Truth, **but pride should not be confused with a confidence in the things most assuredly believed**. The arguments that the editorial provided out of Job, a misapplication at best, leads to the insidious point of view that we should not and cannot be too sure about what we believe or how we should defend it – in other words that no one can claim to have THE TRUTH. Such a philosophy plants the seed of doubt in others (i.e., a stumbling block) and is definitely not going to provide the “stability” or steadfastness that God requires of us.
8. “Truly the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, yet we have shown a tendency to place all the emphasis on the first pure, implying that if one does not have purity of doctrine there is little point in proceeding with any of the other pillars of wisdom. This is the reasoning of the flesh. (p. 265)” This isn’t the thinking of the flesh, but the priority that the Scriptures place upon the matter! – Step 1 “Pure”, then Step 2 “Peaceable”. Again, *can two walk together lest they be agreed?*

With any article, lecture or teaching that one disagrees or has concern with, there are elements that can be agreed upon. We appreciate the fact that there should be a desire for the recovery of those who have fallen into error – but there is a limit to what can be done. And, we agree with the observation that we should “use wisdom in applying these instructions (referencing 2nd Tim.

4:2-4) with balance in the spirit of patience, meekness, longsuffering and sound doctrine (p. 265, 2nd paragraph).” But based upon the Advocate editorial’s premise of calling into question a perceived move towards the “redefining of fellowship standards”, the observation that it is “our passion for exclusivity” that is “our downfall” and a call to avoid early Christadelphian “strategies” – it should exercise a strong degree of spiritual discernment within us that something is seriously wrong with the premise being laid by the Advocate editorial that is not in keeping with wisdom, knowledge and certainly is not providing a clear path to stability in regard to *the faith once delivered unto the saints*. Merely being nice to one another is not going to somehow make all of the problems of the Body go away nor keep the young people from trending towards more liberal influences of belief and practice. Those who have chosen to promote or tolerate alternate paths as opposed to the “old paths” by and large have not heeded the cry of various watchmen and the pleas of their brethren – whether it be those who come across as abrasive or others who are more diplomatic in their approach. We live in the time when *“every man does that which is right in his own eyes”*, and we have the choices to either pursue an “itching ears” mentality, bury our heads in the sand, or to remain steadfast in promulgation and defense of the Scriptural principles as found in our Christadelphian Heritage. These are matters of great urgency and most certainly choices of life and death, and are to be dealt with frankly and without ambiguity. - A. Thomas

EDITORIAL FLYLEAF

We greatly apologize for the late nature of the 3rd Quarter S.K. Various circumstances have contributed for us not being able to publish it in a timely manner. Yahweh willing, we will be immediately putting together the 4th Quarter for publication by the end of the year.

ALL EYES ON ISRAEL

The vote towards Palestinian Statehood at the U.N. in September turned out to be a non-starter as was expected, with the issue being shelved for a later time, allowing a continued festering of the matter. The Palestinians continue to make unilateral moves towards the declaration of such “Statehood”, and have worldwide support. The U.S. is still contending that it will veto such a move if it comes to a vote in the U.N. Security Council.

But this is only one part of the picture as the world descends into turmoil: The Iran nuclear situation is at a breaking point as the world looks on to see what Israel is going to do; and Europe, and therefore the rest of the world is on the verge of (or at least living with the perception of) impending financial collapse, with current factors that are much worse and larger than what led to the economic failure of 2008. Such is only the short list...and we continue to watch.