

*Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps, set thine heart
Toward the highway, even the way which thou wentest (Jer 31:21)*

THE CHRISTADELPHIAN WAYMARK

Volume 7

Issue 3

**Devoted to the Defence and Proclamation of the Way of Life
in Opposition to the Dogmas of Papal and Protestant Christendom**

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*"I saw, and behold, a white horse; and he that
sat upon him had a bow; and a crown was
given unto him: and he went forth conquering,
and to conquer" (Rev 6:2)*

*"The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable ... " (Jas 3:17)
"Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3)*

Noah's Offering

The Eternal Spirit through the Apostle Peter describes Noah as a “preacher of righteousness”. One who heralded the coming judgements of the Almighty on one hand and his grace through faith in his promises on the other hand!

The righteousness, which he heralded, was Yahweh's righteousness and in this Noah was a clear type of the one we have come to remember brethren and sisters, namely our Lord Jesus Christ.

Importantly we must take careful note brethren and sisters that although Noah was a preacher of Yahweh's righteousness. It necessitates that the herald must, them selves conform to a certain standard of righteousness. Otherwise the message communicated would be diluted at least and negated at worst.

What of you and I brethren and sisters, we are likewise required to be preachers of righteousness in our own day. Noah as we shall see lived his life in the light of Yahweh's commandments and his revealed will concerning the judgement to come. Now we too find ourselves equally at the end of an age awaiting the return of our beloved Master, so what sort of message are we communicating through our manner of life?

Thus when individuals approach, as does happen on occasion to enquire of us, why we live differently to those around us with whom we have to do. We in response to the scriptural command are to give a reasoned answer of the hope that lives within us with meekness and fear. Yet what of us brethren and sisters? Does our lives indeed match the standard of righteousness required or is our communication of the truth diluted or negated by the failure of our lives to conform to the message we are to declare by and in our daily lives?

Noah was indeed a preacher of righteousness and when we examine what else the scriptures have to say about the patriarch Noah. What we find is that it confirms him to be a man whom our Heavenly Father was pleased to account righteousness unto.

Could this be said of you and I brethren and sisters?

Hebrews Chapter 11 and Verse 7 declares

“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith”.

So Noah believed God and acted accordingly, we read here that he “moved with fear” in preparing the ark, which was the instrument of the saving of his house. Noah took Yahweh seriously and ordered his daily life around the coming reality

of the flood. Prophecy had its desired effect upon him, but does it have the same effect upon each of us?

That word “fear” more ideally carries the idea of being circumspect in the light of circumstances or knowledge. Thus the revealed will of our Heavenly Father motivated him to act in faith. In this we see him again as a type of our Master in that Noah’s faithfulness, resulted in personal righteousness being accounted unto him. Now because of his faithfulness, He saved his own house, we read.

Hebrews Chapter 3 and Verse 6

“But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end”.

Noah was “moved” we read in the Greek this word is in the middle voice indicating that it was a personal choice, which motivated him to act faithfully. We, therefore brethren and sisters likewise need to be equally moved with fear having been warned of God through his prophetic word.

In Genesis Chapter 6, Verses 5 - 7

“And Yahweh saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented Yahweh that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And Yahweh said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it

repenteth me that I have made them”.

Such was the wickedness of mankind in Noah’s day that Yahweh had to directly intervene to protect the way to the tree of life and his creation.

We likewise, brethren and sisters are awaiting a similar intervention of judgement from our Heavenly Father.

In Verse 8 we read

“But Noah found grace in the eyes of Yahweh”

We have all found grace in the eyes of our Heavenly Father brethren and sisters. The question is – what is our response? Is it like Noah’s response, which found him to be consistently faithful in reciprocation of the love and grace shown unto him?

Thus Yahweh decreed that He would destroy all flesh. But in contrast there was one who our Heavenly Father had respect unto – Noah.

Verse 9

“Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God”.

Three things set Noah apart in his generation and as a result he received grace from Yahweh. Because Noah lived in reverential awe and respect for our Heavenly Father and his ways, so Yahweh had respect unto Noah his servant.

Notice carefully that the first two qualities the Eternal Spirit ascribes to Noah are moral qualities; him being just & perfect in the sight of God.

Just = righteous
Perfect = whole, complete,
healthy, sound – without blemish

Now just behaviour is the foundation for a righteous life, a life that is whole and complete before Almighty God. It is the primary characteristic of the third quality that of walking with God. This third quality of walking with God depicts the lifestyle of Noah. This was a lifestyle that was made possible because of the first two moral qualities, which made the direction of his life a living reality; this same reality is meant to be evident in our lives today?

What is being brought before us here brethren and sisters is not just the physical, moral, emotional and spiritual direction of this great man's life. But more importantly we see the desire of Noah for fellowship with our Heavenly Father and the utter dependence Noah had in Yahweh his God. Do you and I have this same desire and dependence?

Noah displays and models for us total trust faith and humility before our Heavenly Father. The direction of Noah's walking was "with God", just like our Lord and Master there is an absence of that independent spirit, which is so common in flesh.

Noah appears from our record to have subjected his will to that of our Heavenly Father's, so he seems to do always those things, which please him. At least until the giving of the covenant in chapter nine.

Noah then walked humbly with our Heavenly Father, as the one we have come to remember.

Hebrews Chapter 5 and Verses 7 - 9

"Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; 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".

The Lord Jesus Christ was just and perfect in all his ways and we are likewise called upon to humbly walk before our God and be perfect.

Micah Chapter 6 and Verse 8

"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Yahweh require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God"?

Now Noah's faithfulness is constantly being referenced for us in the text for example:

Genesis Chapters 6:22 & 7:1

"Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he. And Yahweh said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation".

So our Heavenly Father delivered Noah and his family; Noah's faith overcame the world, it was victorious. Thus the scriptures speak of Noah be-

ing the eighth person and the number of his family saved including himself was also the number eight. Now in scripture, eight is the number of new beginnings and is symbolic of the Lord Jesus Christ and the kingdom to come. So Noah even typifies the Master in this regard as being the first of a new creation, who overcame through faith.

Now as we move on in the divine record of Noah's life, we come to the incident in chapter eight, which intrigued me brethren and sisters.

In Genesis Chapter 8, Verses 18 & 20

“And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him. And Noah builded an altar unto Yahweh; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar”.

Thus we are informed in 2nd Peter that the Old World perished being overfloded with water. How did the New World begin?

Well these two verses tell us that the new arrangement of things began with worship and specifically with the giving of multiple burnt offerings unto Yahweh.

Now this is the first time in scripture we have mentioned explicitly both the concept of an altar and of the burnt offering. So Noah's first priority and thought when he left the ark was that of worship and in particular the continued dedication of his life unto Yahweh.

Now although the text does not mention thanksgiving, we may safely assume that Noah's God ward response

was one of gratitude and thanksgiving for his deliverance from the flood.

What about us, brethren and sisters for when our Heavenly Father breaks through into our lives and delivers us from difficult circumstances and situations, what is our first response?

I doubt a burnt offering would be the first thing that comes to our minds? No in our day and age if you were indeed spiritually aware of the Fathers providential hand in our lives. Then a short prayer of thanks giving would likely be our norm. Yet brethren and sisters Noah's example here in Genesis exhorts us to give much more.

For firstly Noah took the time and effort to build an altar and then having done so he prepared to offer not, just one offering, but multiple offerings. The text speaks of him taking “of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar”.

So Noah's multiple burnt offerings also cost him in resources, which brings to mind some words of David. “Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto Yahweh my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the threshing floor (of Araunah) and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver”.

I wonder if Noah practised what we find in the time of Job, for Job rose up early in the morning and offered burnt offerings for each of his children before Yahweh.

Did Noah then offer individual offerings for each of his sons and their wives, as well as for him self and his own wife?

Noah firstly exhorts us then brethren and sisters that when our Heavenly Father breaks into our lives his work should always evoke a response from us in appropriate worship.

Yes Noah's response was voluntary, it was a free will offering and indeed that was what the burnt offering would later be under the law. The burnt offering speaks to us of the ascent of the individual up towards our Heavenly Father in service. This is symbolised in the fact that the Hebrew word for "burnt offering" only appears twice not in connection with the offering.

Interestingly in both cases it is speaking of the physical ascent of the person into the temple of Yahweh for worship and service. Of course the Hebrew word here means, "to ascend" and speaks of the smoke of the offering rising up towards Heaven. We will come back to this point when we consider our Heavenly Father's response to Noah's offering.

Secondly then Noah exhorts us brethren and sisters that such appropriate worship in thanks giving requires a cost from us in time, effort and resources. The idea behind this offering is that of total dedication of the individual, as symbolised by the complete consuming of the animal upon the altar, with the exception of its skin. Dedication by its very nature costs us brethren and sisters; it costs:

In Mark Chapter 12 and Verse 33

"To love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices".

Thinking of the removal of the skin of the burnt offering for a moment. Our Heavenly Father was not concerned with it and He donates it to the priests for their own use. The removal of the skin indicates that Yahweh is not interested in the externals of our lives and such was the mistake of the Pharisees in the Master's day. Thus the specific externals of our lives are no barrier to us dedicating our lives unto him, unless of course there is something in those externals, which contradicts the fullness of dedication.

Thus Noah dedicated himself completely to the service and worship of his God and in this, He is once more a type of our Lord Jesus Christ whose entire life was dedicated in total service to his Heavenly Father. Likewise then brethren and sisters if we are to be part of the new order of things during the millennium in the mercy of the Father. Then we too need to follow the faithful examples of Noah and our Master in the dedication of our lives now.

Let us remember brethren and sisters that the burnt offering formed the morning and evening sacrifices under the law and so speaks to us of our daily need to dedicate ourselves to the Father's service and worship.

In Romans Chapter 12, Verse 1

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service".

Here the Eternal Spirit through the Apostle solves the problem for us in that we are not under the law. We are not required to go out to the back gar-

den and build an altar and make sacrifice upon it. Rather as this passage in Romans depicts we are to present our lives in daily recognition of our Heavenly Father's mercies and in loving dedication, which is truly our appropriate and only response. Interestingly the word "service" is actually a Greek word, which is used elsewhere to describe the tabernacle service of the priests.

Thus brethren and sisters the next time our Heavenly Father breaks through into your life with some blessing or through an act of providential deliverance. Our response should be a whole lot more than a simple and quick prayer of thanksgiving. We ought to take the spirit of Noah's offering here. We need too re-dedicate ourselves in a renewed way in some manner of service, of worship, which actually costs us, over and above our normal personal level of service & worship.

Surely as Noah did here in Genesis eight our voluntary response in gratitude is to ascend in greater terms of worship and service of our God. Our desire is to give more of ourselves of our hearts, our will, our strength and our resources unto him. Indeed to ratchet up our personal response that we might more fully reciprocate the love shown unto us, in the light of the example of the emblems before us upon the table.

That our lives brethren and sisters might become like Noah's was an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to our Heavenly Father.

So we read in Genesis Chapter 8 Verse 21

"And Yahweh smelled a sweet savour; and Yahweh said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done".

From this verse it is evident that our Heavenly Father was well pleased with this voluntary response from his servant Noah. The smell of the savour of his offering was sweet to Yahweh. But why was this the case? I don't think it really has anything to do with the possibility that our Heavenly Father is particularly enamoured with the smell of burning animal flesh.

In Isaiah Chapter 1, Verses 11 & 13

"To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith Yahweh: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting".

In Isaiah the prophets day the people were still practising the offerings, but those offerings were not having any effect upon them. They had learnt nothing from them and as such it was

in the Father's eyes simple idolatry on their part. Because in the performing of the offerings they thought they would appease our Heavenly Father and He would be in their debt for their worship. Yahweh calls upon them to "cease to do evil, learn to do well".

In 1st Samuel Chapter 15 and at Verse 22 we read

"And Samuel said, Hath Yahweh as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Yahweh? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams".

Rather the issue behind our Heavenly Father's pleasure at the sweet savour of Noah's response to being delivered was his obedience. It was Noah's obedience, which made his sacrifice efficacious, rather than the giving of the sacrifice it's self.

To our Heavenly Father brethren and sisters the moral condition of the offerer is as equally important as the condition of the offering being made without blemish.

Yahweh's acceptance of the offering of Noah brought about a heart felt response, in which He sought to further bless mankind. So we read in the first verse of chapter nine that "God blessed Noah". Indeed our Heavenly Father goes on to create a wide-ranging covenant with him.

From this incident we see that our Heavenly Father takes note of our acts of worship and service, He takes knowledge of our sacrifices for the truth. Let us learn the lesson here brethren and sisters that our Heavenly Father

will bless our obedience, just as He here blessed Noah.

So as we turn our thoughts to the purpose of our being here brethren and sisters to remember the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who is symbolised here by the offerer Noah and indeed by the sacrifice the burnt offering it's self and even also by the altar.

In Hebrews Chapter 10, Verses 5 - 10

"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the, which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all".

The burnt offering brethren and sisters was also an atonement offering for sin. This burnt offering that Noah gave acknowledged what had just happened in the judgement of the flood, as well as Noah and mankind's ongoing need of a covering for sin.

As we come now to consider the Masters offering for us. We find a similar response from the Father unto Noah,

for the scriptures declare that we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are being saved.

in the wine we see how Christ hath loved us, and hath given himself for us. As an offering and a sacrifice to our Heavenly Father for a sweet smelling savour.

In the bread before us upon the table, we see the word made flesh that body prepared for sacrifice once for all. Then

Wayne Marshall

The Psalms

As we are aware, brethren and sisters, the object of our assembly this morning is, that Christ should be brought to our remembrance. That remembrance, to be truly effectual, ought to comprehend all the aspects that scripturally appertain to it. Yet there is one aspect in particular that comes prominently into view in this breaking of bread—one that is brought before our notice in a Psalm quoted in one of the portions of Scripture read this morning: the personal experiences of the Lord in the days of his flesh. We have not much insight into this in what is called the Gospel narratives; these deal more particularly with the external relations of the Lord. We see him traversing the districts of Galilee and Judea, followed by crowds of people, speaking to them the Word of God, and working marvels which attracted their attention. Very occasionally we get a glimpse of the inner workings of his mind. We have the declaration that he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. We see him frequently retire to mountain solitudes to pray. This is no doubt sufficient to tell us that in the days of his flesh the Lord, like ourselves, felt the cloud and the heaviness and the bitterness appertaining to this body of sin, and the circumstances to which it stands related in this present evil world.

We naturally desire, however, more explicit revelations of the mental experience of Jesus—a closer view of the actual personal thoughts and feelings of that marvellous personage who was begotten of the Holy Spirit, born at Bethlehem, brought up in subjection to his parents at Nazareth, trained to manual occupation at a carpenter's bench, anointed with the visible descending of dovelike Spirit and manifested to Israel as the great power of God in their midst. If we had to think that he passed untouched through this vale of tears—that he felt none of our sadness, none of our weariness in waiting for the salvation of God—none of our yearnings for Divine consolation—by so much the less would his case be a comfort to us. We have to be thankful for a portion of the Word which gives us a living picture the very reverse of all this.

I refer to the Psalms to which Jesus made allusion as "concerning" him. Here the sufferings of Christ are vividly manifest, as well as the glory that should follow. Those sufferings are not to be confined to the closing scene of his tribulation: the dreadful moment when he was in the hands of a scornful and brutal soldiery, and a spectacle on the cross to the jeering rabble. This was but the climax of his sorrows. We must consider how he felt and what he thought in relation to his whole

surroundings. The opportunity of doing this is abundantly afforded in the Psalms, and more particularly in the Psalm to which Paul refers when he, says (Rom. 15:2), "Christ pleased not himself, but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me." This is written in the 69th Psalm.

Turning to that Psalm, we are presented with the inner and personal experience of Christ in a form not accessible in the Gospel narratives, and are able to perceive many points of resemblance to our common experience, with an effect which is encouraging. The primary reference is, of course, to David; but the Spirit in David, which was the Root of David, which called him from shepherding and made him king of Israel for a remote purpose of its own, frames David's utterances in a way that expresses the heart-breakings of David's Son and Lord while he was the despised and rejected of men. The Psalm begins: "Save me, O my God." Jesus had to be saved. Here he prays that he may be so; and as Paul says (Heb. 5:7), "he was heard in that he feared, when with strong crying and tears he made supplication to Him who was able to save him from death."

The "crying and tears" spoken of by Paul are mentioned in this Psalm. "The waters are come in unto my soul." This shows the keenness with which his afflictions were felt: they went home—they pierced his soul—they overwhelmed him with sorrow. "I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God." Jesus "waited." He had his season of what we are now going through, and his "waiting" is here shown to have been of that dreary troublous, trying character that we find it to be. If we picture him in the aspect of a continual ecstasy or even a continual calm we make a mistake. He was a "man of sorrows," and part of his sorrow was this "waiting for God." We are tasting the affliction of this attitude. Our whole life is an act of waiting for God, waiting for the time promised, looking for, desiring, and living for the appointed day of the baring of His holy arm.

While we wait, the world is busy with its own prosperous devices, jeering at our hopes and quietly pitying our infatuation. False brethren also discourage and weaken our hands, heartless and formal in their profession of faith, and tired of the dreariness of the waiting attitude. The situation is trying, but not more so than was that of the Lord in the day when he could say, "Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty." Christ's enemies were his enemies without a cause in one sense, and with a cause in another. The actual cause Jesus explains in the words addressed to his own brothers after the flesh, as recorded in John 7:7: "The world hateth me, because I testify of it that the works thereof are evil." This was the actual cause of the enmity shown to Christ, yet not a justifiable cause, for in testifying against the world he bore witness to the truth, and bearing witness to the truth ought not, in reason, to create enemies. Therefore the man hated for such a reason, is hated without a cause. This has been the case with the brethren of Christ in all ages. Their whole life and conversation is a testimony against the world—a

condemnation of the world after the type of Noah, who, by his faith and obedience, "condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Heb. 11:7). This condemnation acts as an irritant on the world, which is pleased with itself, and which loves only those who speak well of it. Hence the hatred of which Jesus himself was an object. This hatred we must accept as part of the appointed tribulation which is to try and purify and make white for the time of the end. We need not aim to escape it. It still remains true, that from God there is "woe" to such as all men speak well of. Constituted as is the present evil world, it is impossible that all men can speak well of a man unless he be of the world himself—a man-pleaser; and for a man to be of this stamp is to be the subject of future "woe," one in whom God takes no delight. Hatred will be the portion of those who follow in the footsteps of the Lord. We need not seek this hatred. We are to live peaceably with all men as much as lieth in us. But when it does come, we are not to imagine some strange thing has happened. It is what happened to the Master of the household; and it is sufficient for the disciple that he be as his Master.

"Then I restored that I took not away."

This is an illustration of Christ's own precept: "If a man sue thee at the law and take away thy cloak, let him have thy coat also." Doubtless, if we could know the history of Christ's private life at Nazareth, we would find many instances answering to these words of the Psalm. When accused by neighbours of having taken from others things that actually belonged to himself, he would give place unto wrath, and restore that he took not away, comporting himself with a meekness for which a man in our day would be considered a fool. A wider application is found in the fact that he restored friendship and life while we were enemies in our minds, alienated by wicked works; but the lesson of meekness is the same.

"O Lord, thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins are not hid from thee."

The application of this to Christ is only intelligible on the principle that he partook of the common nature of our uncleanness—flesh of Adamic stock, in which, as Paul says, "there dwelleth no good thing;" a nature the burdensomeness of which arises from its native tendencies to foolishness and sin. This burden is felt in proportion as higher things are appreciated. Christ knew, as no man can know, the gloriousness and spotlessness and spontaneous holiness of the Spirit nature. The indwelling of the Father by the Spirit would make him sensible of this. Hence he could feel the more keenly the earthward tendencies of the earthy nature—the tendencies to foolishness and sin, which are the characteristics of sinful flesh, not that the tendency was stronger in him than in others, but that his spiritual affinities and perceptions were higher, and that, therefore, he would be more conscious of the burden which all the saints of God feel, more or less, causing them to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am!" True, Christ sustained the burden; he carried the load without stumbling. He kept the body under; he held it in subjection to the will of the Father in all things, and thus, by obedience, obtained the approbation of the Father, who was in him.

Still, the burden was there; and his consciousness of it finds expression in the words under consideration. Paul's consolation must be ours when we are grieved by a similar cleaving of the soul to the dust: "It is no more I, but sin that dwelleth in me." The new man delights in the law of God after the inward man; the floundering of a sluggish inefficient nature belong to the list of innocent calamities from which we shall be delivered in the day when beauty shall be exchanged for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

"Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel." This is specially applicable to David and Jesus. Calamities befell them; and they were concerned lest those who were faithful in Israel should be disturbed in their trust in God on account of these calamities. When a man believed to be the loved of God is apparently forsaken, the weak of the flock are liable to stagger. In the case of David, his banishment from the presence of Saul, and his life as an out-cast on the mountains; in the case of Jesus, his delivery into the hands of evil men, gave reasonable ground of anxiety to those who were looking to them with confidence, and might be shaken in God on account of their adversities. That this result might be averted—that God, while smiting the shepherd, might turn His hand upon the little ones, is the object of this petition. The lesson of it is, that we ought never to allow confidence in God to be moved by the most untoward occurrence—even the apparent desertion of a righteous man, but hold fast to the persuasion which the end will justify at last—that God is just, and will bring His purposes to pass, sometimes even by the very things which appear to frustrate them.

“Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face. I am become a stranger to my brethren, and an alien to my mother's children. For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen upon me.” The application of this to Jesus is obvious: its application to his brethren will become manifest to everyone who acts a faithful part. The effect of the truth, when accepted and appreciated in its breadth and fulness (as involving that complete change of principle, affection, and aim which is signified by the creation of the new man within), is to separate a man from his kindred and friends in the flesh. There is an end to the union which formerly united him to them. Two cannot walk together except they be agreed; and when disagreement turns upon so large and vital a question as duty towards God and the future objects to be aimed at in the present life, alienation is inevitable, if the truth is held with any earnestness.

When it is not held with earnestness, its effects are not worth considering one way or other, for they will be of no value to the professor. The essentiality of earnestness—enthusiastic earnestness—is manifest from the case of Christ, to whom the words in question particularly apply: “The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.” This expresses no mild degree of earnestness. To be eaten up is to be absorbed, engrossed, taken up very much. This was Christ's mental relation to the things of the Father, and it is the standard at which we must aim, reaching

which the other result will come. The reproaches of them that reproached God will fall on us. God is reproached in His servants; they are the objects of the derision which men feel for divine thing in general: and it will be directed more particularly against those who are most identified with these things. The lukewarm and half-hearted keep their respectability and suffer none of the reproach. Reproach is a bitter thing to bear, but when suffered for the name of Christ, it has promise of great sweetness for the day that is even now at the door.

"When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, THAT was to my reproach." The ungodly are above sorrow themselves, except the sorrow that comes from the deprivation of some present creature advantage. They know nothing of the sorrow that springs from the ascendancy of evil in the general situation of mankind. This is the highest sorrow. David and Jesus experienced it intensely. Their brethren in all ages have felt it, and it is to their reproach. The world like to see men cheery. They are discomfited at refusal to take part in their hilarious mirth, which is the crackling of thorns under a pot. They make the sad sobriety of the truth a matter of scoff: "What dismal creatures you are! Why can you not be like other people?"

This is a reproach not to be ashamed of. Saints do not mope on principle, or mope at all in the true sense of that term. They share the Master's sadness at the triumph of respectable ungodliness—the disregard of all divine things. Their hearts are weighed down by the mighty prevalence of wrong among men—the evils that are more extensive, penetrating, and common than the common intellect realizes. But their sorrow hath hope. It springs from a capacity to appreciate joyful things. It has its root in the knowledge of God, the love of His ways, the desire to see good among men on the foundation of His glory. To such Jesus says, "Blessed are ye that mourn, for ye shall be comforted. Blessed are ye that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for ye shall be filled."

"I made sackcloth my garment; I became a proverb unto them. They that sit in the gate (the men having authority) speak against me; I am the song of drunkards."

Fulfilled in Jesus, this will in a measure apply to all who follow in his steps. From verse 13 to 21 sets forth the earnest petitions of Jesus to the Father in the days of his flesh, and the severity with which he felt the troubles that befell him. From verse 22 to verse 28, we have a style of language which the majority of people have a difficulty in recognizing as the utterances of the Messiah—imprecation against his enemies. "Let their table become a snare: that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap. Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake. Pour out thine indignation upon them." The difficulty arises from confining the view to the day of his humiliation. The Christ-Spirit in David was not confined, but covered the whole breadth of the divine purpose. Now, though Christ in the days of his flesh suffered as a lamb led to the slaughter, yet the purpose of God was at last to pour wrath on his persecutors: and this purpose is foreshadowed in many of Christ's discourses. Christ was not only a sufferer, but the appointed avenger. There is a

time to bless and forgive, and there is a time to execute judgment, even when he returns to the winepress of Jehovah's anger. This prayer of malediction has reference to that time. It is a prophetic intimation by the same Spirit in David that the expectation of the poor shall not always perish: that vile men shall not always be exalted: that meekness and righteousness shall not always be under the heel of the proud. For a season, for discipline, we are commanded to be under subjection to evil, as Jesus was; but it is with the distinct prospect that we shall be avenged by Him who hath said, "Vengeance is mine: I will repay," and this prayer of Christ's shows it is lawful to make that purpose a subject of petition.

"I am poor and sorrowful," continues the Spirit in David concerning Christ: "let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high." In this prayer, every saint can join. Nothing can set them up but the salvation of God. The best condition of mortal life—the highest honour men can bestow—has no power to satisfy the longing which the enlightened soul has continually to God and His glorious perfection. The salvation of God, which will constitute them actual partakers of the Divine nature, will indeed set them up and fill their mouths with songs: in view of which, and the present mercies that lead to it, they can as heartily join in the cheerful strain with which the Psalm concludes: "I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the Lord better than ox or bullock that hath horns or hoofs"—intimating the contemplated end of the Mosaic ritual in Christ.

"The humble also shall see this and be glad: your heart shall live that see God, for the Lord heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners." The full force of this will not be manifest till the day when Christ is surrounded with the assembly of his glorified poor, whose gladness will find vent in singing. They will rejoice effectually in the salvation which shall be theirs in the day of the Lord's vengeance. The humble shall then see the glory of Jesus, and be glad when the scorner is made to lick the dust. The hearts that now seek God in humiliation and sorrow will then live and rejoice at the visible exemplification of the fact that the Lord heareth the poor and despiseth not His prisoners. Then shall heaven and earth praise Him, the seas, and everything that moveth therein. Saints can even now call upon all things thus to praise in anticipation of the fact declared in the concluding verses: "For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there and have it in possession. The seed also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his name shall dwell therein."

Robert Roberts: Seasons of Comfort

THE KENT PROPHECY DAY

Along with this issue, we enclose a flyer advertising the Kent Prophecy day. This is due to take place on Saturday 4th April at 3.00pm. The speaker is to be Bro Richard Palmer, under the theme of "Interpreting Prophecy". The venue is: East Malling Village Hall—New Road, East Malling—just off Junction 4 of the M20, West of Maidstone.

Further details from: Bro Peter Moore (01474) 703037

Lessons from The Manna

Speaking of Israel in the wilderness, the inspired Apostle writes that they “did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink ...” And “these things” he tells us “all happened unto them for ensamples (Greek, Types), and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the worlds are come” (1Cor. 10:4,11). In our considerations from Exodus chapter 16, the first portion of our daily readings for today, we are presented with the “spiritual meat” of the Manna. It’s spiritual nature was not intrinsically within it’s physical substance, for under certain conditions it bred worms and stank. Rather, like the “rock that followed them”, the nature of it’s spirituality is that it taught spiritual things relating to our Master Jesus the Christ, and us, being part of his multitudinous body of believers.

Part of the purpose of the Manna is stated in Deuteronomy chapter 8:

“... he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know: that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of Yahweh doth man live” (Deut. 8:3).

Again, it is written in Exodus chapter 16:

“... I will rain bread from heaven for you; and my people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law or no” (Exo. 16:4).

The daily consumption of the manna taught dependence upon Yahweh for all things – unless he miraculously provided that food each day, they would go hungry and starve. But in addition to this, the circumstances by which it was obtained and the frequency of it’s providing also taught particular lessons, the primary one of which was the teaching of reliance upon the Word of God.

The provision of Manna, we are told, was also to “prove them” and test their obedience. In this respect, we find conditions attached to reaping the “corn of heaven”, and Israel failed each of these. Firstly, it was stipulated that once gathered, it was not permissible to keep it until the next day: “let no man leave of it till the morning”. But human nature being as it is, “they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank, and Moses was wroth with them” (Exo. 16:19-20). The only exception to this commandment was on the sixth day, when twice as much Manna was to be collected and cooked ready for use on the sabbath. This would ensure Israel did not profane the Sabbath law by working to gather and cook their food.

But again, human nature being as it is, “it came to pass that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none” (Exo. 16:27). In these two respects therefore, Israel were taught to learn, and implement the word of Yahweh concerning these matters, yet failed in both counts.

In other places in scripture, the partak-

ing of the Word is again associated with the partaking of food. So Jeremiah spake:

“Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Yahweh Elohim of armies” (Jer.15:16).

This ought to have been the example of Israel: to rejoice in the blessings He Gave, and to obey His commandments and statutes, partaking of them also, spiritually consuming them, and feeding upon the spiritual strength they would give. Indeed, in Jeremiah, we have an exhortation for ourselves: we need to daily feed ourselves with the Word of God, just as Israel did the Manna, for the promise of Wisdom is: “I will love those that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me” (Prov. 8:17).

There is a particularly significant example of this in the case of our Master during his wilderness trials. One of the temptations that came was, “command that these stones be made bread”. However, Messiah drove out the temptation by citing the passage of Deuteronomy we are considering: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Mat. 4:4).

So it is that there is a physical eating, and a spiritual eating. Bread is necessary, but not by itself. Man must partake of the spiritual food with all the eagerness of enjoyment experienced in partaking of physical food. Christ spake of the spiritual eating thus:

“whoso eateth the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day” (Jno. 6:54). But we read that “from that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him” (Jno. 6:66). These could not receive the spiritual things that Messiah spake, and so departed from him.

What is particularly interesting is that the context of this place in John’s Gospel is of Christ comparing himself to the Manna in the wilderness:

“as the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread that came down from Heaven: not as your father’s did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever” (Jno. 6:57-58).

Also, he had earlier declared:

“Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world ... I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst” (Jno. 6:35).

There are then, many points of comparison between the Manna provided by Yahweh (not Moses), and Jesus the Christ being the “living bread” “from Heaven” – we shall consider some of

these by way of exhortation for ourselves.

There were essentially three different types of Manna, all of which point towards our Master.

FIRST TYPE OF MANNA

The first type only lasted a day, as we have seen, breeding worms and stinking if it was kept till the morning (A comparison could be made with the Passover Lamb, which had to be consumed before the morning). It may be in alluding to this that in what is commonly called “The Lord’s Prayer”, we read: “Give us this day our daily bread” (Mat. 6:11).

Notice this point: we are to “take no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought of the things of itself” (Mat. 6:34). We only need sufficiency for the day. Who knows what may befall us tomorrow: today might well be our last, for all we know. We must therefore attend to spiritual things whilst there is yet time. Regarding the day that the Manna was to last for, there is a pre-eminent “day” in Scripture, a day of opportunity. So the apostle writes: “exhort one another daily, while it is called Today” (Heb. 3:13). We are only allotted this one “day” to feed richly upon that which has been provided for us. The new day shall commence with the rising of the Sun of Righteousness (Mal. 4:2), and at that time, our probation will be over. If we have been found wilfully disobeying our God, as Israel did, the only end for us will be to suffer the corruption of death “where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched” (Mark. 9:44,46,48). This first type of Manna

therefore represents the corruptible nature of disobedient men (i.e. the manna would only corrupt upon man’s disobedience in keeping it when he ought not). Yet it also portrays Messiah as one who redeemed the time, giving all due attention to the Word, that in the resurrection morn, there would be not corruption in him.

SECOND TYPE OF MANNA

The second type of Manna remained useable for two days. The Sabbath day was a day to be prepared for, since no work was permitted for that day. We are not told what might have happened to the manna had Israel left it till the next morning after the Sabbath: presumably it would have corrupted also – but the general principle remains that there was a need to prepare for the day of rest.

Regarding this preparation, the situation is similar to the parable of the 10 Virgins, as taught by Christ, and recorded in Matthew 25. Here, all 10 virgins should have made adequate provision for the time of their Lord’s coming, yet five did not. Instead of being ready, they did not have adequate oil to supply their lamps, and were therefore unable to cause them to shine at the time of the bridegroom’s appearance – and so were rejected. It is in a similar way that in order to prepare for the Sabbath day of rest, on the day we would call the Friday, Israel were to gather, and prepare a double portion, to have some in reserve for the following Saturday. So it is, that as we look forward to the Millennial Day of Rest (Heb. 4:8-9), we need to prepare and labour to enter into that rest: If Israel didn’t gather enough to prepare for the coming Day, they would have gone

hungry. Even so, we must prepare for that day by consuming “the word made flesh”, or the “flesh” and “blood” of Messiah to be ready.

Incorruptibility therefore, will come to those who trust in Messiah’s power to save from sin and death, as well as Messiah himself

It is significant that this second type of Manna did not see corruption, lasting for two days. In this regard, it foreshadows Christ, of whom it is written: “Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption” (Acts 2:27). Throughout the period of 2 Millennial days, Messiah remains immortal, and incorruptible.

It is worthy of note that this incorruptible Manna was taken from the daily provision that was made. This being so, it would naturally have corrupted if left – but it was preserved within the Ark of Yahweh’s Presence. We can see the parallel: the corruptible Manna speaks of the corruptible nature of man. But that same Manna became incorruptible by being taken and kept within the Ark of the Covenant. So, it is natural human nature that will be transformed to become immortal and glorious. It is said of Christ: he “shall change our vile body, that it might be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself” (Phil. 3:20-21).

THIRD TYPE OF MANNA

The Third type of Manna did not corrupt at all, but was to be kept within the Ark, where it would be preserved indefinitely. So Moses spake under Divine instruction:

“take a pot, and put an Omer full of Manna therein, and lay it up before Yahweh, to be kept for your generations. As Yahweh commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept” (Exo. 16:33-34).

It is interesting in this connection that Revelation chapter 2 speaks of the “hidden Manna”:

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the ecclesias. To him that overcomeh will I give to eat of the hidden Manna ...” (Rev.2:17).

We have seen how Messiah did not see corruption, but his brethren, the saints are also become incorruptible as did he.

So it is written:

“... this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortality must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written. Death is swallowed up in victory” (1 Cor. 15:53-54).

The “hidden Manna” here would apparently refer to that Manna contained within the ark, which the people could not see, but nevertheless believed that it was there, as a symbol of immortality. Just as this Manna was hidden in the ark, even so it is written that “you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3). What we seek after therefore, is to be granted to eat of that Hidden Manna, and all that it signifies in the Age to Come.

FELLOWSHIP

Another aspect of the Manna is seen in the way in which it was collected. So Yahweh commanded:

“Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your persons ... And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more and some less. And when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing left over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating” (Exo. 16: 16-18).

From these words we gather that although the command defined how much each individual could have, the most practical means of ensuring that all were fed was to weigh out the Manna, according to each person. Some gathered more, some less. There may have been good reason for this: the sick and the elderly might not have been able to gather as much as young able bodied people, who were in turn able to gather more than the prescribed amount. The only way to resolve the situation would be for those who had much to give to those who had little – and this was effected by pooling all of the gathered Manna together, and weigh out portions for each person.

This principle is brought out in 1 Corinthians 8, which is to do with monies being collected for the old and needy. Verse 15 cites Exodus 16:18, in the context of giving:

“if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according

to that he hath not. For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be an equality: as it is written, “He that had gathered much had nothing over, and he that had gathered little had no lack” (2 Cor. 12-15).

In this place, the Apostle is plainly drawing upon Yahweh’s provision of old, and the way it was distributed as an example for how brethren must together fellowship each other’s need, and as they are able, that there may be an equality.

In this regard, we are once more directed to our Master, and how he gave all for his brethren. In the same context as the above passage, it is written that:

“ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he were rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich” (2 Cor. 8:9).

In all these things we see Messiah. He shared the same flesh and blood as do we, yet which saw no corruption – he left nothing undone for the next day. First having a corruptible nature such as ours, Christ is now like the Manna which lasted for 2 days, typical of the 2 Millennia that concludes with his brethren being given to eat of the “hidden Manna”, and become immortalised as he. And like the Manna kept within the holy of holies, he appears in heaven itself – and our lives are hid

with him. Truly Christ is the “bread of life,” of Yahweh’s providing, concerning which we should feed upon daily. Knowing that man cannot live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the Almighty, we must give attendance to the word, feeding upon it daily, that in assimilating it’s principles into our minds, we might be found worthy to partake of the Hidden Manna, and be granted life eternal before our God.

Christopher Maddocks

Give Thanks Unto the Lord

"Seek the Lord, and His strength: seek His face evermore. Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord."—Psa. 105:3-4

PSALM 105

We have for consideration a very beautiful Psalm. We value the Psalms more and more as we grow older. We see their reason and purpose. We recognize our need for what they supply.

The Psalms are deep spiritual food—divine nourishment—bread from heaven. If we do not regularly feed upon these things, then we are sick, weak, undernourished, carnal, fleshly. Failure to fully draw on this transforming nutrition is the cause of most of the fleshly weakness, and poor spiritual memory, and lack of faith and spiritual cheerfulness that we bemoan and profess to deplore.

The proper food is all there in abundance. We inadequately take advantage of it, and then make unworthy excuses for the inevitable result.

A deep, constant imbibing of these things God has provided is the **ONLY WAY** to life. It is **impossible** to be spiritually healthy and strong without it. There is no "light within"—only evil and corruption requiring constant treatment with strong spiritual medication to keep it in check.

The book of Psalms is frequently quoted or referred to by Christ and the apostles, not just as expressions of beautiful thoughts and feelings, but as specific, word-for-word, divinely-inspired doctrines and prophecies and commands. If we accept Christ, then the Psalms are for us—on his authority—imperative divine law, acceptance of and obedience to which are essential to salvation.

The basic theme of the Psalms is deep and unshakable thankfulness to God, rejoicing, spiritual peace in the midst of any sorrow, because of the infinite love and power and goodness of God to men. Thankfulness that we are in direct, personal, beneficial contact with the omnipotent power of goodness that rules the universe should overshadow every other consideration in our lives and minds.

Whoever really HAS this in truth has GOT to be happy. It would be impossible to be otherwise. And this is freely available to all—urgently pressed upon them

by the appealing grace of God, but very few are willing to put the misguided thinking of the flesh aside and follow the way of life required.

The Psalms are full of God, full of Christ, full of what God has done in the past and will do in the future.

The Psalms represent the frame of mind—the ONLY frame of mind—that is acceptable to God. If we are not in tune with the spirit of Psalms, we are not the children of God.

Psalm 105 begins with 9 exhortations, 9 plain commands, and only if we sincerely endeavor to remember and obey these commands can we consider ourselves possible candidates for eternal life through the love of God.

These commands are as important as any others, perhaps much more important, though all commands are important, for our reaction to them immediately manifests the state of our heart toward God. The 9 commands of Psalm 105:1-5 are:

1. Give thanks to God.
2. Call upon His Name.
3. Make known His deeds.
4. Sing unto Him.
5. Talk about His Works.
6. Glory in His Name.
7. Rejoice.
8. Seek the Lord, and--
9. REMEMBER!

They begin with "Give thanks to God"—give thanks in everything, and always. They end with "Remember"—keep always in memory, in the forefront of the mind, where action and character are determined. Let us think upon these 9 points, one by one in order.

1. "Give Thanks Unto the Lord"

This is fittingly first, for it is basic; it is the most important. Cheerful thanksgiving based on an intense appreciation of God's infinite beauty and goodness, MUST be our basic frame of mind ALWAYS. For this alone is life in the true sense—a living awareness of divinity and glory, an overflowing gratitude, irrepressible love welling up from within in reciprocation of divine love poured down on us from above.

If we have not got this, we are dead. We are cold walking carcasses; mere creatures of flesh like the dead world about us.

Thanksgiving is a beautiful frame of mind—healthy, wholesome, upbuilding, beautifying, inspiring to others. It leads to all other beauties of mind. It drives

away all contrary characteristics: self-pity, envy, dissatisfaction, dissension, criticism of others. True, humble thankfulness to God for His infinite patience and goodness makes us want to help others, not to criticize and condemn.

God's children are guaranteed perfect peace of mind, if they do their simple little part—

"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them" (Psa. 119:165).

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee" (Isa. 26:3).

If we do not have this, we are not yet deep enough in the Truth; we have not yet put down our roots deeply enough into the rich soil of the Spirit-Word.

If we do not have the perfect peace of mind that God promises all His children, and that only He can give, and that can only be found by seeking it from Him, then wisdom cries that we should apply ourselves to it while it is yet called today. We should make it our most urgent matter of attention.

We must look in the right place for the trouble—for the reason we lack peace. We must look within our own fleshly hearts and minds—within our own weakness of faith and love.

No one outside of us can make us happy or unhappy. Happiness or unhappiness is from within.

It is so easy to criticize and blame others because we lack peace of mind. It is so easy to shift the blame from ourselves to our external circumstances. This has been the miserable way of the world from Adam on.

But if we truly do believe what we SAY we believe, then continual, cheerful thanksgiving is not just the only reasonable and sensible frame of mind—it is the only **possible** frame of mind. We couldn't be unhappy if we tried. In the light of the greatness and goodness of God, we should be overwhelmed with joyful thanksgiving continually. After all God has done, and is doing, and promises to do for us, if we are not happy we are reproaching God, ignoring and belittling His love and care.

If we are unhappy, we are unspiritual, we are carnal, we are dull and unresponsive to divine things. The infallible Word assures us, and the assurance should be all-sufficient for all time:

"All things—ALL things—work together for good to them that love God."

Do we BELIEVE this? It is God's Own guaranteed Word. Does our life and our attitude toward everything give evidence that we believe this? This is the essence

of Faith:

"The assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen."

If we have not found this divine, unearthly peace of mind within ourselves, and largeness of heart toward others, then something is wrong. We are missing life's meaning and joy. We have not really found the saving Truth of God. We take our own affairs too seriously. Our petty, passing affairs are not important. It is only God's purpose that matters. The present is nothing—just a striving after wind. The future is everything. The present with all its ridiculous little concerns will be gone in a moment. The future will last forever.

If we are wrapped up in ourselves, we have never grown up. We are mentally stunted. The whole purpose of life is to grow up, to mature and develop spiritually by the study and absorption of the Word of God. We cannot be self-centered infants all our lives. We must get our minds on something real and worthwhile, outside of ourselves and our petty little affairs and problems. Now the Psalms will do this for us—IF we will let them, if we will get down to work and take advantage of them.

As natural creatures we are no use to God. He pities us but cannot use us eternally.

There must be great changes made in our minds and our characters. He has given us the tools. He has furnished us the power. He tells us how. All we have to do is to follow the instructions and USE the tools. What must we do? We must read more, we must meditate more, we must think more, we must DO more.

"Faith"—the power that moves mountains and overcomes the world—that turns sorrow to joy, and frustration to peace—"comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."**

Our baptism is just the beginning, the very barest, most elemental beginning. The preparing process takes the whole life—all our strength, all our interest and attention. The difference between being dyingly natural and livingly spiritual is simply a matter of nourishment: spiritual food, spiritual growth, spiritual exercise, spiritual interests, spiritual activity. We are still considering this "giving thanks" to God—what it really means, what it involves, how it must be the permanent, consistent basis of our mental outlook at all times. Paul says (1 Thess. 5:18)

"In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God."

in EVERYTHING—good and bad. It takes faith and understanding to give thanks for trouble and suffering, but Paul could do it. He had enough spiritual understanding to see the reason and purpose and necessity for trouble.

We have got to learn this too, if we want to be any eternal use to God. Any position of usefulness and responsibility takes learning and practice, and this is the highest position in the universe.

It is not easy. No real learning is easy. Look at the effort the people of the world will put into passing, worldly things. They do it because their heart is there. They love money, or fame, or power, or importance, or the sense of achievement.

Look at the effort and time Christadelphians are willing to put into things they want and are interested in.

Yet so many seem to assume that they will just coast automatically into eternal life without any real effort and application at all. EFFORT is the secret, and LOVE is the power. What are we doing for God? If we haven't this kind of consuming thankfulness to and love for God that will drive us to joyful action and service to the limit of our ability, then let us have wisdom to do something about it without delay.

Let us put this down on our daily schedule as No. 1 at all times: "Give thanks!" We should carry these 9 commands with us always, and refer to them frequently—keep them in the forefront of our minds. And first of all is, "Give thanks!"

We cannot be unhappy when we are giving thanks; we cannot be sorry for ourselves; we cannot be angry at or unkind to others. Truly we can alternate with marvelous inconsistency and breathtaking rapidity between blessing God and cursing man, as James points out. This is a highly-developed fleshly accomplishment, but such have not truly found God, or peace, or the joyful reality and power of true thanksgiving.

2. "Call Upon His Name"

—His Name Yahweh. What does it mean to "*call upon His Name*"? How would we specifically define it? The basic meaning of this word "call" is to call out to someone to get their attention, to address by name, to greet or accost, to make contact with someone. It is derived from the word meaning "to meet, to come together."

If we compare this root meaning with the way it is used in Scripture, we shall get the full picture. These are the 2 steps in studying:

- 1. Get the real meaning of the word according to the best authorities.**
- 2. Compare the uses of the word throughout Scripture.**

The latter is the most important, for how God Himself uses the word is the final determination. This is why all modern versions are useless for satisfying and profitable study. They are not direct translations but just vague paraphrases according to the ideas of men. We cannot dig into man's conclusion as to the mean-

ing. They might be right, but we have no way of comparing and checking, so they are dangerous.

A word derived from this word “call” means exactly the same in Hebrew as “ecclesia” does in the New Testament—*“A group called out to assemble in worship.”* As, for example, Ex.12:16—*“An holy convocation.”*

Now, proclaiming God is covered in the 3rd command; talking together about Him in the 5th; asking for help in the 8th. What then is specifically meant here in the 2nd?—*“Call upon His Name.”*

It appears to mean identifying ourselves with God—making ourselves His—separating ourselves unto Him in allegiance and worship. The first use of this phrase is significant—To Seth was born a son... *“Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord”* (Gen. 4:26). This clearly does not mean the first appearance of worship, but it does appear to mean the beginning of SEPARATION in worship—the clear, healthy separation between the sons of men and the sons of God, which was broken down later and led to the worldwide corruption that brought the judgment of the Flood.

3. "Made Known His Deeds"

We must speak of God to those around us: not simply as a matter of preaching, but naturally and inevitably as the greatest and most basic fact of life. No thought or conversation has any relation to reality that is not built on this foundation. If our belief is real and living, then it will color and control ALL our conduct and conversation. If it doesn't, we are living a lie.

David in the Psalms speaks naturally of God in all aspects of his life. In ALL that befell him, both for good or ill, he could vividly discern the loving and guiding, though often chastening, Divine hand. And for the benefit of all subsequent generations he was caused to record his inmost thoughts, making known God's wonderful works among the children of men. The Psalms are the outpouring of this desire to make the greatness and goodness of God known, that all men may come in joyful wisdom to the beauty of holiness. We must, like David, fill our minds and thoughts with God and His goodness, and then we too shall be moved to speak in the fullness of our hearts—not in contention and condemnation but compassion and invitation.

4. "Sing Unto Him"

The Psalms are songs. They go beyond mere proclamation of God. They go beyond mere prayer. They have far greater depth and intensity and feeling than mere words. Singing is a vital part of worship: both public and personal, both with the lips and silently in the heart. Paul speaks of *“Making melody in your hearts unto the Lord.”*

People who do this are beautiful people, desirable people, people whose com-

pany is joyful and inspiring. The truth of God is a living thing. It must fill the heart as well as the understanding. Could OUR normal frame of mind be described as *"making melody in our hearts to the Lord"*? If so, we have found the secret of life. If not, let us find out what is wrong and what we are missing, before it is too late!

5. "Talk of His Wondrous Works"

This is best illustrated by the words of Malachi (3:16) *"Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another."* This is the bond of their communion together—the *"wondrous works of God."* What we say is the measure of what we are. The content of our normal conversation is the indicator of the spiritual fruitfulness or barrenness of our mind.

This Psalm, like many others, speaks of God's wondrous works in delivering His people from Egypt. Why is this theme repeated over and over—the blood, the frogs, the lice, and the firstborn slain? Some feel they must pass quickly over these things. They are embarrassed and uncomfortable. They prefer to dwell only on God's love and mercy. Others glory and rejoice in these terrible judgments, with personal pleasure and vindictiveness.

Both views are wrong. We are told (Eze. 33:11)—*"God hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked."*—nor should His servants. They should sorrow and grieve, like Christ over Jerusalem, though Jerusalem cruelly slew him. The judgments of God on wickedness are dwelt upon in the Psalms, and we meditate upon them, because—though sad—they are essential to the world's salvation: *"When Thy judgments are in the earth, THEN will the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness."*

It is an undeniable desirable thing that the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness. Therefore His judgments that lead to that righteousness are desirable. But He calls on US to learn from the recorded lessons of the past, and to learn the wisdom of righteousness **without** the necessity of judgment. The judgments on Egypt are a great type of the judgment of the world in the last day, when fleshly folly will be wiped out, and godly righteousness established.

We meditate upon these judgments upon Egypt, and take comfort from them—especially in this foolish, evil, violent day—because they show, not only that God **can** control all things, but that at the proper time He **will** control them. It seems today that vice and violence are expanding unrestrained, and things going rapidly from bad to worse throughout the earth. But God is just as deeply interested, and just as closely in command, as He was when Egypt oppressed Israel, though He was silent until the appointed time arrived. There are no mistakes. Nothing goes beyond its appointed bounds. God is working His will in the Kingdom of Men as surely as He was in the terrible days of the Exodus from Egypt. That is why the Psalms say so much about that time.

God only rarely openly bares His arm. But those rare times are the key to all history.

Therefore His people talk often one to another of all His wondrous works. This is the central command of the nine. Let us be ever found so engaged.

We all can talk at endless length upon what interests us and fills our hearts—mostly things to do with ourselves. But how much of our talk is idle chatter, because our interests are so shallow!

6. "Glory in His Holy Name"

Three deep and wonderful things are combined: glory, holiness, and the Memorial Name of Yahweh.

What does it mean to "glory"? What are we here commanded to do? Is it more than rejoicing, for that is the next command. "Glory" as a noun means "supreme splendor or excellence." The highest, finest attribute or characteristic of anything is its glory:

"The glory of young men is their strength."

Of course, here more than physical strength is meant, for John says:

"I write unto you, young men, because ye are strong."

The young have strength and vigor to accomplish. The old have wisdom and experience to direct. These are their respective glories. To "*glory in His Holy Name*" is to make it our highest aim, to "*seek FIRST the Kingdom of God,*" to "*Set our minds on things above, not on earthly things*" —to centre and focus our lives upon attainment to an eternal part in that glorious Memorial Name of Yahweh, the manifestation of God's glory in a purified multitude.

"Glory ye IN His holy Name."

Shine forth that Name and purpose in all you do. Put off the Old Man of the flesh; put on the New Man of the Spirit.

7. "Rejoice Ye That Seek Him"

WHAT else could they do than rejoice, if they are truly seeking Him? What other possible frame of mind is there that fits the situation? Paul said (Rom. 5:3)

"I rejoice in tribulation"

And James said (1:2)—"*Count it all joy when ye meet various trials.*" Why? God is thereby working out our glory. Jesus said—"*Rejoice and be exceeding glad.*" —when you suffer in faithfulness. "*Leap for joy*" about it, he says (Matt. 5:12; Lk. 6:23).

"*Leap for joy*" because of suffering! What a strange thing to say! Why such strong and striking language? Clearly he is trying to impress us with something

very important. "*Leap for joy*" when you encounter tribulation. Not just bear it well. Not just be patient. Not just control yourself and see you are not provoked to retaliation and wrong doing.

These are all negative virtues. Jesus' approach is positive: rejoice, be thankful, welcome it, leap for joy, praise God for your rigorous spiritual training and discipline that is lovingly preparing you for eternal glory. Have we really comprehended the full picture of what our holy calling means, or are we still groping on the outer fringes of the glory of godliness? Let us ponder these marvelous things, and extract their transforming power, especially this strange command to "*leap for joy*" at tribulation.

8. "Seek God and His Strength"

"Seek and ye SHALL find," said Jesus. And through Jeremiah, God said (29:13) *"Ye shall find Me when ye shall search for Me with ALL your heart."*

"Seek His face forevermore," the Psalmist says. Clearly then the seeking is a perpetual activity.

Truly we have found much. We have been called out of darkness into His marvelous light. We have found the Way of Life. But seeking the Lord is an endless duty and an endless pleasure—a constant striving for deeper understanding, greater comprehension, fuller discernment of God's great revelation of Himself and His Word.

And finally:

9. "REMEMBER!"

"Remember his marvellous works that he hath done: his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth."

His works: the marvels of Creation. His wonders: the specific manifestations and working out of His purpose. His judgments: that which He has recorded for our instruction, training, and guidance.

"Remember!" How often the Scriptures sound this warning note!

Some things we remember indelibly from childhood. Some things we forget the next day. How clear our memory often is for worldly things, while so forgetful in spiritual things! Why? What is the answer? We reveal where our heart is by what we remember and what we forget. We remember worldly things best because our minds are on worldly things. Let us face it and not make excuses, or blame it on "poor memory." We shall never cure it if we do not face it. Let us test our heart by this rule: *"Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."*

What are we fluent in—remembering all the details, and able to chatter on endlessly about? Is it the things of God, or our own passing, personal things? This 9th command says:

"Remember HIS marvellous works, HIS wonders, and the judgments of HIS mouth."

Fill the mind with God, and we shall gradually become like God. Fill the mind with the things of the flesh, and we shall be mere creatures of the flesh.

1. Give thanks to God.
2. Call upon His Name.
3. Make known His deeds.
4. Sing unto Him.
5. Talk about His Works.
6. Glory in His Name.
7. Rejoice.
8. Seek the Lord, and--
9. REMEMBER!

Bro.G.V.Growcott

Israel, Gaza and Prophecy

Recent months have seen dramatic events taking place between Israel and Gaza, and the role of the Bible Student is to place these events into a Biblical perspective. Seeking to understand how world events fit into the overall prophetic scheme of things, we must beware of “forcing” events to fit into what Scripture testifies, or vice-versa. In recent weeks I have seen 2 articles by different brethren on this matter, yet both are wanting in terms of the Biblical backing for what is proclaimed.

A GENERAL OBSERVATION

Over the years, it has become evident that when dramatic events take place, there is a proportionate excitement and general expectation in the brotherhood for Messiah’s coming—yet when things are quiet, this fervent expectation quiets down. To give one example: Israel and Iraq. When Saddam Hussain was at the zenith of his power, there were those who confidently asserted that he was the long-expected “king of the north”. There was much political and military activity, and this was seen to be a “sign” of Messiah’s coming. However, events came and went, Hussain was executed and his dominion taken by a stronger power than he. What of the expectations that brethren had then? This has been cited by our detractors as an instance of a “failed prophecy” that Christadelphians have been guilty of—and this accusation does contain truth!

But we must make a distinction between those things that some brethren expect to happen (and were wrong), and those things believed by the body as a whole (i.e the BASF and what it contains). Such things are not so much “failed prophecies” by Christadelphians as a whole, but rather a few brethren being carried along by the excitement of events to make predictions based on assumptions, as opposed to the plain teaching of Scripture.

In the matter at hand then, we must take care not to be rash in our predictions or expectations. Messiah himself proclaims that his coming would not be at a time of great excitement and expectation, but rather “in such an hour *as ye think not*” (Mat. 24:44). Again, the Apostle writing for the generation of those who would see Messiah’s coming warns against the believers falling asleep (1 Thes. 5:1-8)! And the prophet Joel describes the mighty men of war has having fallen asleep (Joel 3:9,12). Every indication is that when Messiah comes, it will be at such a time when there is a “peace and safety/security” to the extent that a spirit of slumber sets in, in both the heathen and those disciples should be watching and waiting for their Lord.

THE LAND OF GAZA

The region known as Gaza is part of the ancient homeland of the Philistines. That this is so is evident from the following testimonies:

“the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down *to Gaza*” (Jud. 16:21)

“these are the golden emerods which *the Philistines* took for a trespass offering unto Yahweh; for Ashdod one, *for Gaza* one ...” (1 Sam. 6:17)

“he smote *the Philistines* even *unto Gaza* ...” (2 Kings. 18:8)

In our day, there are no Philistines as a distinct nation as in times past, who are descended from the ancient power—but Scripture does speak of what we might call a “latter day” Philistine power. One such prophecy is Isaiah 11:

“they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west ...” (Isa. 11:14).

This is a passage which some have taken hold of, and confidently applied to the events of recent months, in which Israel has made a number of successful incursions into Gaza, treading it underfoot as a subjugated area. However, this application ignores the context of the chapter, which is of the future reign of Messiah:

“... with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the weak of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked” (Isa. 11:4).

That there is a latter-day Philistine power is undeniable in the light of particular Bible references, but we need to be careful to make a correct application of those references at their correct time. Isaiah 11 as cited above, speaks of the Philistine power to “the west”, which includes the territory currently occupied by the Palestinians, including Gaza. The term rendered “Palestine” is literally, “the land of the Philistines”, and is translated this way in scripture. In the example at hand therefore, there is a correct application being made in terms of the latter-day powers involved, but the prophecy is being used incorrectly in terms of the time-period that it relates to. That is, a period in which Messiah shall lead the warfare against Israel’s enemies, and cut them down as prophesied so many times, so long ago.

However, there is a point that we can derive from Isaiah 11, in relation to our own day. The passage specifically places a power in the ancient territory of the Philistines, which Israel shall overcome when Messiah comes. That indicates to us that this area is not going to be given up as part of a supposed “peace process”, or, despite the events of recent months, will not be destroyed by Israel before Christ comes. What this passage leads us to expect, is for the Palestinians to continue their role as a latter-day Philistine (as a thorn in Israel’s side) until the day when the Greater than David shall come upon them with destructive power as a Stone smiting the kingdoms of men (Cp. Dan. 2).

There is another passage that relates to the land of the Philistines/Palestinians. That is Joel chapter 3:

“... what have ye to do with me, O Tyre and Zidon, and all the coasts of Palestine? Will ye render me a recompense? And if ye recompense me, swiftly and speedily will I return your recompense upon your own head ...” (Joel 3:4-5)

The context of this chapter is that of the Gentile powers uniting together against Israel, afflicting Yahweh’s people in particular ways detailed in verse 5 & 6 of Joel 3. Notice the terms used; “all the coasts of Palestine”, or the Palestinians. This people are seeking to render a recompense—which implies that something has been done to them, that they are seeking a recompense for! The idea of a “recompense” contains the idea of revenge: the latter-day Philistine power is seeking revenge against Yahweh’s people, which, because Yahweh is contending for his people at this stage, is regarded as being against Him.

What, might we ask, is it that the Palestinians are seeking recompense/revenge for? The Scriptures do not say. We can only speculate—taking care as we do so. It could be that Israel is to defend herself further from the latter-day Philistines by launching further strikes into that land: that would provide further reasons for a retaliation on the part of the Palestinians as a “revenge”.

OUR STANDING

The position of Christ’s brethren in relation to world events, whether they be concerning Israel, or any other country, is that of being *neutral observers*. We

have no place in the things of this world, let alone the politics and wars of the kingdoms of men. Our part is to simply observe, allowing the light of Bible Prophecy to show us where our personal standing is, in relation to the coming crisis at the coming of our Master.

SUPPORTING ISRAEL'S ENEMIES

It is of concern therefore, that the February issue of *The Christadelphian* makes reference to a “significant donation” being made to ease the afflictions of the Philistines in Gaza, brought about by the defensive incursions of Israel. The item is headed: “*Humanitarian Appeal—Save the Children*” and reads:

“in the light of the worsening humanitarian crisis **in Gaza**, the Samaritan Fund has responded as best as it can by making a significant donation to the Save the Children Fund **for help in Gaza ...**”

Place this action in a Biblical context: did Abraham collect money for the Canaanites? Or more relevantly still, did David collect money to ease the Philistines of his day, that warred against his kingdom? Of course not—yet in our day such actions take place, and the people of Israel’s enemies are supported “significantly” by Christ’s brethren! The article speaks of the underlying reason for this: “the worsening humanitarian crisis”. It is solely to do with “humanitarian”, not Scriptural reasons. The spirit of humanism permeates through, even to the brotherhood. Not that we condemn giving *per se* as some falsely say we do. There is the general command: “as we therefore have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith” (Eph. 6:10). But that is not to say that we should violate our separateness by supporting the people of Israel’s enemies.

To summarise therefore: in seeking to understand current events in the light of Bible Prophecy, we must be wary about using passages out of their context to make predictions concerning which there is no proof. To do this give occasion for the adversaries of the Truth to claim that Christadelphians make false predictions, and therefore are not to be trusted. But also, as observers of world affairs, we ought to stand in a position of neutrality, and take care how we use the resources that our Father has provided. To financially support the people of Israel’s enemies must surely compromise our state of detachment, and is something which has no precedent in Scripture.

Christopher Maddocks

THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Accompanying this issue is the first of several “special issues” we hope to send out in the coming year, entitled “*The Parable of the Good Samaritan*”. From the pen of our Brother Eric W Phipps, this item seeks to dispel some of the incorrect applications of the parable, and shows forth it’s true spirit and meaning as expressed in Scripture. Further copies are available from the Secretary (address details as per the back cover) at a cost of 50 pence each, postage extra).

FINAL THOUGHTS

I am no man's personal enemy. I have neither time nor inclination to trouble myself about persons, or their affairs. I have enough to do in this department to take care of my own personalia, without interfering in other people's. But when they approach me on the premises of the truth, then they are either my friends or my foes, and I am theirs. I am their friend for the truth's sake, or I am their foe for the truth's sake.

I would rather be the friend than the foe of any one upon any ground. This is the bent of my fleshly nature; and if men will not be friendly, I do not feel resentful, but my disposition is to give them a wide berth or margin, because the world is wide; and if they are disposed to travel north, I will travel due south; or if they would go west, I will go due east; and think of them and theirs no more. This is the natural man. But if they pretend to be the friends of the truth, and they are neither intelligent in, nor faithful to, what I believe to be the truth, and will not consent to be instructed, then I have a duty to perform as one of Christ's Brethren, in obedience to apostolic injunction, and that is, to "contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints," and in so doing, which is well-doing, "to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men," that that their mouths being stopped, they may no longer subvert whole houses, and lead captive silly people laden with sins"

John Thomas

We are all ignorant to start with. We think we know, when we don't. Experience is the only thorough and accurate teacher: and it teaches by a quiet and slow and extensive process of tuition that cannot easily be formulated in words afterwards. It is made up of a thousand mental accretions that can only come with the varied experiences and reflections of years. Hence the scriptural exaltation of age over youth

Robert Roberts