

LIFE ETERNAL

Like the glorious light of day
Like the bright sun in his way
Like a life without a sorrow
Like a day without a morrow
Like a never fading tree –
So shall *life immortal* be.

Like a smoothly flowing river,
flowing on and stopping never.
Like a sure foundation stone
Like a man whose work is done
Like the ever rolling sea –
So shall *life immortal* be.

Like a diamond sparkling bright,
sending forth its gleams of light.
Like a clear and cloudless morning
In the East the sky adorning
Like the stars in heaven we see –
So shall *life immortal* be.

Like the treasured golden grain
Like the sunshine after rain
Like a royal diadem
Like the New Jerusalem
Like a lovely bride to be
Clad in *immortality*.

Like the Palace of a king
Like a never failing spring
Like the gold tried in the fire
Like the ones that never tire
Like the air when pure and free -
So shall *life immortal* be.

From “Words Spoken at the Burial of a Sister”
The Christadelphian Advocate – Oct., 1913

THE SANCTUARY-KEEPER

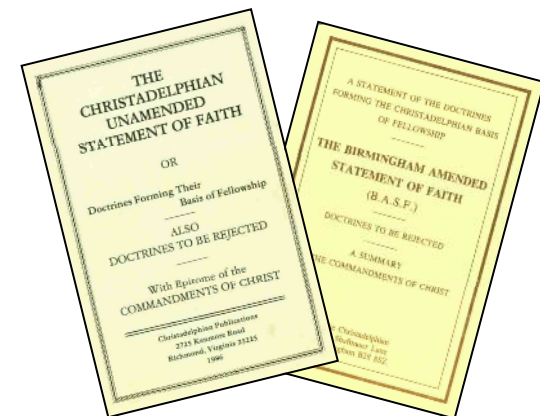
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of the Holy Scriptures*



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AN

“OPEN QUESTION”?

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AN "OPEN QUESTION"?

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SPEAKING PLAINLY

An Editorial Comment

In Acts 8:20-23, the Apostle Peter addresses an error that was manifested by Simon the Sorcerer. We do not wish to address this particular sin, but rather the manner in which Peter responded to the actions of this man who was baptized into the name of Christ. Peter spoke very plainly in his description of the outcome of the man if Simon chose not to repent of his sinful ways. Did Peter speak harshly? Some people may think so. Was he unbrotherly or Un-Christ like in his response? Surely, we do not believe this. The apostle was responding in a manner that Simon would completely understand. When matters of life and death are at stake, this should be the only way in which errors should be addressed.

This practice of plainly speaking about problems in the Ecclesia is not followed in many situations today. The pioneers of the Truth had no problem speaking out as plainly as they could about the errors of the world around them and the errors that developed within the Christ Body. Why is this not practiced by the brothers and sisters of this day and age? Many only want to hear smooth things and do not want to recognize the errors that are caused by our humanistic thoughts and actions. Many want to be politically correct and only speak of those things that are positive. Was this the approach of our pioneers of a century ago? More importantly, was this the approach of the first century Apostles and of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ?

The public exhortations and writings of our brethren should always be simple, plainly spoken and direct to the point. The outcome of a public lecture or of an article published in one of the many Christadelphian periodicals should not leave the ones who are being exhorted asking "What did that brother say? Which side of the issue is that brother taking? Why is he sitting on the fence on these matters? What does he really believe on the subject in which he just spoke about? Why doesn't he say what he really means in clear, concise and simple statements?" We should remember that the goal of dealing with a brother or sister in error is to help them recognize the error of their ways and to help them return to the path of Truth. Read James 5:19-20. This, if done with the right attitude, is the outcome of a true spiritual love for the sinning brother or sister. We do these individuals no good if we are only worried about being politically correct and are afraid to discuss the error in a simple and straightforward manner. Let us return to the ways of the Apostles and speak plainly on all matters of the Truth. Our own eternal salvation may depend on this. - B. Henderson

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

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GOD IS LOVE

THIS title is a quotation from I John 4:8 wherein the whole verse reads, “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.” We have Christ’s word in John 17:3, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” From these words is indicated the importance of knowing God if we seek for eternal life. If God is love then there is a definite need to understand what love is if we are to know Him. This study is intended to give some insight what the word love means as it is used in the Scriptures, mostly in the New Testament.

The word love has taken on many meanings in our present times and sadly most of the true spirit of the word has become hidden by human emotions. It has come to mean an affection for anything which attracts us, mostly something to do with our fleshly inclinations. This is not what the word means in the above quotation or how it is used throughout the New Testament! Let us examine the word love so that we may better understand what God is and what it means to love or to have love.

There are two basic Greek words translated love in the New Testament, the first being *agape* a noun and its related verb *agapao* [the word used in the above quotation]. The second basic word is *phileo*. Strong’s has the following comments on the two words under his explanation for *phileo*. About *phileo* he says it means, to be a friend to be fond of [an individual or an object], that is, have affection for (denoting personal attachment, as a matter of sentiment or feeling).”

Concerning the word *agapeo* he says, “it is wider, embracing especially the judgment and the deliberate assent of the will as a matter of principle, duty and propriety.” He further adds, “the former (*agapeo*) being chiefly of the *heart* and the latter of the *head*.”

Vine’s Expository Dictionary gives the following commentary on this; “In respect of *agapao* as used of God, it expresses the deep and constant love and interest of a perfect Being towards entirely unworthy objects, producing and fostering a reverential love in them toward the Giver, and a practical love towards those who are partakers of the same, and a desire to help others to seek the Giver.”

In contrast his remark concerning the use of *phileo* says, “*Phileo* is to be distinguished from *agapao* in this, that *phileo* more nearly represents tender affection” [underlining mine]. Further Vine says, “Yet the distinction between the two verbs remains, and they are never used indiscriminately in the same passage; if each is used with reference to the same objects, as just mentioned, each word retains its distinctive and essential character.” He makes a very strong point in the next paragraph saying; **“*Phileo* is never used in a command to men to love God;”**

In Matt. 22:37-40 Jesus tells us that all the law and the prophets hang on two commandments. The first being to love God with all our being and the second to love our neighbor as ourselves. The word used by Him in both instances is *agapao* not *phileo*. It is not an emotional affection which we are to have toward God but a sincere desire to please him through faith and obedience. Our love toward our neighbor is likewise a sincere desire to help him or her in their times of need but most especially to teach them of God’s Truth in order for them to have a chance at salvation.

In Adam Clarke’s commentary on Matt. 22:37 he states; “Hence it appears that, by this love, the soul eagerly cleaves to, affectionately admires, and constantly rests in God, supremely pleased and satisfied with him as its portion: that it acts from him, as its author; for him, as its master; and to him, as its end. That, by it, all the powers and faculties of the mind are concentrated in the Lord of the universe. That, by it, the whole man is willingly surrendered to the Most High.”

The best example of the word love as applied to God is found in John 3:16; “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” It was not a matter of God’s affection for mankind that he gave his Son; it was his desire for their salvation. He was willing to make His only Begotten Son endure the suffering and degradation of the crucifixion in order to establish the forgiveness of sins and the way to eternal life. In turn Christ was willing to endure this terrible agony in order to bring his Father’s plan to fruition and this, too, was *agapeo* not *phileo*.

We must remember that God’s overriding reason for creating the earth and man upon it was not to please man but himself; Revelation 4:11; “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” We tend to think that His purpose is to obtain salvation for his creatures made in His image. This is purely human thinking. He

wants the earth perfected and peopled with only those immortal creatures who reflect His glory in absolute perfection with whom he can have perfect fellowship as the Apostle Paul states in 1 Cor. 15:28; “And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”

This word love as applied to our relationship both to God and to our neighbors is the word *agapeo*; not an emotional love generated by our emotions but one that seeks the welfare of the recipient. One might ask how can we seek God’s welfare and it is really quite simple. If God is seeking things in His creation that will give Him pleasure what more pleasure can we give Him than to love Him with our whole being. This love would be to keep His commandments: not out of fear but out of a recognition that He is right in all respects. That His ways are the best and nothing else is really important.

This type of love would in turn generate in us a *phileo* love based on our emotions being stirred by our realization that it is in God that we live and move and have our very being through God’s mercy and grace. That not only has He given us this wonderful mortal life but the hope of the unspeakable blessings of immortal perfection in His eternal kingdom for those who are faithful. The development of this *agape* love toward God would in turn generate the emotional *phileo* love for Him. This would be pleasing to God for the Apostle Paul tells how anyone not having this *phileo* for our Lord Jesus Christ should be accursed [1 Cor. 16:22]; “If any man love (*phileo*) not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.” If we can become cursed by not having the *phileo* love for Christ how much more cursed can we be if we do not have it for God. There is a definite need for us to have both *phileo* love and *agape* love for God and Christ and if we do not then our spiritual lives have not developed very far.

One might ask, “How do we show love for God?” The answer is found in many places in the Scriptures, one being 1 John 5:3; “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.” So the answer is quite simple as to the requirements involved; it is the obeying of these commandments that is the problem. They counter almost every act and thought that our mortal nature generates but if we can keep our sights on the reward promised to those who obey then the task becomes possible through God’s continuing mercy and grace - His willingness to forgive our sins should we approach Him in a humble and contrite spirit.

Let us take special notice of 1 John 2:3-6; “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. ⁴He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. ⁶He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.” From these words we see that the proof of our love for God and Christ is only in our obedience to their commandments.

We can lose the love of both God and Christ by our disobedience as we see in John 14:23; “Jesus answered and said unto him, “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” We see from this verse and many more that in order to have Christ and God abide with us in this life we must do their commandments; we must love them in the *agapeo* way.

One of the most important ways in which we can show this love for not only Christ and God but also for our brethren is shown us by the Apostle Paul. Paul speaks of his love toward his brethren in Corinth as being *agapao*. He demonstrated this *agapao* love toward them many times in his seeking to correct their errors and return them to the right path. *Agapeo* is what motivated Paul to do what he told them in Acts 20:31, “³¹Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.”

Some would say this is casting a stumbling block before our brethren or would be offending a brother or sister but what is the outcome of such “interfering”? If left to continue in an unsound way they could lose their eternal life. If “interfered with” it is possible that they would correct the error of their way and ultimately enter into the “rest” prepared for those who love and obey the Lord.

“Charity – Charity is love; and love disregards no danger to the object of affection. True charity speaks the truth to the deceived and the erring, because error begets death.”
- *The Christadelphian Advocate*, Feb. 1918

There is nothing wrong with the *phileo* type of love; it is just not the most important and does not wholly reflect God’s being. *Phileo* would be generated by experiencing the higher type of *agapeo* love. It would be our emotional feeling toward those with whom we experience the actions of helping and being helped by those of like precious faith or becoming conscious of what God and Christ have done for us. God had *phileo* for Christ as well as *agapeo* as we are told in John 5:20; “For the Father loveth the Son.” This word loveth is from *phileo* not *agapeo* as is usually the case when speaking of love between God and Christ. As we know, God has emotions as he is spoken of as a jealous God, as hating, as being angry, etc. His emotions are just not based on the human lusts or thoughts, therefore of the purest kind but emotions none the less. Observing His only Begotten Son in his love and obedience for his Father would naturally generate the highest form of affection for him in God’s mind and heart.

God also has *phileo* for his spiritual children who return His *agapeo* love in like fashion and who believe and love Christ as we see in Christ’s words in John 16:27; “For the Father himself loveth [*phileo*] you, because ye have loved [*phileo*] me, and have believed that I came out from God.” By this we see *phileo* with God is something to be desired as well as *agapeo* but it is not the most important love that we need to develop. Even though God has *phileo* for his children his use of the *agapeo* love is the most important to us for we are told in Hebrews 12:6; “For whom the Lord loveth he

chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” Without His corrections where would we be? We would be wandering lost in this wicked and evil generation with no direction nor hope.

The whole 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians gives us the characteristics and importance of the *agapeo* love which God seeks in His children. In his commentary on this chapter Adam Clarke says that the term charity is improperly used in translating this passage. He says along with many other translators that the word should be rendered love as understood from the Greek *agape*; a selfless love generated by respect and a desire to help others while disregarding self. With this in mind let us read what Paul has to say:

“¹Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not *agape*, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. ²And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not *agape*, I am nothing. ³And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not *agape*, it profiteth me nothing.” These verses show that without this love we are nothing even though we may be very knowledgeable, have strong faith, and even contribute to the care of others or sacrifice ourselves in some way. These things can all be reflections of a desire to elevate ourselves in the eyes of others and not through a desire to please God. We must be careful of our motives.

Continuing on with the words of Paul; “*Agape* suffereth long, and is kind; *agape* envieth not; *agapeo* vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, ⁵Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; ⁶Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; ⁷Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. ⁸*Agape* never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. ⁹For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. ¹⁰But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. ¹¹When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. ¹²For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. ¹³And now abideth faith, hope, *agape*, these three; but the greatest of these is *agape*.”

Why is *agape* spoken of being more important than faith and hope? When God’s plan is completed there will be no more faith nor hope for all things will be fulfilled and there will be nothing further to hope for or to have faith in for all promised things will then be a reality. Love will continue both from God to His creation and from His creation to God for He will then be “all in all”; the closest relationship possible between God and all the immortalized beings who will then make up His Kingdom.

Let us close this study with the following thought given to us by the Apostle James; “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the

crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.” (James 1:12) Remember that those who love Him are those who keep His commandments!

Charles Kelly

PROBATION BEFORE EXALTATION



MAN in the first estate is “a little lower than the angels;” but, in the second, or higher, estate, he is to be “crowned with glory and honor;” and to take his stand in the universe upon an equality with them in nature and renown. Man’s first estate is the natural and animal; his second, the spiritual, or incorruptible. To be exalted from the present to the future state and inheritance, he must be subjected to trial. From the examples recorded in the scriptures, it is evident, that God has established it as the rule of His grace; that is, the principle upon which He bestows His honors and rewards — to prove men before He exalts them. Probation, then, is the indispensable ordeal, to which every man is subjected in the providence of God, before he is accepted as “fit for the Master’s use” (2Tim. 2:20-21). By these examples, also, it appears, that man’s probation is made to bear upon the *trial of his faith* by testing *his obedience*. An untried faith is worth nothing; but a faith that stands the test of trial, “is much more precious than gold which perisheth, though it be tried with fire;” because the sustained trial will be “found unto praise, and honor, and glory, *at the appearance of Jesus Christ*” (1 Pet. 1:5-7).

An untried faith is a dead faith, being alone. Faith without trial finds no scope for demonstration, or evidence of its existence. Thus, it is written, “faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. ‘Yea,’ a man may say, ‘thou hast faith, and I have works:’ *show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.* Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well; the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know; O vain man, that faith, without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and *by works was faith made perfect.* Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and **NOT by faith ALONE**” (Jas. 2:17-24). “Without faith,” says Paul, “it is impossible to please God;” and it is also apparent from James’ testimony just recited, that the faith with which He is pleased, is a faith that is made manifest by works; of which Noah, Abraham, Job, and Jesus, are preeminent examples.

Now, this “precious faith” can only be educed by trial; for the trial elaborates the works. This is the use of persecution, or tribulation, to believers; which in the divine

economy is appointed for their refinement. Peter styles the “manifold persecutions,” to which his brethren were subjected, “the trial of their faith;” and Paul testified to others of them, that “it is through much tribulation they must enter the kingdom.” Probation is a refining process. It purges out a man’s dross, and brings out the image of Christ in his character; and prepares him for exaltation to his throne (Rev. 3:21). We can only enter the kingdom through the fire (1 Cor. 3:13); but, if a man be courageous, and “hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end,” he will emerge from it unscorched; and be presented holy, unblameable, and unrebukeable (Col. 1:22-23) before the king.

A man cannot “honor God” more than in believing *what He promises*, and in doing what He commands; although to repudiate that belief, and to neglect, or disobey, those commands, should highly gratify all his senses, and place at his disposal the kingdoms of the world, and all their glory. Not to believe the promises of God is in effect to call God a liar; and no offence, even to men of integrity in the world, is so insulting and intolerable as this. “Let God be true,” saith the scripture. His veracity must not be impeached in word or deed; if it be, then “judgment without mercy” is the “sorer punishment” which awaits the calumniator. The unswerving obedience of faith, is the “faith made perfect by works,” tried by fire. God is pleased with this faith, because it honors Him. It is a working faith. There is life in it; and its exercise proves that the believer loves Him. Such a man it is God’s delight to honor; and, though like Jesus he be for the present, “despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,” the time will certainly come, when God will acknowledge him in the presence of the Elohim, and overwhelm his enemies with confusion of face.

Probation before exaltation, then, is upon the principle of *a faith in the promises of God, made precious by trial well sustained*. There is no exemption from this ordeal. Even Christ himself was subjected to it. “By the grace of God he tasted death for every man. For it was fitting for God, that ... in bringing many Sons to glory, He should make the Captain of their salvation *perfect through sufferings*. For in that he himself hath suffered *being put to the proof* (*πειρασθεις*), he is able to succour them who are tried” (Heb. 2:9-18). And “though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience *by the things which he suffered*: and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation *unto all them that OBEY him*” (Heb. 5:8-9). He was first morally perfected through suffering; and then corporeally, by being “made into a spirit” by the spirit of holiness in his resurrection from the dead. I say, “morally perfected;” for, although he was without transgression, his perfection of character is predicated upon his “obedience unto death.”

Excerpt from *Elpis Israel*, pp.75-77 (2000 Logos Edition)

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us”
Romans 8:18

AN “OPEN QUESTION”? The need for clarification

T **HERE** is, and has been for some time, a point of view within the Unamended community that contends that the issue of Resurrectional Responsibility, and its relation to what divides the Unamended and Amended communities, has historically been viewed as an “open question”. Though there is some truth to such a view, if not considered in the proper context and with the appropriate clarification it can lead to mistaken conclusions on the subject - especially in its connection to fundamental doctrines as well as the status of fellowship between the two communities. For some who view the matter as an **unconditional** “open question” it can lead to the “*we will break with them, but they will not break bread with us*” point of view – a line of thought (that even in the wake of a fairly convincing NASU rejection) we believe has and continues to have an eroding affect upon the spiritual health and independence of the Unamended community.

In order to bolster such thinking some have contended that brother Thomas Williams viewed the issue as an “open question”, (both to the 1898 “amendment” and the doctrine of “responsibility”), but unfortunately there exists misunderstanding on where exactly he stood on the matter. Without question, Bro. Williams worked untiringly to avoid any division over the subject and after division in fact took place he worked even harder by contending for doctrinally sound principles to heal the breach that had been created. But, instead of Bro. Williams looking at the **whole** issue as an “open question” it must be understood that in regards to the subject and how it related to the issue of fellowship, there were certain conditions that he believed had to be met before unity and fellowship could exist.

Brother Williams (along with many others) contended untiringly to return to the “**old**” or “**original**” basis of understanding and fellowship before the Birmingham Statement of Faith was amended. From the Biography section of *Life And Works Of Thomas Williams* we read, “As for the responsibility question alone, he consistently maintained that it was not a fundamental issue **if one agreed with the Statement of Faith before it was amended**; that is that “the responsible (faithful and unfaithful), dead and living of both classes” would appear at the judgment seat of Christ. If one chose to believe that the unbaptized rejector would be raised to **a judgment, but not to the judgment seat with the saints**, this would not be a bar to fellowship. This position was strongly supported by many brethren and ecclesias, who did believe in the resurrectional responsibility of rejecters, but who refused to make the matter a test of fellowship.” (p.17)

It should be seen in the quote provided that the matter is **very distinctly qualified** as to how the subject was to be understood and what conditions were agreed upon for acceptable fellowship. It is such qualifying points that were made by brethren such as Thomas Williams, as well as those who believed in the resurrection of Gentile “enlightened rejecters”, that seem to be often overlooked by some in the Unamended community today.

The record as to where Bro. Williams and those who supported the Christadelphian Advocate stood in relation to these issues does not stop here. Much was written on the subject during those contentious years, and though we cannot provide all such examples in our magazine we do feel that it is beneficial to clearly demonstrate as to how the issue was perceived and contended for by bro. Williams – as the voice of many Christadelphians during that time.

“Burning Questions”

It was recognized by bro. Williams and many others that the 1898 amendment to the Birmingham Statement of Faith had created a departure from the Truth and interfered with first principle teaching in regards to resurrection and judgment as well as its impact on all other atonement related subject matter (see the pamphlet “Adamic Condemnation”). In years previous to the division there had been general agreement that if the resurrection of “enlightened Gentile rejecters” was true, that such would not be raised on the same basis (i.e., the everlasting covenant) or brought to the same judgment as those of the Household.



T. Williams

This was known as a “third class” resurrection. But the “amendment” took away the understanding of a “third class” and combined their basis of resurrection and appearance to the Judgment with the “faithful and unfaithful” of the Household – all under the principle of knowledge or “light” – dismissing the link between covenant making and resurrection. Quoting from “Burning Questions” (a lecture delivered in Leeds, England by bro. Williams - December, 1907 *Christadelphian Advocate*):

“With regard to the question of first principles, I will go back to the infancy of the revival of the truth, fresh from the pen of Dr. Thomas, up to the time of the trouble. Is it not true that the question of the resurrection of Gentiles out of Christ was always called a “third class resurrection”? And why a third class, unless there were two other classes implied? And the two classes were always regarded as the “just and the unjust” under the law of the gospel, in Christ; under the law of the spirit of life, under the everlasting covenant; and if the other class had been considered as under this same law, they could not have been called a “third class.” Those regarded as outside that law are always called a third class. If we still retain that “third class” idea, and speak of the resurrection of such as a resurrection of a third class, then we shall admit and agree upon the possibility of that. **Keep the two classes separate and distinct as belonging to the law of**

the everlasting covenant, on probation for “good or bad” to be judged “according to works good or bad”; keeping that truth intact, undisturbed, do not extend or diminish it, and admit the other as outside of it, not interfering with it, not infringing upon it, and granting that what God has done in the past in certain incidental resurrections he may do in the future, and there will be a meeting point where we can meet as before.”

Along the same argument bro. Williams later stated in the lecture, “There is our meeting point, and that is where we ought to have remained at the time when this controversy arose. And why did we not stand there? I will tell you. The reason we are not there now is because of this, the Statement of Faith **has been tampered with**, and here is the **ridiculous form** in which it is presented to you and me today from Birmingham:” – After quoting the amendment, bro. Williams immediately continues, “That is the **absurdity**, as an “amendment,” of our Statement of Faith.”

Further he states, “*We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ to receive in body according to that which we have done, whether good or bad, which no man upon the face of the earth, who know anything about the Bible, could apply to any except those who are upon probation.* We hope that **ridiculous form** will be blotted into oblivion; it is a **manifestation of foolishness and contradiction**, and the sooner the better all get **back to the simplicity of the old Statement of Faith** along with Bro. Robert’s declaration, “It is inappropriate that they should be raised with the household.””

Can we claim that the “amendment” - what bro. Williams referred to as “ridiculous” and as an “absurdity” - was viewed by him as an “open question”?

Bro. Williams’ final appeal in “Burning Questions” is stated in the following, “Then rally to the standard, **the old standard.** **Allow the truth in relation to the doctrine of the resurrection, admit the possibility of future resurrections as in the past; there is our meeting point as it was in years past,** and until you revert to that you will be crippled, shackled hand and foot, and **disabled from showing the truth to the hundreds around you. Come back again to the “old paths,”** and thus enabled to go on with the grand work which it is your privilege to do for those by whom you are surrounded. Have the courage of your convictions, fearing not the frowns of men and courting not their smiles; but fearing Him only in whose hands is held your eternal destiny.”

Dispute with C.C. Walker

When Bro. Williams visited England in the summer/fall of 1900, he arranged a meeting with Bro. C.C. Walker at the home of Sis. Jane Roberts (widow of bro. Robert Roberts). The exchange of this meeting is found in the August, 1900 *Advocate* (p.272). When bro. Williams tried to get clarification from bro. Walker on the issue of Adam’s sin and its relation to the sin flesh nature, bro. Williams reported:

“We were told it was useless to re-discuss that question so long as we denied the resurrection of believing Gentiles. To this we answered, **“So long as you will not claim that Gentiles are raised by the same law and upon the same basis as the household who are in covenant relation, we will not object to you believing in their resurrection as God may see fit.”** This is where the question was for forty years, and now why not place it back there again?” “O, no, we cannot do that; for that was never tolerated.” “Yes it was always tolerated, by your Statement of Faith stating that only the ‘household’ ‘two classes’ ‘just and unjust’ would appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and by brother Roberts stating in ‘Twelve Lectures’ and ‘Christendom Astray’ that ‘Rejecters of the word do not come under the law of Christ,’ that they ‘are not constituents of the household,’ that ‘their resurrection at the time when account is taken of that household would seem inappropriate.’ Then he asks, ‘May they not be dealt with at the end (of the thousand years)?’ Now if you will admit this ‘inappropriateness’ we will leave the ‘may they not’ stand where it was for thirty-five years, **and then our obstacle is removed.**”

From “Where is the Blame? – Judge Ye”, bro. Williams shared an open letter between himself and C.C. Walker – the editor of *The Christadelphian* during that time and one of the chief supporters of the “amendment”. Bro. Williams made the observation:

“Jesus made “the” resurrection a certainty for Himself and His brethren **through the blood of the everlasting covenant.** “Them that are without, God will Judge.” Where? When? and How? we leave open questions; but let it be distinctly understood that we do not deny God’s power, right or prerogative to raise for punishment any out of covenant relation. **But we do not believe these will be subjects of “the” judgment “for good or bad” to which probationers only are amenable,** which judgment is spoken of in II Cor. v:10; Rom. xiv:10” (original appearance in the April, 1908 *Advocate*, p.99, and later in *Selected Works of Thomas Williams*, p. 469).

It should be noted that bro. Williams felt it important to make a distinction between “**THE**” JUDGMENT which was to involve the Household (good and bad) “through the blood of the everlasting covenant” on one hand; and then leaving the possibility for those “enlightened” outside of covenant to partake in some other resurrection and judgment. His emphasis and distinction is unmistakable.

In a following letter bro. Williams goes on to state,

“Yours of the 7th inst. is to hand, from which I conclude that it is useless for me to trouble you any further in an effort to effect a reunion of the divided ecclesias, since you consider that reunion can take place only upon an acceptance of the Birmingham amendment of Prop. xxiv. of the Statement of Faith. That Statement is so worded as to declare that non-baptized persons will appear at the judgment-seat of Christ to be judged, and to

receive accordingly “good or bad.” **Yes, I have opposed this,** and it still clearly appears to me to be the only consistent attitude that any enlightened brother can take towards it. **Let me repeat. Our offer, so far as the responsibility question is concerned, is reunion upon the Birmingham Statement before it was changed.**”

If Bro. Williams and many others viewed the whole “amendment” and “responsibility” issue as merely an “open question” why did they not just compromise for the sake of peace and accept the new terms that Birmingham was demanding for acceptable fellowship? As demonstrated by the quotes provided up to this point it is evident that they did not view the matter as an open question without specific conditions being understood and agreed upon. Bro. Williams understood that the “amendment” and new views on “responsibility” were not scriptural and represented a departure from the “old paths” of the Truth.

A shared way of articulating the matter

In a familiar series of questions by Thomas Williams to J.J. Andrew during a visit to England, here obtaining clarification from bro. Andrew as to where he stood on the controversy, bro. Williams asked this question to bro. Andrew:

“If it is understood and believed that Adam’s disobedience brought condemnation and death upon the entire race, Christ included, and that through Christ’s obedience, even unto the death of the cross, there is deliverance therefrom, **would you make the question of whether or not God will raise “enlightened Gentiles” a test of fellowship?**”

Bro. Andrew responded:

“The question of making resurrection of Gentiles out of Christ a test of fellowship **depends upon the way it is held.** **If it be recognized that Adam brought death upon the entire race by his sin, that baptism into Christ frees men from the permanent power of death, and that such of the baptized as die will rise through their relationship to Christ, but that it is possible God may, by His independent power, raise some others, I should not consider it a barrier to fellowship.**”



J.J. Andrew

But if it be contended that some Gentile out of Christ will be raised on the same basis as those in Christ, this contention would be a barrier to fellowship.” (printed in the *Selected Works of Thomas Williams*, p. 489; originally appearing in the October, 1900 *Advocate*, pp. 332,333, under the title of “A Rallying Point”)

Again, notice that it was deemed important to provide clarification on the subject. Bro. Andrew’s lucidity on the matter was a position that Thomas Williams not only tolerated, but it represented his belief on the matter of how it related to fellowship as well. In an address given by Thomas Williams in

London that appeared in the February, 1904 Advocate (p.178, *Life and Works*); bro. Williams gives answer to a question that was posed to him:

“Would you fellowship any who believe or teach resurrection of any unbaptized Gentiles?” Bro. Williams provides the answer endorsing the J.J. Andrew quote previously given – “First, so far as belief is concerned-yes; **if they come under the exception** expressed in the address of the presiding brother. **What is that exception? It is in harmony with Brother Andrew’s well-considered answer in the “Rallying Point.” ... “That is my position. I could not express it in better words.”**”

“Fellowship impossible”

In the same lecture, under “Question #4”, bro. Williams leaves us with absolutely no doubt as to where he stood regarding the amendment and those who supported it. Bro. Williams was asked,

“How will you act toward those (both in England and America) who believe and teach that light is the ground of responsibility, and those who believe that unbaptized Gentiles will be raised to the Judgment Seat of Christ?” He responds, “My “plea for unity” explains that. The Birmingham brethren having **departed from the truth** on Adamic condemnation, and tampering with the old Statement of Faith, and weaving into it resurrection for Gentiles for “good or for bad” out of Christ, on the same basis as those in Covenant relationship, **makes fellowship impossible**, and therefore, when I came to England this time I did not write a single word to Birmingham because I realized that there had been **a departure from the truth** in the new patched unscriptural so-called amended basis thereby departing from the stand Brother Roberts took – “It is inappropriate,” and a “may be,” and making it a must be, and that it must be used as a means of intimidating people into the waters of immersion.”

Many more passages could be supplied to support what has already been reviewed, but such would only be redundant. Bro. Williams and those who fought along side him were very consistent in their position against the departures in the Truth that resulted from changed views on “responsibility” and the creation of the “amendment”. Context is very important to consider when trying to understand how bro. Williams viewed these issues.

LET IT BE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD. When reference was made by brother Williams to the matter as an “open question”, it only had reference to the belief of the resurrection of unbaptized Gentiles as it was viewed before the division. Before the division some believed in it and others did not (including Thomas Williams). There was peace and fellowship between the two parties as long as it was understood that if true, such would not be resurrected on the same basis or appear at the same Judgment as the Household. It was considered vital that it be realized that the Household (the only source of fundamental concern) were to be raised through the “blood of the everlasting covenant” to appear

before the Judgment Seat of Christ. The amendment blurred the lines of truth, making the basis of resurrection and appearance to the Judgment Seat of Christ “light”, bringing both the Good and Bad of Christ’s Household along with the unbaptized “enlightened” Gentiles out of the grave and to the Judgment on the same basis and at the same time – eliminating the need for the “blood of the everlasting covenant”.

We hope that the seriousness of the ramifications of the change in belief (i.e. the “amendment”) can be clearly comprehended. Such a matter cannot be merely explained as an “open question” without very clear clarification provided as to the qualifications that need to accompany any discussion as to what divides the Unamended and Amended communities and how it all relates to the subject of fellowship. The whole issue was not viewed merely as an unqualified “open question” by Thomas Williams or those who stood firm with the *Advocate*. If such were true there would have been no need for those who became known as Unamended to stand fast against the change in doctrinal belief that came out of Birmingham.

With that said, we now lead into the next section of our consideration:

“We will break bread with them, but they will not break bread with us”

For the most part the Unamended community has come through the NASU matter, and though somewhat worn out from the circular reasonings put forth by those contending for the initiative, our fellowship remains intact. But, while the NASU may have been clearly rejected we believe that certain views and attitudes have become engrained into some of the Unamended community that leads to our community’s continuing struggle with these issues, and how the Unamended community perceives and relates to the Amended, especially in regard to fellowship practices.

This struggle has been no where more apparent in recent years than with the more broadminded attitudes of the younger generation in certain segments of our community. Where the doctrinal teachings and/or history of the subject are ignored or misunderstood, it is not surprising that many (not all) of our young people would find themselves in a confused state. If we as a community only hold a certain sentimental allegiance or sympathy to the Unamended position, while also viewing the Amended model as an equally valid means for salvation then why shouldn’t our young people feel inclined to interact, fellowship if possible (where allowances are made), if not altogether jump to the Amended/Central fellowship? It would seem that a growing number of the younger generation (and some of the older as well) are only acting on what the rest of the Unamended community may not fully comprehend – the “we will break bread with them, but they will not break bread with us” view is not a valid

or sustainable position. Combine such a view with an already destructive emphasis on social relationships and “post-modern” tendencies that have crept in from the world, we then have a recipe for disaster on our hands, regardless of an official rejection of the NASU or any other similar initiative.

If these matters are viewed without any clarification – i.e., “that the only difference between the Unamended or Amended is the Responsibility Question, which is nothing more than an open question” - or that the stated differences between the two fellowships are “not that important and do not act as a barrier to fellowship between the two communities”, then why do we as the Unamended community even bother to hold out? Would it not be in everyone’s best interest if we as the Unamended community simply swallowed our “pride”, kept our mouths shut on our view of supposedly “non-vital” issues and join the Amended? They do have vastly “more numbers”, they do have “far more resources for outreach” and they provide “a boundless field of prospective marriage partners” for our sons and daughters. Again, if the Amended model provides an equally valid mode of salvation as is implied by the “we will break with them but they will not break with us” mindset, then why do we hold on to the Unamended position?

With this in mind it is important for us to ask the question - Why did individuals such as Thomas Williams, J.J. Andrew and many, many others work so tirelessly against the change in fundamental belief that took place with the “amendment” if these issues were not that vital? It has to be understood that it was more than just the “Amended” cutting off a group of people, it was that those who were “cut off”, “disfellowshipped”, etc., refused to change their beliefs on what they understood as serious issues that did in fact affect fundamental belief and fellowship.

Regarding the cries of unity that were coming from some brethren regarding the Division, bro. Williams had this to say in response. From the June, 1901 Advocate (p.219):

“It is not to be wondered that brethren are making pleas for unity, in view of the situation, and especially in England. One cannot help sympathizing with all those who make the plea. **But here is a danger as well as a thing to be desired.** The danger is just now, and in all grievous contentions we are forced into, that we may become sick at heart and cry out: What’s the use striving for purity; let us all unite and compromise our differences. Now there certainly are differences among us at present which require very far-fetched arguments to magnify them into causes of division; ... **Still, there are real doctrinal differences of a serious character, and these cannot be compromised for union, however much we may naturally desire to see an end of all contentions.**

It is to be feared that the danger we are now speaking of is overlooked by some who are crying out for ‘unity’. Their cry is to be respected and sincerely sympathized with; **but disregard of duties incumbent upon a**

faithful maintenance of the Truth and pure fellowship based upon fundamental principles must be condemned and carefully guarded against.”

As we stand some 100 years after the initial division that formed the Amended and Unamended communities we have to understand that very real differences exist of a fundamental nature between the two groups. To carry the “we will break bread with them” mindset is to deny the importance and vital character of some of the doctrines that separate Christadelphia. The following questions (to name a few) have to be considered that go beyond our consideration of the issue of what is termed the “Responsibility Question”:

- Are we willing to fellowship those who deny the legal principle of Adamic Condemnation?
- Are we willing to fellowship those who think we can be “in Adam” and “in Christ” at the same time?
- Are we willing to fellowship those who deny that we are alienated from God from our birth due to the Adamic Nature we are born with?
- Are we willing to fellowship those who think that it is not until we commit our first personal transgression that we are alienated?
- Are we willing to fellowship those who do not believe that we pass out of the Law of Sin and Death at our baptism?
- Are we willing to fellowship those who believe that “sin in the flesh” represents only a “propensity to sin” rather than an actual sin/unclean principal in our flesh that needs atonement?
- Are we willing to fellowship those who believe that Christ did not inherit condemnation as a result of the sin of Adam and did not bear the sin flesh nature and therefore did not need atonement?
- Are we willing to fellowship those who believe that baptism is only for the forgiveness of personal sin?
- As we have already discussed, are we willing to fellowship those who believe that it is only “light”/“knowledge” that brings us from the grave to appear before Christ’s Judgment Seat, rather than “the blood of the everlasting covenant” accompanied by knowledge and faith?
- Are we willing to fellowship those who have absolutely no understanding or concern as to what they believe regarding the above mentioned issues and doctrines?

There are other serious errors that are now tolerated within the Central fellowship that go beyond the historical differences on the atonement. But, whether Amended individuals fall under all the points just mentioned, a few, or only one – and it must be recognized that such issues vary throughout the Central fellowship – to say we will “break with them” either shows a lack of understanding of Bible teaching or a dangerous degree of carelessness as to the

vital importance of these subjects as well as an unscripturally casual view of the doctrine of fellowship.

What of those who “believe just like we do”?

When we hear brethren say that they have talked to Amended individuals that “believe just like we do” the question that we must ask is, why do they then embrace a Statement of Faith that compromises fundamental doctrine and remain in a community that tolerates to one degree or another the above listed errors? When brethren state regarding the Amended that “they believe just like we do”, one has to consider that maybe the degree of understanding as to the Unamended position of those that make such claims is seriously lacking or they are putting social interests over scriptural principles.

If there are those who “believe like we do” then is it not to their best spiritual benefit to come out of a system that promotes or tolerates such error and be with brethren of like mindedness, if they come in contact with our community? We have read and heard of excuses given as to why Amended individuals who “believe just like we do” would not come out of the Amended fellowship. But we know of several brethren (one as recently as this past summer) who have had to make difficult choices that involve family, close friends or their financial welfare (see Matt. 10:37 and John 12:43) to come out of what they saw as a flawed system of belief to embrace the old standard of belief, i.e. the Unamended position. If we do come across those who believe as we do or are at least on the right track, should not our responsibility dictate that we more earnestly attempt to assist them in being part of a more scripturally based belief system, rather than to provide excuse for them? What did Aquila and Priscilla do when they came across Apollos still teaching the baptism of John? Did they accept this as an excusable “non-vital” difference? No – they “*expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly*”.

“Case by case”

Arguments have been put forward that contend that we should fellowship the Amended on a “*case by case*” basis. Such an approach seems perfectly ideal if such individuals were examined sufficiently to see if they truly believed as we did, met the conditions regarding the subject of Resurrectional Responsibility as once agreed upon by our earlier brethren and are of the understanding that if fellowship with the Unamended is to be pursued it is not acceptable for them to return to fellowship under the BASF. And, in some cases re-emersion may be in order.

Unfortunately, the way we have recently heard and read “case by case” presented, there seems to be very little definition as how to discern who can be scripturally fellowshipped and who cannot. We should be on guard against any such course of action that cannot possibly be consistent, that compromises the continuity of the “old foundations” and that creates unneeded strain and strife

between individuals and ecclesias, which also carries over to our Gatherings and Bible Schools.

In conclusion

We have no desire to disparage the Amended; neither do we hold any ill will towards them. For years the Amended had held a strong position against fellowshipping us. At least they were able to comprehend the ramifications of the differences. Our primary concern is with the health of the Truth and our (i.e., the Unamended community’s) relationship to it. Do we fully understand the doctrinal implications of what it is to be an “Unamended” Christadelphian? Do we understand the history and context of what has come before us? Do we appreciate the serious nature of these issues? Let us be very careful that we do not adopt casual or mislead conclusions as to the substance of the differences that exist and its application to the issue of fellowship. Nor should we be naïve as to the hazardous consequences of relaxed views that are becoming more manifest within our community. We must realize that these difficulties will never go away, and though they tend to tax our patience may our resolve never be weakened and may we never cling to mistaken views that undermine our position and relation to THE TRUTH.

A. Thomas



IN SEARCH OF THE PERFECT ECCLESIA - JERUSALEM

IN this installment of our series of articles dealing with the Ecclesias of the first century, we wish to examine the Jerusalem Ecclesia. The majority of our comments will be centered on the inspired words that have been recorded in the book of Acts. Our study will not address the bestowal of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but will only focus on the divinely described characteristics of the Ecclesia. These actions and mind set appear to be characteristic of this Ecclesia regardless of the gifts and manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

The first mention of this Ecclesia can be found in the first chapter of Acts, verse 14. This first description provides the believer much food for thought. The phrase “with one accord” occurs eleven times in the book of Acts and once in Romans 15:6. We can find this phrase in Acts in 1:14, 2:1, 2:46, 4:24, 5:12, 7:57, 8:6, 12:20, 15:25, 18:12, and 19:29. This appears to be the best description of the early day believers.

The Diaglott renders the phrase in Chapter 2:1 as “They were all with one mind in the same place.” We have to believe that this unity of thought and purpose was necessary or the Spirit gifts would not have been given to the entire Ecclesia. Would God have given His Spirit-power to a group of individuals who held differing beliefs on the essential matters of God’s Truth? Should we not expect the same thing to happen with the bestowal of eternal life in the future age? Will God bestow this wonderful gift on any who are not in one accord with the teachings of the Apostles or to any who continually practices immoral acts that are contrary to a faithful walk? Should we not expect to see the same thing in the day to day activities of modern day Ecclesias? Will God bestow His blessings on the efforts of today’s Ecclesias if they are not of one mind on the essential things of God’s Truth? Herein lies the problem, brethren. Modern day Ecclesias and individuals cannot agree on what are the essential things of God’s Truth. This lack of agreement on these things will continue to cause much discord, strife, stress and depression among modern day believers and may keep some from experiencing the wonderful blessings of eternal life.

This powerful phrase has been misused throughout efforts of many during the past hundred years who have pushed for “Unity” without resolving the differences that have kept the two Christadelphian communities from being “at one mind” on essential things. During this age in which we live, there are still some that wish to sweep these differences under the rug and refuse to acknowledge that there are still major differences between the two bodies. However, this cannot be pleasing in God’s eyes. Unity is wonderful as the early stages of the Jerusalem Ecclesia teach us, but it can only be accomplished if all are of one mind.

The latter verses of the second chapter of Acts provide a very beautiful picture of this first century Ecclesia. We read in verses 38 – 47 a description of the growth of an Ecclesia who truly had all things in common and was following the ways of the Eternal Father. Verse 42 reads: “And they continued steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread and in prayers.” Verse 46-47 reads: “They continuing daily with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people.” What a beautiful description of a group of called out ones whose ultimate desire is to be part of God’s Holy Kingdom. How many Ecclesias of today could this be said of? In the opinion of this writer, this is the description of the perfect Ecclesia. This is what the Ecclesia of God should be striving for. Let us look at each of the components of the description of this Ecclesia with the purpose of seeking ways to strengthen our home Ecclesia.

Continuing steadfast: This characteristic describes individuals who were strong in the faith and who were always continuing in well-doing. They were steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, accounting that their labor was not in vain in the Lord’s service (I Corinthians 15:58). This band of believers who lived the closest to the time of the resurrection of our Master were firm and committed to the perseverance of the Truth. They would be happy and would count it all joy to

suffer with Christ in the proclamation and defense of the Truth. This is a characteristic of dedicated and committed brothers and sisters in all ages that would let nothing come between them and the true worship of the Heavenly Father and His Son.

In the apostle’s doctrine: Their only beliefs were in the one hope, the one Lord, the one faith, the one baptism and the one God and Father of all Who is above all and through all and in you all. (Ephesians 4:4-6). To believe in the apostle’s doctrine, they had to understand a set of doctrines that would teach them about the salvation offered through the shedding of the blood of the Lamb slain from the foundations of the world. They would have to fully understand the first principles of resurrection and judgment and the future bestowal of eternal life. They would have to understand fully the components of the covenants made to the fathers and ratified through the blood of the everlasting covenant. They would have to completely understand the components of the Kingdom of God, maybe not the time of the establishment of this glorious age, but definitely the elements of the Kingdom. When we think of the depth of the knowledge of this first century Ecclesia, we must remember the teaching of the Master to the Apostles as recorded in Luke 24:27 and 44-45. We cannot fathom the instruction about all things concerning the Christ that these Apostles were taught. Although we believe that the second chapter of Ephesians is mostly talking about the Gentiles brought into the Jewish Hope, this Jerusalem Ecclesia fits the wording of verse 19 – “The Ecclesia was built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.” Initially, while this Ecclesia was still in the infant stages of development, they had no other gospel other than that preached by the Apostles. This should be the standard of every true Ecclesia. There can be no other doctrine allowed in the Ecclesia of God, other than that preached by the apostles and prophets. If there is, then the warnings of Galatians 1:5-9 are attributable to that Ecclesia that allows false doctrine to be taught. This Ecclesia was not looking for “new things” and would not have been trying to transform apostolic teachings into new forms of expression. They recognized and accepted the simplicity that is in Christ. Should we be like the Jerusalem Ecclesia or will we be like the Ecclesia described in this first chapter of Galatians – accursed by God?

And Fellowship: The Greek word is “koinonia”. This means a common sharing, partnership and participation in things together, both spiritual and natural. This can only be done by those who are in one accord, having one mind on spiritual things, who have one common goal and who are at one with the Father and His Son. Much has been written on the pages of Christadelphian writing about this subject. The only point that we wish to make in regards to the Jerusalem Ecclesia is that they must have fully understood and practiced the elements of a true godly Ecclesia. They desired the oneness that this term implies. They desired to have common goals with others of like precious faith. Their attitude in the initial stages of the development of this Ecclesia was appropriate for the perfection of this Ecclesia that gives us many things to compare our own Ecclesia against.

And in breaking of bread: They completely understood the Atonement, the symbolical significance of the breaking of the Saviour's Body and the shedding of His blood. They understood the ratification of the everlasting covenants. They understood the plan and purpose of the Messiah in His two advents. There were no new ideas introduced into the early stages of this Ecclesia's development. Although many false ideas did develop out of this group that were proclaimed by the Judaizers, the first group of believers in this Ecclesia had a very good understanding of the things that are necessary for salvation. During the later stages of the Ecclesia, the Apostles had to continually fight against the false doctrines that others introduced into the Ecclesia environment. The lesson for all is that every Ecclesia has to be built on the foundations of the apostolic teachings.

And in prayers: This final element of the development of the perfect Ecclesia is one that should never be forgotten. The prayers of a healthy Ecclesia, both personal and communal, are pleasing to the ears of the Father. They followed the admonition of I Thessalonians 5:21 to pray without ceasing.

In Verse 46, we see the final description of this first century Ecclesia. The inspired writer again makes notice of their singleness of mind and purpose. He then speaks of one effect of this unity. They were a contented people, recognizing that all blessings flowed from their loving Father, understanding that the things of the world were not what they were to strive for, and accepting that their sole purpose in life was to prepare themselves for the return of the Messiah. These individuals were probably not rich in this world's affairs but they were very rich in the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ.

The Scriptures teach us that the singleness of mind that this Ecclesia manifested would come to an end throughout the remaining years of the Ecclesia. Other inspired writings describe the problems that this Ecclesia would soon have to address and overcome. Many of these problems developed because of the same Ecclesial problems that we have already discussed in our review of the letters to the seven Ecclesias of the Apocalypse. As we study the other Ecclesias from the pages of Scripture, let us pay special attention to the root causes of the problems they experienced as these same issues have impacted the Ecclesias of all ages. The spiritual goals of each brother and sister and of each Ecclesia should be to return to the way of life that the Ecclesia of Jerusalem manifested in their early stages of development.

Lord willing, our next articles in this continuing series will review the other Ecclesias mentioned in the Scriptures, beginning with the Ecclesia at Corinth.

B. Henderson

Thus saith the LORD, "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." Jeremiah 6:16

PREPARING TO PREACH – Lesson 4

Resurrection and Judgment

JOHN Carlton had heard that Bob Ferra's mother had died last week. He's worked with Bob for years, and liked him. He was honest and considerate. When he saw Bob come in Monday morning after being out for a couple of days, he walked up to his buddy, and put his hand on his back.

"Bob, I'm really sorry to hear about your mom passing away"

"Thanks John" he replied with a far off look "but I know she'll be raised to life when Jesus returns"

"Uh huh" he mumbles with a confused look in his eye "You're not Catholic, are you?"

"No, I belong to a small group of Bible students called the Christadelphians." John tried mouthing this multi-syllable word, but kept coming up short.

"Christ-a...Chris...I've never heard of that before."

Bob held out four fingers "We focus on the promises that God made to Abraham Isaac and Jacob".

Bob pulled in one finger and John knew at least this was going to be a short description with three more sentences.

"We believe that Jesus will return to the earth to set up a kingdom that will never end, that when he does return, he will raise those (the dead "in Christ") who have been sleeping in the grave and judge them righteous or unrighteous. Lastly, the righteous will have eternal life and the unrighteous will be turned back into the world where they will die and be extinct for all eternity."

"Interesting" John said, and spun around trying to make his escape.

"I'll talk to you later Bob, let me know if I can be of any help".

Bob smiled and waved, and turned to his computer to start working for the day. John usually didn't talk about religion much; he really didn't know anything about religion. He sat back down at his desk and looked out the window for a moment. He thought everyone believed they went to heaven or hell when they died. Bob didn't seem to believe that.

John made a mental note. "I deed to look at my Bible" he thought, and then turned back to his computer to resume work.

2 Timothy 4:1: “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; 2)Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”

For most of us, the opportunity to preach never comes when we have a Bible in hand, and yet the Bible is clear that we are expected to be able to share the hope within us at all times, when it is convenient and when it is inconvenient. How do you preach the truth to people when you have a hard time remembering Bible verses, and worse yet, your mind goes blank when put on the spot?

The theme of this series on preaching is that we should have four simple sentences stuck in our head, burned there by endless repetition so we can always be ready to explain to someone what we believe, and if they are interested in knowing more, then invite them to your home to look at your Bibles together.

These are the verses you have to remember (or take a minute to write your own versions of these sentences down - whatever makes you feel comfortable).

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

If you are going to just read these four sentences and hope you'll remember them, then you're wasting your time. Please move on to the next article. If, however this is important to you, then you are going to have to work to remember these sentences. Write them down four thousand times. Drill yourself every time you stand in front of the mirror. Ask yourself “What do I believe”? And list off the four sentences. Write them on your wrist, put a post-it note on your computer, tape the list to your mirror, keep a piece of paper in your pocket, use flash cards or even tape them to the side of your television and memorize the statements over and over again during commercials (this is a good idea for kids - who says commercials are useless?). If this is important to you, and you are determined, then you can remember it.

I guarantee that if you work this hard to remember this description of your beliefs, when you are put on the spot, you will still clearly remember what your hope of salvation is, and you will be able to clearly and succinctly explain your hope. From your friends and neighbors, to an angry judge trying to stare you down, you will feel a wonderful strength in knowing exactly what you believe, being able to explain it and being firmly convicted of it.

The Resurrection

The rest of this article will give Bible verses on subjects related to the resurrection and the judgment. My suggestion is for you to write the four sentences as well as these Bible notes on any blank pages in your Bible, so you will have bible verses later to show people.

None of these lists are exhaustive (a complete listing of all the Bible verses on the subject), but rather a small clear sampling of Bible verses that show what we believe.

Resurrection: Being resurrected is of no use if we fly off to heaven as an “immortal soul”, so we're going to give some Bible verses on why being raised is critical. For starters, many people believe dead people are having a good time somewhere. The Bible does not say this, and it's good to tell people exactly what happens when you die.

First of all, we want to show that the Bible refers to death as unconsciousness, and clearly states that people don't even remember God in death, much less anything else.

Psalms 6:4 “Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake. 5) For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?”

Psalms 115:16 “The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD'S: but the earth hath he given to the children of men. 17 The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.”

Psalms 146:3 “Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. 4 His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.”

Ecclesiastes 9:4 “For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion. 5) For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. 6) Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.”

Ecclesiastes 9:10 “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.”

Isaiah 38:18 “For the grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. 19) The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth.”

Some people are referred to as being asleep when they are dead.

Job 7:21 “And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away my iniquity? for now shall I sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be.”

Psalms 13:3 “Consider and hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death”

Jeremiah 51:57 “And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her

captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts.”

Sleep can be another way to refer to unconsciousness, but it also refers to people who obeyed God, because they will be awoken from that sleep. The unconsciousness is not permanent.

Daniel 12:2 “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. 3) And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

John 11:11 “...Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. 12) Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. 13) Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. 14) Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.”

The hope of man is the resurrection from the dead. God has planned this event for when Jesus returns. It is when all the dead who have been baptized will be raised again to stand before God for judgment.

Romans 6:3 “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4) Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5) For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection”

1 Thessalonians 4:13 “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14) For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15) For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16) For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17) Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18) Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

Revelation 20:12 “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13) And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.”

If you would like some more Bible verses for these subjects, visit www.learnbible.net and click on the “topical” tab. You can find Bible verses for the subjects of death and resurrection as well as many others.

Years ago, a person accused Christadelphians of basing their beliefs on “one or two verses”, so sometimes it’s good to know a lot of verses so you can show that a topic is

consistently taught all throughout Scripture. Death, resurrection and eternal life are referred to in the Bible multitudes of times, so it’s good to know where to go when you need to find that information.

Next issue we will cover the hope of eternal life and it’s associated Bible verses. That’s it. The article is over, but before you put this magazine down or turn the page, start writing down these four sentences right now! Get going!

Jack Garvey

THE BLESSINGS OF THE APOCALYPSE

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” Rev. 1:1-3

WHEN we think of the wonders of God’s blessings, we often think of the Sermon on the Mount and the wonderful blessings that Christ pronounced on His followers of all ages. We may think of God’s Mercy that He has exhibited throughout the ages. We may think of the natural blessings that we experience throughout our natural lives. Within the Apocalypse, there is another set of blessings that we should also think about. These blessings are a summary of God’s workings with His people throughout all generations. As we study these individually, our minds may immediately go to thoughts of the faithful men and women of ages past whose lives are so eloquently described in God’s Holy Word. We see in these blessings a pictorial representation of the life of the true saint. Let us acknowledge these apocalyptic blessings and learn the lessons that the divinely inspired apostle John is trying to teach. A primary theme of this last book of God’s revelations is the message that he that have ears to hear let him hear. This certainly applies to these blessings that make up our study. As we study these blessings, we should not limit their application to just the Book of Revelation, but to all of God’s Revealed Word.

We wish to look at these blessings in the following order as this order appears to detail the life of the saint.

1. A blessing is pronounced on the accurate study of its message - Revelation 1:3.
2. A blessing on those who keep the sayings of the book - Revelation 22:7

3. A blessing on those who keep the Lord's commandments - *Revelation 22:14*
4. A blessing upon those who watch and walk in the light of its teaching - *Revelation 16:15*
5. A blessing is pronounced on those who will be resurrected to help fulfill it - *Revelation 14:13*
6. A blessing upon those who attain unto life eternal - *Revelation 20:6*
7. A blessing is pronounced upon those who partake of the marriage supper of the Lamb - *Revelation 19:9*

A blessing is pronounced on the accurate study of its message - Revelation 1:3.

In **Revelation 1:3**, we are told that in order to receive this blessing we should read, study and keep the words of this book. This blessing could be read as such – We should gather exact knowledge of the matter, give heed to what is heard and to observe narrowly the things of the book. How often do we see this concept within God's Holy Word?

II Timothy 2:15 – Study to show thyself approved of God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of God.

Psalms 119:97 – O, how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 – These words that I command you this day, shall be in thine heart: (7) And thou shall teach them diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up.

The Apostle John begins his writings with the age old concept that God will draw nigh to those who draw nigh to God.

The Apocalypse is a book that describes the issues that the faithful of his age were facing and the burdens, trials and tribulations that the faithful of the ages to come would have to face. We cannot take these teachings lightly or take the stance that this symbolic book is too difficult to understand.. Granted that sometimes it is hard to remember all of the details of each prophecy as it relates to the various time periods throughout history, but these symbols are not difficult to understand. John tells us of the tribulations that each Ecclesia would have to face due to the impact of the great enemy of the truth – Humanism. He describes the impact of toleration, apathy and compromise among the believers. He also describes the blessings to those who overcome. He describes the apostasy that would grow out of the one true Ecclesia. He describes the end time events that would culminate in the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth and the angelic proclamation that Babylon, Babylon the great is fallen and the pronouncement of the everlasting gospel to all those who survive the terrible judgments of God on a sinful, wicked generation. He describes in glorious details New Jerusalem, that symbolic city that is representative of the accumulation of the saints of all ages. He describes the fate of the sinners who will not

be allowed to enter into this glorious age, but are cast to the Savior's left after hearing the devastating words of "Depart from me, you workers of iniquity, for I never knew you." Yes, brethren, it is our duty to gather exact knowledge of the matter, give heed to what is heard and to observe narrowly the things of the book. These issues are repeated within the other blessings of the Apocalypse.

A blessing on those who keep the sayings of the book - Revelation 22:7

A blessing on those who keep the Lord's commandments - Revelation 22:14

Again we see links to the divine message of all ages. Read Deuteronomy 4:39-40. The word keepeth is from the Greek word –"Tereo". This word means to watch over, preserve, keep, to guard from loss or injury by keeping the eye upon. The individual that keepeth the saying of this book will be able to use these sayings in the day of trial, tribulation, persecution and depression.

What are some of the sayings that we receive from the Apocalypse?

- Repent from which thou hast fallen and do the first works (that brought you into the truth) – Rev 2:5
- Be thou faithful into death – Rev 2:10
- But that which you hath, hold fast until I come – Rev 2:25 and Rev 3:11
- Be watchful, strengthen the things that remain that are ready to die – Rev 3:2
- Buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed and anoint thy eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see

The entire last book was given to the Saints of all ages to provide means of obtaining strength and encouragement to overcome their own sins, the sins of the Ecclesia and the tribulations that results from those who are opposers to the one truth. In Revelation 22:6, the proclamation is made that all of the sayings of this book are faithful and true. This reminds us of one of the titles of the Commander of all Armies. In Revelation 19:6, Christ is called the Faithful and True. This is a beautiful picture of the Master. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Christ was always faithful and true to the commandments and laws and doctrines of His Father. When we are baptized into the name of the Jesus Christ, we take on the family name of Yahweh himself. Therefore we accept all of the responsibilities of this sanctified name. We must continuously manifest the characteristics of God's Holy Son. This means a continual and consistent guarding of the purity and truthfulness of the sayings of not only this last book of the Bible, but all of God's commandments and holy doctrines. Notice the warning of the 18th and 19th verses of Chapter 22. We cannot add or take away from the commandments of this book. This again brings us back to the admonition made to the patriarchs of old. (Read Deuteronomy 4:2.) This admonition should not be taken lightly. Many throughout the ages and many today have chosen to worship God on their own terms and pervert the true principles of holiness, truthfulness and godliness. We must not do this or our names will be removed from the book of life and we will be cast out into outer darkness to suffer the extinction of the sinners and wicked at the return of Christ.

A blessing upon those who watch and walk in the light of its teaching - *Revelation 16:15*

This blessing is a continuation of the last one. We will achieve no blessings simply from keeping the truth pure, we must also look at our own walk, keeping our spiritual garments pure and unadulterated and unspotted from the world's filth. The word *watcheth* means to keep awake. Read Luke 21:36. This term suggests a spiritual alertness to the things of God - an awareness of our own sins, the signs of the times and errors within the Body. This concept is intertwined throughout God's Holy Word. We are commanded to be watchful in these ways.

- Because they know not the time of the Lord's coming – Matthew 24:42, Matthew 25:13; Mark 13:35-37
- In order to guard against temptation – Matthew 26:41; Mark 14:38
- So as to recognize error – Acts 20:28-31
- In prayer – Colossians 4:2
- In view of prophetic signs - I Thessalonians 5:1-6
- To obtain a blessing – Revelation 16:15
- To receive the reward – Luke 12:35-38
- Matthew 25 – parable of the virgins – someone was watching for the return of the bridegroom

Again, we see a link back to the days of the Old Testament. Ezekiel 3 and 33 describe the duties of God's watchmen. One chapter appears to deal with individual sins and the second chapter deals with situations that impact the entire household. We see in the final admonition regarding the duties of a watchman in Ezekiel 33:6 a direct contrast of the blessings provided in Revelation 16:15. To those who watch and perform the duties of a watchman, blessings will accrue. To those who refuse to blow the sound of the trumpet when necessary, God will require his blood. This is a very sobering commandment in which we should pay special attention.

A blessing is pronounced on those who will be resurrected to help fulfill it - *Revelation 14:13*

This chapter gives us a very good summary of the things that will happen prior to and during the establishment of the political kingdom of the restored Kingdom of God on this earth. As with most of the Apocalypse, this chapter, describes latter events first and then tells us of earlier events that lead up to the final events.

Verse 13 describes a blessing to those who die in the Lord from henceforth. This verse is a description of the saints of God, covenanted with the eternal Father, through the blood of the everlasting covenant. The blessing is not for a blessing in the death of the saint but in the saint's participation in the events described in this chapter. These glorious individuals will be those who have exhibited patience in their day to day sufferings, who have the name of Yahweh inscribed in their foreheads, who have not been defiled with the spiritual harlots and adulteresses of the world around them.

These individuals will be resting from their labors of the flesh, but are not in a restful state on inactivity. They will be participants in the great reaping and harvest of God's judgments poured out on a sinful and wicked world. Verse 14 provides us a clue that verse 13 is applicable to the time right after the judgment as opposed to the complete participation in the political aspect of God's kingdom. The word for crown in verse 14 is Stephanos, not diadem. This word implies the personal victory over sin and not the granting of authority that will be given the saints when they rule and reign with the Supreme Commander of the LORD of Hosts. This verse describes the saint after resurrection and judgment and prior to the battles to liberate God's people from the northern invading armies of the age. This blessing is pronounced on that multitudinous throng of glorified individuals who have constantly and consistently sought after God's Kingdom in their probationary lives. Again, we can see this blessing in the writings of the Old Testament. Read Psalms 149:4-9.

A blessing upon those who attain unto life eternal - *Revelation 20:6*

This blessing is pronounced upon those who had separated themselves from the apostate religious systems of all ages and whose form of worship was always towards the Lord God Almighty. The term resurrection as used in this verse is the ultimate sense. This verse is not just speaking of the standing again of the covenanted individuals throughout the ages, but is speaking of those who have been granted eternal life after a righteous judgment. These are truly the firstfruits as described in Revelation 14:4 – “These are they which were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.” We are commanded to “Seek you first the Kingdom of God”. This verse describes the ultimate blessing for those who were obedient to this commandment throughout their probationary lives. These individuals will rule and reign with He whose right it is for the millennium, until the time when all enemies have been destroyed and the Kingdom will be delivered to the Father and He will be all in all. This verse brings our minds to the exceeding great and precious promises that by which we might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust – II Peter 1:4. This is the consummation of the hope of all who have died in the faith, not having received the promises, but were persuaded of them and embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth – Hebrews 11:13. This blessing will be realized by those who have fought the good fight of faith, laying hold of eternal life, wherein thou hast been called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses – I Timothy 6:12. Let us walk in the path of the Lord and be part of this glorious multitude.

A blessing is pronounced upon those who partake of the marriage supper of the Lamb - *Revelation 19:9*

In this chapter, we read of both the marriage and the marriage supper of the Lamb. These are two different events. The marriage will unite the Groom and His espoused bride unto a union that will last for 1000 years. The marriage supper is the celebratory

feast that continues for many years after the actual marriage. It is during the marriage supper that the friends of the wedded couple will recognize the union of the two and celebrate the marriage. In olden times, this was done at the house of the Groom. Here, we see in symbolic beauty, the return of the multitudinous Christ to the land of Zion and to his fellow countrymen, the natural Jews. These natural Jews will at first be under the oppression of the northern Gogian invader when Christ and His Bride returns to the land promised unto Him. This oppressor must be destroyed before the marriage supper can commence. After the defeat of these enemies of God, those who accept Christ and respond favorably to the pronouncement of the everlasting gospel message will at first be in great sorrow for the evil that their ancestors performed against the Son of God. However, God will fulfill His promise made unto the patriarchs of old. These individual Jews will soon recognize that the despised Nazarene is truly the long awaited for Messiah. Their sorrow will soon turn to extreme joy and Christ and the immortal saints will make them the first dominion of the worldwide Kingdom of God on earth. These will be mortal constituents of the greatest age ever seen by mankind. They will be singing "Hosanna; Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the LORD. Blessed is the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the LORD: Hosanna in the highest". Mark 11:9-10. These will only be the first guests that will be celebrants of the marriage of Christ and His Bride. After the defeat of the Gogian invasion, the gospel message will be proclaimed again in the heavens of the age. All who will separate themselves from the evil and wicked political and religious powers of the day will be invited to recognize that their fathers have inherited lies, vanities and things wherein there is no profit. Jeremiah 16:19. These Gentiles will be part of the group described 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." At this time, the guests are all invited and have responded favorably to the invitation. The marriage supper feast will continue for an extended time and all will be blessed with the righteous reign of a benevolent ruler and co-rulers.

Let us watch and be always ready for the return of our Master.

"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto

him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

B. Henderson

PRINCE OF ROSH – Ezekiel 38:2

THE editor, giving Dr. Thomas' translation of Ezek. 38:2 in a lecture, was once asked for his authority for the translation. He could only give Dr. Thomas, and while he had the utmost confidence that the doctor was right, he felt his case would have been stronger had he been able to give authority from an outside source. Through Brother Phillips, of Kansas, he has now in his possession "Dissertations on Unaccomplished Prophecy, by W. Snell Chauncy," published in London in 1838, and found by Brother Phillips on a second-hand book stand in Wales. This is what the author says:

Rather Gog *the prince* of the land of Magog, *the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal*. By Magog is probably meant the Scythians or Tartars, called so by the Arabian and Syrian writers. Josephus is the earliest Hebrew authority of weight and learning to which we can address ourselves; and he distinctly informs us "that Japhet, the son of Noah, had seven sons," whose names as recorded in Gen. 10:2 were Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras; who, proceeding from their primitive seats, in the mountains of Taurus and Amanus, ascended Asia to the river *Tanasi* (or, *Don*;) and there entering Europe, penetrated as far westward as the straits of Gibraltar, occupying the lands which they successively met within their progress (all of which were uninhabited); and bequeathed their names to their different families or nations. – Granville Penn.

By Rosh is most probably meant the Russians, descendants of the ancient inhabitants on the river Araxes or Rosh. See Bochart, Phaleg., lib III., cap. 13, etc. Michaelis, Spicileg. Geog. Part I., p. 34, etc., D'Herbelot and others.

According to our common English translation, the prophecy is addressed to "Gog, *the chief prince* of Meshech and Tubal."

So the English translators of the Bible have rendered that important title, following the interpretation of the Vulgate, or Latin version of Jerome, used in the western church; which interpretation rests upon a criticism of that same ancient writer. But the *first translators* of the Hebrew Scriptures, the *Septuagint*, or Seventy Jews of

Alexandria, who translated the prophecies of Ezekiel into the Greek tongue about six hundred years before the age of Jerome, and about two hundred years before the birth of Christ, rendered this passage with a very notable and essential difference, viz:

Gog, the chief of Ros, Mesoch and Thobel. The difference between the two interpretations turns upon this one point: The Hebrew word *rosh* or *ros*, used as an appellative noun, signifies indeed, “head,” “chief,” or, “prince.” But the ancient Jews were sensible that in this place it was not an appellative, but a proper name; and they therefore rendered it by the proper name Ros.

Ezekiel makes mention of other proper names of nations besides Ros, which yet are nowhere to be met with in the writings of Moses; and the question has long been set at rest by the concurring judgment of the learned, who have adopted decidedly the primitive interpretation of the Alexandrian Jews. And although our common English version has not derived the benefit of the decision, yet the title of the prophecy has been generally received among the erudite portion of the western nations for nearly two centuries, according to the ancient Greek interpretation; that is to say, as uniting the THREE proper names of nations, Ros, Mosc, and Tobl. Vitringa observes, that “the Seventy interpreters, Symmachus, and Theodotion, perceived Ros in this place to be the *proper name of a people*.” Conformably to this corrected interpretation Archbishop Newcome has expressed the three names *Rhos*, *Meshech*, and *Tubal*, in his English translation of Ezekiel; following Michaelis in the orthography of these words. And David Levi, the most learned Jew of our days, thus determined the signification of the word *Ros*: “As to this word I must observe, that it is *not an appellative*, as in the common translation of the Bible, but a *proper name*.” - Dissert. on the Prophecies, vol. II. p. 308.

The word “prince” in our common translation ought therefore to be replaced by the proper name Ros. The celebrated Bochart has observed that *Ros* is the most ancient form under which history makes mention of the name of Russia; and he contended that the two first of those names properly denote the nations of *Russia* and *Muscovy*. “It is credible,” says he, “that from *Rhos* and *Mesech*, that is the *Rhossi* and *Moschi*, of whom Ezekiel speaks, descended the Russians and Muscovites, nations of the greatest celebrity in European Scythia.” We have, indeed, ample and positive testimony that the Russian nation was called *Ros* by the Greeks in the earliest period in which we find it mentioned.

“The *Ros* are a Scythian nation, bordering on the northern Taurus.” This testimony is given by Cedrenus, Zonarus, Leo Grammaticus, and Tzetzes. And their own historian thus reports: “It is related that the Russians, whom the Greeks call *Ros*, and sometimes *Rosos*, derived their name from Ros, a valiant man who delivered his nation from the yoke of their tyrants. This is identical name which the first interpreters of Ezekiel found in the text of that ancient prophet; upon the peculiar form of which name Mr. Gibbon has this remark: “Among the Greeks this national application has a singular form, *Ros*, as an *indeclinable word*; of which many fanciful etymologies have been found.”

Moskwa, or Moscow, the ancient capital of the Russian empire, derives its name from the river Moskwa, which runs on the south side of it. – Busching’s Geography, vol. I., p. 452. The river Tobol gives name to the city of Tobolum, or Tobolski, (Utsupra, p. 506, 483), the metropolis of the extensive region of Siberia, lying immediately eastward of the territories of *Moscovy*, or *Mosc*. “Tobol and Mosc are mentioned together in a former chapter of the same prophet, 28:13, where they are characterized as nations trading in copper; a metal which it is notorious abounds in the soil of Siberia. And thus the *Three Denominations*, united in the prophecy, point out, with equal capacity and conciseness, those widely extended regions, which, at the present day, we denominate collectively, THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE. It is true that in 1st Chron. 5:4, we find the same God in our English Bible as a Hebrew name among the Reubenites; but the ancient Greek interpreters teach us that in that place it was properly enounced *Goug*, and not *Gogue*. But the name in Israel’s prophecy is not a Hebrew, but a Gentile name. “If,” as Michaelis says, “Gomer was the Hebrew name for the Gauls, it is not improbable that the Trocmi, a nation of the Gauls, were *Togarmah*.” - Penn’s Prophecy of Ezekiel.

From the November, 1895 *Christadelphian Advocate*

“MISTAKEN”

A small portion of the editorial section of the March, 1909 *Christadelphian Advocate* excerpt was recently used in another periodical to suggest that those who did not accept the Birmingham amendment (what later became known as the Unamended) had open fellowship policies towards those who fell under the BASF. The excerpt from the *Advocate* in fact records that some from England who were meeting under the new “amendment” had come to North America and were being accepted back into fellowship by ecclesias that met on the “old foundations”. But it has recently been contended that the excerpt informs us that after being accepted into fellowship by the North American ecclesias that the “amended” visitors from England then returned home to continue fellowshiping under the BASF. Such a view is contended for in order to voice distaste for “exclusive” fellowship policies in the Unamended community. After reviewing the full excerpt, written by bro. Thomas Williams, we find great difficulty in finding support for the way that it has been recently used, or rather misused. The entire excerpt is as follows:

MISTAKEN

The editor of *The Christadelphian* and the Secretary of the Temperance Hall (Birmingham) Ecclesia complain that, despite the emphatic tone of letters to brethren coming to America, the hearers of the letters are taken in by ecclesias that have been cast out by Birmingham; and there is more than a hint that ecclesias of this country act

deceitfully in these cases. They are mistaken; it is almost impossible for any to be so misled. Some who, guided by the emphatic letters, have gone where they were directed have discovered that they were in the wrong place, and they have, of their own accord, come among us, finding that we stand on the old foundation of the Truth as they at first heard it. The ecclesias of this country are not anxious enough for numbers to deceitfully take in visitors without first knowing how they stand. Several thousand miles away they are deploring what they regard as the evil state of things in the American ecclesias. Dear me, cannot these complainers see what is right before their eyes at home? It is because the American ecclesias have refused to follow the foolish dictates of a few men in England that these men try to make their followers believe that we are in a fearfully evil state. But they are again mistaken. We over here like to see many coming into the fold, whether from the ranks of aliens or from separated brethren; but we do not like this at the expense of the Truth, and honor, and honesty; neither do we have it so. You are mistaken, Bro. Editor and Bro. Secretary; and no wonder that you are, in presuming to judge of things at this distance by letters from a few partisans, while you overlook the inconsistencies which visitors see clearly on your side the water, and in your own meetings. It is not a nice thing to do, to send over innovations here, Accept or divide, and then insinuate dishonesty because new comers are received upon the old basis, with the innovations ignored. The American brethren, as a whole, have survived the divisional attempts, and are in peace and harmony, and making their "first love" stronger and stronger, as their annual Fraternal Gatherings make manifest. For this we have reasons to be thankful, and we pray that the Lord will bless, and keep us and give us peace; and we pray also that those who have divided brethren, and who continue to advise a continuance of division, and who have departed from some of the clear principles of the Truth to excuse the division, may yet come to themselves and retrace their steps into the old paths.

From the passage we do learn:

- That certain English brethren, who had fallen in with the Amendment, were coming to America and were directed to attend ecclesias that had supported the Amendment.
- That some, going where they were "directed", found that they were in the "wrong place" and sought out those ecclesias that stood on the "old foundation of the Truth" as they had once heard it.
- That such ecclesias did not take these "visitors" in "without first knowing how they stand."
- That those individuals were not received "at the expense of the Truth".
- That those individuals were "received upon the old basis". (Isn't having such a standard in fact having "exclusive" views on the terms of acceptable fellowship?)
- That the North American ecclesias, of that time, did not endorse the divisive stand (spoken of as "departures from the Truth" in other excerpts already provided in this issue) to interfere with their stand on the "old basis". (As we should already understand, any error that is introduced into the Truth is itself divisive.)

What we do not see from the provided excerpt: There is absolutely no indication from this excerpt that such individuals went back to England to break bread under the BASF. Even if they did, this would have been out of the control of the ecclesias in North America. Those who returned to England would have had opportunity to fellowship upon "the old basis" in that several such ecclesias (nearly thirty) existed in that country. The North American ecclesias, as perceived by bro. Williams, had done their part to insure that the proper questions had been asked and the appropriate procedures followed.

It is also important to remember, that previous to the 1898 amendment to the Birmingham Statement of Faith that the Christadelphian community had been united upon the same foundation. Many were needlessly swept up into the division by the new standards of belief being promoted (rather forced) by *The Christadelphian* and the Temperance Hall (Birmingham) Ecclesia. Christadelphians on both sides of the division would have or should have known what the "old foundations" were. For individuals to return to the "old foundations" and be restored into fellowship with those that did not "amend" would not have been a difficult thing to do. But now the circumstances are not the same, many years have past, and those who have come after under the "amended" position were not brought up with the same understanding of the "old foundations". This makes a restoration of fellowship much more difficult in that no previous condition of unity and fellowship has existed between this present generation of Unamended and Amended Christadelphians.

A. Thomas

PEACE AND UNITY

"Men talk of peace and unity. There can be no peace where there is not essential unity. Where there is unity there will be peace. To bring about unity is therefore to bring about peace. The peace of an Ecclesia is promoted by the excision of those disturbers who introduce false teaching. This is one purpose served by their expulsion. (Rom. 14:1; Gal. 5:12). If we cannot have a large number in unity and peace, we may at least have peace among those, the few, who are in unity, by a separation from those with whom they are not in unity, with whom they are not at peace. "How shall two walk together except they be agreed?" "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith." We strive for peace and unity by all lawful means within our power. But these are conditions too idealistic to be permanently maintained in this discordant world. We have not yet entered into our rest. It is a time of war, and not peace. We are soldiers of the cross, and must fight the good fight of faith until the Captain of our salvation shall come and give us everlasting victory. There is no assurance of perfect or permanent peace in this militant order of things except the peace and patience which come by faith. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee." It is true that the popular churches sometimes appear to maintain an enviable degree of peace, but there is peace, also, in a graveyard, yes, and unity too."

Bro. Berton Little, *Christadelphian Advocate* – Jan., 1917