

*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

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Issue 2

**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)*

Memorial

DO we fully realise the importance of the weekly Memorial Service? There may be a danger in these days of multiplicity of meetings—fraternal gatherings, mutual improvement classes, study circles, singing classes, vacational campaigns, all of which have valuable features—to lose the correct sense of proportion. Let us put first things first: and the first in importance of all our meetings is that for the Breaking of Bread.

Do not let us forget that the Memorial Service owes its origin to a command of the Lord Jesus to his disciples: “This do in remembrance of me.” Paul reminds us that it was given “the same night in which he was betrayed”—a solemn and an arresting association of ideas. Can we not enter somewhat into the spirit of that “dark betrayal night”? The partaking of the Passover with its vivid reminder of God’s intervention and Israel’s deliverance: our Lord’s evident satisfaction in partaking with his disciples—“With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer”: the sudden challenge of the Master: “Verily I say unto you, one of you shall betray me”; followed by the heart-searching enquiries “Lord, is it I? is it I?” Then the linking up of the Passover with the breaking of bread and drinking of the cup after Jesus had given thanks, and associated the emblems with his body soon to be broken, and his blood about to be shed. Could those disciples ever forget the inauguration of that Memorial Feast?

Years later the apostle Paul, in giving the salient details of that inauguration to the Gentile believers in Corinth, reminds them: “As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord’s death till he come.” Surely the emphasis in that quotation is on the word “often”! How often shall the servants of Christ meet to remember him? If it were left to ourselves to decide, the answers would be many and conflicting: we are saved from such uncertainty. The apostolic example has been preserved for us in the record given in the Acts of the Apostles (20:7). “Upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread.” Here then are our instructions based on the inspired record: “Do this in remembrance of me,” said the Master; “Do it often,” said Paul; “Do it on the first day of each week,” said apostolic example.

I believe many brethren and sisters today feel that we may be called upon, in the none too distant future, to face some great trial of our faith, perhaps the last and supreme test the brotherhood may be called upon to endure. We may possibly be wrong in so indulging our imagination. One thing is certain, however: if we are faithful in the simpler and obvious duties of our profession, we shall be all the more able to meet the greater trials should these come. Every first day of the week brings with it a simple yet infallible test of our loyalty to Christ. Have we obeyed his command to remember him in the breaking of bread and drinking of wine? How many times have we failed to do so this year? Have we forgotten? Christ does not forget, and the “book of remembrance” is a Divine reality. Only the gravest of reasons can be adequate to justify our failure to obey our Lord’s request. Was it impossible—really impossible—for us to be at the meeting? Then there is the possibility of breaking bread at home, as many a brother or sis-

ter in isolation must do. Were we on holiday? Then did we, amongst our preparations for that holiday, find out the address of the nearest ecclesia and time of meeting? Or if there were no ecclesia accessible, did we ourselves make the few essential preparations to remember Christ in the way appointed?

Each first day of the week brings its opportunity, and its test of loyalty to Christ. Happy shall we be if we can assure ourselves in the day of account that we have been consistently faithful in this matter of the remembrance of our absent Lord.

(F. Turner 1939)

“O Send Thy Light Forth and Thy Truth”

“Oh, send Thy light forth and Thy truth:” this is the fullness of the desire and the prayer of the spiritual man. Darkness not only covers the earth, but broods on the pilgrim’s way. He is a son of light and walks by faith in that light, but his walk is in darkness, as saith the prophet:

“Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God” (Isa. 1:10).

We trust in God who dwells in light and is the Light, but our trust is exercised in a time and in a place of darkness. The darkness is oppressive. God has spoken, but His hand is hidden: His voice is silent: His power is quiescent. Men do as they please without interference.

“The righteous perish: the godly man ceaseth.”
“He that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey.”

Men do evil a hundred times with no evil consequences:

“Therefore the hearts of the sons of men are set in them to do evil.”

The lovers of God and man are, in such circumstances, like the hart that David speaks of: the hart panting in a dry and thirsty land. They long for the refreshment that will come with the manifestation of the power and presence and authority of God. They exclaim with Isaiah:

“Oh, that Thou wouldest rend the heavens and come down . . . There is none that calleth upon Thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of Thee, for Thou hast hid Thy face from us.”

This is only another way of saying:

“Oh, send Thy light forth and Thy truth.”

It is the consuming desire of those who love God and are waiting for Him. It may be said He has already done so. Yes, in the partial form that faith requires. His word is a light to the feet and a lamp to the path in the midst of the darkness. This is something exciting intense gratitude, but it is not enough to meet the desire of those who “wait for God more than they that watch for the morning.” They have heard of the glory of the Lord and this is gladness to their hearts; but there is no satisfaction to them till they see the glory of the Lord in the land of the living, —even filling the earth, as God has promised, even “as the waters cover the sea.” For this they pray continually: and their prayer is not vain. It pleases God to be asked for the things He has promised.

“The prayer of the righteous is His delight.”

Their very conversation is a sweet odour to Him. We learn this from Malachi, that:

“The Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon His name: and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.”

“The Lord will fulfil the desire of the righteous: He will hear their prayer.”

Their prayer is:

“Oh, send Thy light forth and Thy truth.”

“Blessed are they,” says Jesus, “that hunger and thirst after righteousness: they shall be filled.”

God’s manifested light and truth will burst upon the path of their darkness. The sun will rise and the darkness will flee. There will be healing in his pure beams.

“Let them be guides to me.”

“Let me be delivered from this body of sin and death wherein a law is at work bringing me into captivity through weakness. Let me share the glorious light and liberty of the spirit-body wherein I shall be controlled by the Spirit in every thought and motion of my being. Now, I see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. Now I walk by faith with trembling steps: then I shall stand in the full vision of the glory of God unabashed. Now I serve in tribulation, in weakness, on probation—in the fainting and failing of the flesh which is but a wind that passeth away. Then I shall stand in His presence and see His face and serve with His servants in the full light of the Holy City ‘having

the glory of God like a stone most precious, even a jasper stone, clear as crystal.”

The present application (“let them be guides to me”) is in preparation for this. It is of vast importance to us at present. If we are not guided by the light and the Truth now, to the extent to which they have already been “sent forth,” we shall have a poor affinity for them in the day of their greater intensity. It is the men who are “guided” by the Truth now that will be sharers of the glory then. What is this state of being guided by the Truth but a submitting to the direction of the Truth. The dictates of the Truth are repugnant to the mere children of nature. Paul says

“The carnal mind is enmity against God.”

We see it in society around us. What is this carnal mind but the mind resulting from the operation of the brain flesh without enlightenment. We see this mind in every variety of development—mere natural mentality acting upon the objects of nature—upon what can be seen, felt, tasted, and physically enjoyed: mentality not open to the deep reason of things: insensible to God’s existence: shut off from all knowledge of what God has already done in the management of the earthy, and from all faith of the glorious purpose He has revealed. To a mind so moulded, the things of the Spirit are distasteful—worse, they are hateful, while the things of the flesh are congenial. The service of God is a hateful myth: the service of natural desire, a delightful reality. Christ’s description of the case is as plain as it is simple and true:

“They savour not the things that be of God but those that be of men.”

Paul’s description is almost similar:

“They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh: they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.”

The two classes necessarily find themselves mutually incompatible.

“The world will hate you,” said Jesus. It is inevitable. The world loves its own set, those who live and work by the world’s loves and principles. It has nothing but detestation for those whose separation is a reflection on its wisdom. Christ’s words in prayer to the Father define the situation exactly:

“I have given them Thy Word, and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”

There is a constant natural tendency to chafe and wince under this incompatibility—a constant tendency to get rid of the disagreeableness by conformity to the world in which we live. This is a tendency with which the man of God

is at constant war. The warfare is arduous, but there is no surrender. “Let them be guides to me” is the spiritual man’s motto. The words of David are the words of every son of God:

“I thought on my ways, I turned my feet unto Thy testimonies. I made haste and delayed not to keep Thy commandments . . . I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and of them that keep Thy precepts . . . Depart from me, ye evil doers: I will keep the commandments of my God . . . I am thy servant. Give me understanding that I may know Thy testimonies. It is time for Thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void Thy law. I love Thy commandments above gold. I opened my mouth and panted, for I longed for Thy commandments. I have longed for Thy salvation, O Lord: and Thy Law is my delight.”

How could men animated by such sentiments be in league with a world that knows not God and cares not for His Word, and has no faith in His purpose, and no regard for His proprietary rights in the universe? It is a moral impossibility. Any attempt to blend the two must end in failure. It is far better for our few days on the earth to be “strangers with God” (to use David’s expression) and find everlasting inheritance therein with Him, when the hour of His promise arrives, than to be friends and citizens with the world for a short time, to be blown away with the chaff in His indignation when the day comes for the judgment appointed.

“And bring me to Thy holy hill, even where Thy dwellings be. Then will I to God’s altar go, to God my chiefest joy.”

We may take this as broadly as the subject admits of. The full breadth is of the Spirit’s own indication. Christ is the altar in the final significance of that Mosaic institution. So we learn from Hebrews 13:10, and other places. On him we lay ourselves for offering and consumption by Spirit-fire—morally now; physically afterwards. The flesh changed by Spirit is the process at both stages; but the completeness of the process is not realised till we stand before him in the joy and glory of the final transformation—when, no longer flesh, but one spirit with the altar-Christ, we come to God in the full rapture of an actual reciprocal communion through Christ, “the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” This will not be till His holy hill is manifested as the place of His dwelling, in fulfilment of Moses and the prophets from the beginning. The ecstasy of communion in that day must remain an impossible experience till then. We see it afar off, so far as sensation goes; but faith contemplates it as a reality that will be attained in due course. And this contemplation is a present source of strength. The sense of joy to come is a cordial amid our present dreariness. That David should speak of the harp in this connection is natural:

“Yea, God, my God, Thy name to praise, my harp I will employ.”

David in this attitude may be taken as a type of the great multitudes seen by John in vision “harping with their harps”—of whom David will be one. John heard their voices as if it had been the roar of many waters and the sound of thunder—“the voice of harpers harping with their harps.” They sang “a new song” which none could sing but the members of the 144,000 standing on Zion’s hill. The reason was that none but they were the subjects of the salvation which their song celebrated. The chief ingredient of their joyful song was the very feature standing forth so prominently in the Psalm before. It was not mere gleefulness at escape from danger and pain. There was all the joy that could possibly animate human breasts on this head; but above and below and around it was the all suffusing prevalence of a pure and bright and ennobling sentiment unknown to mere human satisfaction—rapturous gratitude to the eternal God, springing from a clear and strong discernment of His relation to the deliverance accomplished.

“Salvation and glory, and honour and power (be ascribed) unto the Lord our God.”

A voice came out of the throne, saying:

“Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Hallelujah! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.”

Thus to praise God is the climax of the high calling in Christ. It is not mere sound: a crowd of barbarians can make a great and jubilant noise when they are glad, though no such crowd ever made such a joyful tempest sound as the multitude “redeemed unto God from the earth.” It is sound as the appropriate and measured and perfect expression of the sentiment filling all hearts in that assembly: praise resulting from clear discernment and hearty love. This clear discernment and hearty love find in this praise the “chiefest joy.” This joy is the salt and flavour of it. Sinners find stimulus in brass bands, and the stir of public occasions. In that case, it is the mere excitement of powerful self-contemplation. In the case of the “musical festival” that John saw in vision—which was the revelation of a coming reality, the finest raptures will be blended with the highest flights of reverence and admiration directed to the only reverend and the admirable—the underived power and life, and wisdom, and goodness of the Creator, upholder and possessor of heaven and earth. But it will never be unconnected with the altar: the altar will always be the central idea. Christ the head and the medium of approach—Christ in whom alone forgiven sinners stand accepted with the Eternal who is too terribly great to surrender an atom of his prerogative: though too kind to forget that we are dust. It will always be a memory to the forefront that in him sin was con-

demned: that through him, we have access by favour through faith: that in his blood, we stand washed from our sins. Therefore it will always be in place to sing:

“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, who hath redeemed us to God by his blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and people and nation.”]

Thus on the (mystical) hill of God, “even where His dwellings be,” will we “to God’s (mystical) altar go”—to God, our great, and thrilling and everlasting “joy.” In Him is the fountain of light and life. In His light we shall see life. We shall drink of the rivers of His pleasure, and be satisfied for ever. Why, then, should we be troubled during these few days of trouble and probation? This is the application David makes of the facts.

“Why art thou then cast down, my soul; what should discourage thee: and why with vexing thoughts art thou disquieted in me? Still trust in God for Him to praise, good cause I yet shall have: He of my countenance is the health. My God that me doth save.”

This is making a reasonable and profitable use of the Truth. It is a necessary use. So long as we are in this frail and fainting nature, we need rallying. We need reminding of the Truth. We are liable to sink in the “slough of despond.” We are liable to forget that the weeping and present distress endures but a night: that songs come with the morning: that our light affliction is but for a moment, and is not worthy to be considered in view of the weighty glory which will have no end.

One consideration more, and the relief is complete: the affliction that presses on us so heavily in the days of probation will not only end and never return, but it is a necessity for the time being. Such is the fact whatever difficulty we may have in feeling it while the shoe pinches. It “worketh out for us” the glory that is coming. Such is Paul’s expression, and such experience shows to be the truth. Men can only be fitted for divine use by trouble—not that trouble alone will do it, but trouble will do it when other conditions are right. Where God is known and believed, and loved, trouble acts the humbling and the chastening part. How long the action is needful, God is Judge. There is nothing for it but to submit ourselves to His hand, prepared heroically to do our part in all circumstances, at the same time ready to accept whatever affliction He may permit, or cause to spring in our paths, knowing that “He doth not willingly afflict;” and that the end of all His dealings with us will fill our mouths with laughter, gratitude and praise.

“Seasons of Comfort”
Robert Roberts

Who are you?

Many a time this question is asked by individuals who do not need to know our names at all rather they are after someone and you happen to be in their way. The posing of such a question intrudes our nerves at points where authority and rank are headquartered. Instead of ascertaining our responsibilities we suddenly feel a worthlessness that can only be redeemed by an answer we often find that we hand not budgeted for. We often have a thought lingering on the options of how best we should have answered that individual, normally to appease our destabilized self worth we become comfortable in making it hard to assist our intruder. Some might even be more subtle in their inquisition, we only feel better if we are the persons they are really looking for and then they have to adjust to our tempo to dress their requests with appeal to suit our responses.

However, the question summarizes our efforts, dreams and goals. It is a probe into our core values the unseen and undocumented facts of where we have been and what we have done measured against what we have to show for it. Sort of locus points of the inner man creating DNA attributes unique to one. Our appreciation of the teachings of Christ is the only eye opener how much we have been corrupted by the Adamic curse. It is the only plane at which the true reflection of our darkness can be contrasted. All have sinned and have come short of the glory of God. We are indeed, living under sin in a sinful world. Who we are only is defined as worthy when we are in Christ, if we walk in the light as he is the light, we will have fellowship one with another and the blood of His Son will cleanse from all sin.

We are nothing before God and in Christ we become His treasured possessions. In other words we gain godly values, value that is from God through the righteousness that comes in being in Christ. Our humility is founded on recognizing our worthless before God and not only that but comprehending the creator's sustenance in all things in the correct perspective. In other words understanding of God's work balanced with gratitude.

The spirit of Christ in the prophets shows the humility of Christ as of unique quality: he is spoken of as a "worm and no man". A worm depending entirely on God and all form of senses not taking enterprising prominence to influence course of emotions and ownership in any form to fulfil personal objectives.

We have to lose our Adamic inheritance and through progressive ingress of God's word transform to a Christ-man. Who are you? Where you are in this transition demonstrates who you are. What you are aiming for sets the base of everything else you will do so that is who you are.

The Bible speaks of these matters and speaks of a day when God will judge and prove to all of us who we really are.

The days apportioned to us are then purposed to be lived to an expected end. One writer puts it this way 'work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

In fact the introduction of the word ‘work’ denotes an exercise that entails a physical, practical way of one engaging in some form of occupation. A quick look in the concordance on the word ‘work’ stimulates immeasurable insight of a unique element of our worship that aids us in our efforts to say no to ungodliness as we are exhorted to fill our hands with that which natural takes up very big spaces and thereby make us avoid many pitfalls.

Work is fulfilment of what our minds have already dealt with.

Work is the final admission of what we believe it is a way of proving to ourselves that we really believe. It is a measure and given to us to pre- judge ourselves. An outward way of testifying what we believe there by proving who we are.

Our hearts are so foolish we might even convince ourselves out of the truth eventually, like Israel of old.

James spoke of something along these lines, when he gives an example of one looking in the mirror then forgets what he looks like. Who are you? It is needful to be able to remind yourself that you belong to Christ and prove that by right associations and fellowships and living according to the times, being able to understand the programme of salvation.

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobrates?” (2 Cor. 13:5)

Once we have the knowledge of the kingdom of God we have our hearts set on things above. We set in motion activities that conform to the new life as instructed in the Bible. We start to build a new personality that is in line with the new kingdom to come. Our identities will show who we are. We become sons of God, we then can give answers by the authority given to us by our Lord. We are ambassadors of Christ, a holy priesthood. This is what we should answer to one who asks us. We might not give that answer, but what ever answer we give, our conscience agreeing with us, we give answers that will be complete. Our answer will be identifying us as those awaiting the return of Christ. It is good to see some one and yet they can not see you. They can never know why you are so hopeful regardless of the floods, the wars, the strife. Who are you?

The light that shone in our hearts will move and spread from us to others if we are what we ought to be.

If you know who you ought to be but are rather entangled in a maze of doubts and are lost, you need to remember one more thing. You can not change and undo who you are. You are a son, come back home to your Father who will meet you along the way and dress you up and celebrate your return. At most ask yourself who you are. Often when asked to explain the choice to lead a Christian life, I give an answer along the difference in computers, some are Pentium one

up to four, some dual core and so forth. I then explain my position that the knowledge of Christ has opened up my understanding beyond Pentiums that I can explain therefore I can not under utilise my advancements considering what I have come to know.

Our Lord speaks of keeping oil in our lamps and staying ready with oil to go out and meet him. Are we prepared at any given time to go out and meet him? Are we ready to leave our business enterprising to go out and meet him? Are we reasonably presentable all round to be ready to meet our Lord? Can we be identified at all with him to be seen as fit to be with him wherever will be. Who are you? One brother gave an example to say if the world were to choose who should be theirs will they live you out. Will that be on account that you remind them of Jesus of Nazareth? Thy speech betrayeth thee, some were told. Do we find it easy to speak about our Lord and our beliefs to our relatives? Do we dress it up to look cool and only mention the appealing side of things. Is it hard to say who we are?

We are those who have believed that there is one God ,who has chosen to display His existence through the bible and demonstrated His attributes by caring and preserving the nation of Israel and is exercising His love by providing a way into His new kingdom to any one of us. We are those He has given an opportunity already and are living our lives in recognition of our responsibilities to daily conform to a new way of life, imitating His son.

I am a man looking forward to the return of Christ and trying my best to receive the grace of God by doing that which pleases Him. My wish is we be blessed with circumstances that will see us make it through everyday and that we all be in the kingdom. I am a man who also believe and knows that the day of Christ is very very near and I am also your brother.

Bro Gombera Tendai

Daniel, The Man Greatly Beloved

Our thoughts this morning are with Daniel, the man greatly beloved. What a wonderful title and tribute to be heard from the mouth of an angel of God! The Book of Daniel opens at the time Nebuchadnezzar first came against Jerusalem in the days of King Jehoiakim. Nebuchadnezzar (verse 3) selected certain youths from the princes of Judah to attend him at his court, and four are especially mentioned (verse 6)—Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. The latter three are better known by their Babylonian names (verse 7) of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Nebuchadnezzar was supreme ruler of the most powerful nation on earth. Daniel and his companions were captives. They were in the position to escape the common lot of captives and to achieve great benefit and advantage, if they gained the king's favor. "But (verse 8) Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with

the king's meat." Daniel could easily have convinced himself that the position he was in made a rigid adherence to the Law of Moses impossible, and that therefore, it would have been foolishness to jeopardize his life and that of the other Jewish captives by making an issue of meat.

Have we not often heard such arguments? But Daniel saw through all these weak deceptions of the flesh's reasoning. He knew that God had given a law, and regardless of danger or difficulty, he determined to obey it, as fully as he could under his captive circumstances. We notice (verse 9) he was in favour and tender love with his Babylonian overseer. How much this tells us of the character of Daniel, even at this very early age. Though of such strong determination, he must have been of exceptional gentleness and courtesy and pleasantness to have won the tender love of this man.

This is a striking picture, and there is a great lesson in it. Strength and firmness do not necessitate harshness and coldness. True godly strength of purpose is always accompanied by gentleness and kindness. The result of this faithful uncompromising stand was (verse 15) that God blessed the Hebrew children with physical health and robustness above all others, and in addition, with preeminence in wisdom and understanding. All things are in the hands of God. The main thing—the only thing of any importance is to sincerely seek to please Him. He can, as He sees fit, give health or wisdom or any other blessings in limitless abundance, or He can withhold it.

Chapter 2, which follows soon in time after chapter 1, records the famous

dream of the great metallic image, which represented the course of history of the kingdoms of men from Nebuchadnezzar's day until ours. And how wonderfully and significantly all the details fit, when laid against the pattern of events as they have transpired! Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, and divided Europe. And now we are in the last days of the vision.

Think of how much this one revelation in Daniel 2 has meant to us in understanding and confidence and assurance. It is not for us to tremble in darkness, fearful of the future, which seems so ominous to the natural eye, as evil and ruthless men threaten the world with atomic destruction. We watch current events with keen interest, seeing the overall picture wonderfully developing, as world tensions and rivalry center more and more upon the Middle East.

In the past twenty years we have seen the British and western power decline with unexpected speed in the Mid-East, and Russia suddenly loom as a major factor in the critical Palestine and Egyptian areas. Now events have taken a new turn. Russia is out of Egypt, and the United States is growing in strength and influence there, as it should be at the end. It is an exciting drama of the potsherds of the earth striving together for power and possession, unaware that the LORD God rules in the kingdoms of men and gives it to whomsoever He will—whoever suits His purpose.

Daniel, alone, is able to reveal and explain this vision to the king, and (verse 48) "the king made Daniel a great man, and...ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon...and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-

nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon.” So ends chapter 2. But the favour of man is precarious.

Chapter 3 records the incident of the golden image and the fiery furnace. It illustrates the form of trials of which God’s servants in all ages are subjected—pressure to conform and to give reverence to man-made objects of worship. Even today, in times of national danger, brethren have been faced with the same issues and the same hazards. Patriotism and side-worship can become a frenzied cult in time of war, and we must be prepared, if necessary, to face this danger and test with meekness and restraint, but still inflexible determination to keep a clear and faithful allegiance to God alone, with our windows wide open to worship Him.

This test will also face us in many subtle and disguised ways. The world is full of things and principles, and men will try to pressure us to conform and, in a sense, to worship them.

Let us remember the inspiring example of Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael. Our God is able (verse 17) to deliver us, even though it be not His will at this time to work a miracle on our behalf, still “Be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not worship the golden image that thou hast set up.”

What a calm and noble example of courage in the face of eminent peril! Again, the power of God was manifested to the confusion of the heathen and to the salvation of God’s people. That power will always be manifested eventually for His people, if they are faithful, though God’s purpose may require their present suffering and martyrdom. The final results will always be the same as here—salvation and deliverance.

Chapter 4 gives the dream of the cut-down tree and the seven-year madness of Nebuchadnezzar that was represented by it. Nebuchadnezzar reigned 43 years—from 605 to 562 BC, as closely as we can determine. Babylon was the head of the image that represented the kingdom of men, so there was a special significance in what was divinely caused to happen to her and her rulers. The lesson in this chapter is expressed in verse 17, “To the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.” A fact just as true today as then.

In a dream the king saw a mighty tree in the midst of the earth, lifting up to heaven, visible to the ends of the earth, harboring all the birds of the sky in its branches, and sheltering all the beasts of the field under its shadow. At the height of its prosperity, a watcher—a holy one—descends from heaven and issues a decree (verse 14), “Hew down the tree...but leave its stump, and bind it with a band of iron and brass...and let seven times pass over it.”

The vision appears to have a three-fold significance. First to Nebuchadnezzar himself, seven years; second to Babylon, seventy years; and third, to the kingdom of men as a whole, 7 times 360 years, or 2520 years. Its immediate and typical fulfillment was in Nebuchadnezzar. Just a year later at the peak of his pride, he was divinely struck with madness, and for seven years roamed the fields like an animal eating grass.

The full scope of the vision is obviously greater than this, as further indicated by the binding of the stump of the tree with the band of iron and brass. The constitution of the kingdoms of

men, since the fall of the Babylonian Empire, is just as pictured here—the Babylonian stump bound with a band of Roman iron and Grecian brass. All, in any way familiar with history, are aware that our present-day civilization is principally bound by the customs, principles, and heritages of Greece and Rome in language, government, philosophy, art, architecture, law, science, literature, etc.

But there are fewer who recognize the basic Babylonian fleshly and religious stump. Students of God's Word know that the modern religious world is fundamentally Babylonian, and that **BABYLON THE GREAT, MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH** is the title that the scriptures give to this modern system. Such documentary books as Hislop's *Two Babylons* expose the pagan Babylonian origin of the world's principle religious observations and traditions and festivals as Christmas, Easter, Halloween, etc. God's people can have absolutely nothing to do with any such Babylonian corruptions.

Verse 16, "And let seven times pass over it." Seven times in the scriptural symbol of months, on the larger scale, is 7 times 360 years, or 2520 years. Our day, which we know from world conditions to be the time of the end, lies just this length of time from the period of the Babylonian Empire. Seven times, measured from the beginning of the Babylonian head of gold, comes to approximately 1914. Seven times, from the end of Babylon, comes to approximately 1984. That is the 70 years of Babylon carried forward seven times, or 2520 years, covers the period 1914 – 1984.

At the end of his madness, Nebuchadnezzar, typifying the kingdom of men cured from his present delusions and brought to the true knowledge and worship of God, declares (verse 35), "All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say to him, What doest thou?"

This is the great value of Daniel for us today—the great truth we must keep in our minds, as we watch the futile maneuverings of the great sin-powers of the earth, as the final crisis approaches. Even a proud and terrible God himself, God says, "I will turn thee back...and I will bring thee forth." Russia, of whom the world is increasingly afraid, is merely fulfilling God's will and preparing the things for the manifestation of God's glory. We have nothing to fear.

Chapter 5 describes the last night of the great Babylonian Empire. Daniel is now an old man over 80, and the king is Belshazzar, who is apparently the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar. This chapter was long used by critics in an attempt to discredit the Bible, for it did not fit in with the fanciful legends of heathen historians. The critics said there was and could be no such king—no such circumstances, but archaeology has completely justified the Bible account.

This destruction of literal Babylon by Cyrus is typical of the destruction of symbolic Babylon by Christ. Even as the enemy surrounds the city, King Belshazzar, confident of his power and defenses, (verse 1) makes a great feast unto his lords, and in their

drunken revelry (verse 3) he makes sport of the holy vessels of the temple, drinking to their own heathen gods out of them. So the Babylonian Harlot is drunken with the blood of the saints, and all nations are drunken with the wine of her fornication and follow all her customs and festivals. He says, “I sit a queen and am no widow,” at the very time that her destruction strikes.

Suddenly, (verse 5) Belshazzar’s merriment is silent, and the revelers are struck with terror by the appearance of the fingers of a man’s hand, writing on the wall. The king (verse 7) calls for all his wise men and offers great honor to any who can interpret the supernatural message.

Daniel is not at this time in public prominence, but his fame is well known. The queen reminds Belshazzar of him, and Daniel is called (verse 11). And he spells out the meaning of the divine message (verse 25)—MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. Numbered, numbered, weighed, and divided. The handwriting is clearly on the wall today. But the blind nations cannot read it. In that night (verse 30) was Belshazzar slain, and Darius, the Mede, took the kingdom.

Chapter 6—the lion’s den—is a lesson and an inspiration in many ways. It is not always God’s purpose to miraculously intervene and close the lion’s mouth. Many faithful men have sealed their testimony with their blood, but the lesson and the comfort of this chapter is not diminished. In the end, all who are His will stand eternally before Him, delivered from the lions—all the lions. The events of this chapter occur in the reign of Darius, the Mede. The prominence of Daniel and his godly separateness leads, of course, to jealousy. His

enemies realize (verse 5) that they would not be able to find any thing against him, unless they could create a situation where he must choose between service to the king and service to God. So (verse 7), they flatter the vain king into making a foolish decree that none may ask a petition of any but him for 30 days.

The course that Daniel follows is a striking illustration of the principle that a lit candle is not prepared to be put under a bushel—not even temporarily for convenience sake, and it is a standing rebuke to all who on a plea of prudence hide their divine light that is meant to illuminate the world. When open confession of the principles of Christ is dangerous or inconvenient, how often do we hear it quoted that we should not toss our pearls before swine? Daniel’s conduct puts such a misapplication of scripture to shame.

“Ye are the light of the world. Let your light shine.”

Daniel makes no attempt at concealment, though he knows that he is walking into a planned trap and is exposing himself to a cruel death. How easy it would have been to shut his windows, and thus, make sure that his prayers were unobserved! What harm would it have done to use a little caution in this way? But Daniel, the man greatly beloved (and we can see why), could see the issue so much more clearly than that. He saw that such a course would have been weakness, cowardice, failure, and defeat. And so all generations since that time have been strengthened by the power of his fearless example—

Dare to be a Daniel!
Dare to stand alone!
Dare to have a purpose!

And dare to make it known.

Verse 10, “Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.”

Chapter 7 begins the great prophetic visions of Daniel himself, which now continue right through to the end of the book. They were all at the end of his life in the short reigns of Belshazzar and Darius and the first three years of Cyrus. Chapter 7 is about the vision of the four beasts that parallels the image of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. But the symbolism here is much fuller and more striking. That was for a heathen monarch; this is for the servants of God. There the kingdom of men was as a great man-like image; here it is shown as savage destroying beasts. Here we have the deeper details—of the little horn that prevailed against the saints, of the Ancient of Days, the Son of Man similitude of God-manifestation, coming with the clouds of heaven, the opening of the books of judgment, the ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him, and the saints taking the kingdom under the whole heaven. These were vast and mighty things for a mortal man to see and to carry alone in his heart.

Daniel says (verse 28), “My thoughts much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.” The more terrible things were yet to be revealed to the man greatly beloved. He was to see the long centuries of the desolation of his people, the restoration, and then the destroying again of the city and the sanctuary, the cutting off of the long-

awaited Messiah—visions and revelations that overwhelmed his spirit and caused him to lie sick many days.

Chapter 8 contains the vision of the Persian ram destroyed by the Grecian goat. After the goat had destroyed the ram (verse 7), its great horn (Alexander) was broken (verse 8) and four horns took its place—the four-fold division of the Greek Empire under Alexander’s generals. From one of these horns (verse 9) came a little horn—the Roman power that was to wax great against God’s land and sanctuary and to take away the daily sacrifice. And the vision (verse 14) was to be for 2300 days, “then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” The vision throughout concerns the he-goat and what develops from it, and the appearance of the goat, coming like a whirlwind from the west under Alexander, is the first specific action in the vision. Therefore, counting 2300 years from the brief 9-year period of Alexander the Great—332-323 BC—we come to the period 1969-1978. Of the end of the period, we are told (verse 14), “then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.”

Chapter 9 occurs in the first year of Darius, right after the Babylonian oppressor had been destroyed. Daniel understood (verse 2) by the prophecies of Jeremiah that the captivity of his people was to be for seventy years. This first year of Darius, as closely as we can determine, was 69 years from the beginning of the captivity.

And Daniel sets himself (verse 3) to seek by prayer and fasting and supplications for the gathering and blessing of his people. Even though the end of the time had come, and the destroyer had been destroyed, Daniel does not take the regathering for granted, or merely wait for God to move.

Prayer, supplications, fasting, sackcloth, and ashes (verse 3) indicate the fervent urgency of his appeal for his people. With such intense desire, God is well pleased. He desires those, and only those, who burn with intense longing for the fulfilment of His promises.

And then we note how Daniel identifies himself with his people and their sinful condition. There is no superior self-righteousness, but a loving sympathetic desire to stand for them and plead for them. Repeatedly, he says, We have sinned. We have rebelled. We have not obeyed. We have not made our prayers. As he prayed (verse 21), a gracious answer came to him. The angel Gabriel, who had appeared and explained the vision of the he-goat, stood beside him again. This was the angel who appeared to Zacharias to announce the birth of John the Baptist and to Mary to announce the birth of Christ. He appears to no one else in scripture—just to Daniel, Zacharias, and Mary. It is here at the end of his life that Daniel is first addressed in verse 23, as the man greatly beloved.

The beloved Daniel is the Old Testament counterpart of the beloved John. Both in their old age received marvelous apocalyptic revelations. Love is the key to the deep knowledge of God.

Gabriel's message at this time is brief, but it is one of the most striking prophecies in the Bible, perhaps it could be called the central prophecy of all. Verse 24, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and the prophecies,

and to anoint the most Holy." What depth of meaning is contained in these words! How beautifully and wonderfully all was fulfilled in Christ! Here is the hope and salvation of mankind—to make an end of sin. Here is all the law and the prophets.

But Gabriel continues in verse 26, "The Messiah shall be cut off, and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary." Daniel is left with the enigma of the end of sin, reconciliation made, everlasting righteousness brought in, the covenant confirmed, and then the Messiah cut off, the holy city and the temple destroyed. We can see now, in the wonderful working out of the eternal purpose, how all this fits together and was fulfilled in Christ. But what would Daniel's thoughts and feelings be? Here is glorious accomplishment associated with utter defeat and desolation. Things were the things the angels desired to look into.

The next vision, chapter 10, occurs in the third year of Cyrus, apparently about three years after the foregoing. It is clear that Daniel's great concern in the meantime has been to learn more of the things in store for his people and regarding Messiah the Prince. As this chapter 10 opens, Daniel has set himself (verse 2) to mourn and fast and seek unto God for an answer to his searching. He had been fasting and mourning three weeks, when (verse 5) he sees a vision of a man that corresponds in striking detail to the Son of Man similitude that appeared to John on Patmos—the multitudinous Christ. Like John, he fell at this man's feet, as dead (verse 9). And like John, he is caused to arise and is given courage and strength, and is told (verse 14), "I

am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days.” Chapters 11 and 12 contain this final revelation.

Chapter 11 is a detailed history of the conflicts between the king of the south and the king of the north—the two parts of Alexander’s Empire—Egypt and Syria—between which lay Palestine—the Holy Land—their common battleground, just as today. As time passes on, nations come and go. And Rome enters the picture, as the king of the north, by the conquest of that territory. The Roman power develops into the Papal power, into whose hands the people of God are given for 1260 years. Much history is telescoped into a few verses.

In verse 40, our attention is turned to the time of the end. There is still a king of the north and a king of the south. The ancient enmity still exists, and God’s land is still the crossroads and the battleground, just as we see today.

As the final crisis arises (verse 40), the king of the south pushes against the king of the north. Then the latter, the king of the north, comes forth like a whirlwind and carries all before him. At the zenith of his power, he meets his end, (verse 45) between the seas in the glorious holy mountain.

Chapter 12 is the final picture. This time of the great power and the final destruction of the king of the north is described (verse 1) as a time of trouble on the earth such as never has been.

But it is also a time of great deliverance, “Thy people shall be delivered.” It is the time (verse 2) of the awakening of the dead and the rewarding of God’s faithful servants of all ages. “They that

be wise (verse 3) shall shine as the brightness of the firmament.”

We know that this great day is even now upon us. Are we among the wise? Are our lives filled and dominated by the consciousness of these great things? Do we put all present things in the background—meaningless? Do we feel the intensity of Daniel’s yearning and supplication?

“But thou, O Daniel (verse 4), shut up the words, and seal the book, even till the time of the end.” Here, as one asked another (verse 6), “How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?”

They speak of the 1260-, the 1290-, and the 1335-year periods. Here again a final 75-year period is indicated related to the rebirth of Israel, and we are in the midst of it, obviously. At the moment these periods appear to run our successively, in 1917, 1947, and 1992. But it is not for us to know, only to be wide awake to the possibility and to recognize that it is certainly the time of the end.

Daniel heard the mystic reply—he heard but he understood not (verse 8), for the vision was not for Daniel. The aged prophet had now come to the end of his long exile. His weary years of prayer and concern for his people were now over. “Then said I (verse 8), O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end...Go thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.” May it be our lot to stand with him, the man greatly beloved.

G.V.Growcott

Philemon

Today's daily readings take us to one of the shortest books of the Bible, but one which is filled with exhortation and encouragement for us, as we wait for the coming of our Master. We could do no better than to review the lessons contained therein as we prepare our minds for the partaking of the emblems which speak to us of the sacrifice of Christ.

In his salutation to Philemon, the inspired Apostle Paul makes reference to "The Ecclesia in thy house". Given that we already know he had servants, the implication would be that Philemon had a degree of prosperity, and had a house of sufficient size to accommodate the brethren and sisters which made up the Ecclesia. It is highly probable that this ecclesia was actually the ecclesia at Colosse, which was the recipient of another epistle, bearing that name. The evidence for this, is that in his Epistle to Philemon, Paul makes reference to a number of individuals, who are also referred to in Colossians as being members of that ecclesia, as follows:

Col. 4:9 Onesimus (Phil. 1:10)
Col. 4:10 Aristarchus (Phil. 1:24)
Col. 4:12 Epaphras (Phil. 1:23)
Col. 4:14 Demas (Phil. 1:24)
Col. 4:17 Archippus (Phil. 1:2)

This is very fitting, as part of the letter to the Colossians contains instructions regarding Masters and their Servants, and how each should behave to one another:

"Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice as men pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God" (Col. 3:22).

"Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven" (Col. 4:1).

ONESIMUS THE SLAVE

The central theme of the epistle to Philemon concerns Onesimus, a runaway slave, and an appeal for him to become reunited with his Master, as we shall proceed to show. Colossians is an epistle to the whole ecclesia, whereas Philemon was an open letter to an individual who was part of that ecclesia.

The precise circumstances of Onesimus are difficult to ascertain, but from reading the epistle, we may gather the following points:

- He was a slave who was disobedient, and unprofitable.
- He appears to have defrauded his master in some undisclosed way.

- Having absconded, he met up with the Apostle Paul, who was in bonds for the Gospel's sake.
- He became converted, and, obeying the Gospel, was baptized.
- He was no longer unprofitable, but rather Paul desired that he should remain with him to assist with his work – but recognizing Onesimus' responsibility to his Master, he instead sought to reconcile the two.

Under the Law of Moses, it was commanded:

“Thou shalt not deliver unto his Master the servant which is escaped from his Master unto thee: he shall dwell with thee, even among you in the place which he shall choose in one of thy gates, where it liketh him best: thou shalt not oppress him” (Deut. 23:15-16).

From this, we see that it would have been against the Law for Paul to arrange to force Onesimus, being a slave, back to his Master from whom he had absconded. However, that is not what he purposed to do: rather than to order a servant back to his master, he sent Onesimus back, as a brother, to be part of the ecclesia. So he appeals:

“Perhaps he departed from thee for a season, that thou shouldest receive him forever; not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord” (Phil. 1:15-16).

Rather than to compel a slave to go back to his master, Paul sent Onesimus - who would have travelled back of his own free will – returning him to Philemon, as a fellow disciple and brother. There is a play on Onesimus' name here. In the Greek it signifies “profitable”, and of Onesimus it is written that he was in times past “to thee unprofitable”. However, now Onesimus is returning as being “now profitable to thee and to me” (vs 11). Again, Philemon's Name is derived from the word *phileo*, and signifies “affection” or “love”. Paul exhorts him to receive his former slave as “a brother beloved ... both in the flesh, and in the Lord” (Phil. 16).

A WILLING MIND

It is a principle of Scripture that “God loveth a cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9:7), and that “if there first be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not” (2 Cor. 8:12). Paul therefore exhorted Philemon “without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly” (Phil. 1:14). Having Apostolic authority, Paul could have given a command (vs 8), but rather than Philemon having to obey a command, there was scope to show his willingness “for love's sake”.

Here is a principle which is fundamental to our high calling in Christ: the display of willingness and love before the Almighty – reciprocating as it were, the love shown towards us in the Master laying down his life for his friends. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus ... [who] made himself of no

reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant ... he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philip. 2:5-8 – see context). Here is a willingness to make His Father’s Will his own: truly Messiah was a willing sacrifice, to redeem us from being disobedient servants, to become his Brethren through faith in His Name.

THE TEACHING OF THE LAW

There appears to be a precedent in the Law of Moses for a situation similar to that of Onesimus. Leviticus 9 reads:

“... if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the Land of Egypt. I am Yahweh” (Lev. 19:33-34)

Here we see Onesimus as a stranger sojourning with the Apostle Paul, being instructed in the things of the Truth. And in an apparent reference to Baptism, Paul states “... yet for love’s sake ... I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds” (Phi. 1:10). Just as a stranger - a Gentile - could be brought into a relationship with Yahweh as a son i.e. “one born among you”, so the Gentile Onesimus could be brought from a servant to become a Son of the Living God, and a brother beloved to Paul an Philemon.

Again, Leviticus 25 states:

“ if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee: thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant: but as an hired servant ...” (verse 39).

Here we have a comparable situation to that of Onesimus: a brother being accepted not as an unwilling slave, but as a hired servant, willing to serve his Master. Interestingly, in this same chapter, we have some ideas that are lifted out by the Apostle in his inspired writing to the Colossians. Compare the following:

“They shall not be sold as bondmen” (Lev. 25:42).

“Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; but shalt fear thy God” (Lev. 25:43)

With Colossians chapter 4:

“Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a master in Heaven” (Col. 4:1).

There is a principle here: Masters were not to be overbearing to believing servants, but treat them as being themselves God-fearing servants, and recognizing that they have a Master in Heaven. The principle in both of these passages, is

that brethren were not to be treated as slaves, but rather as willing hired servants, who could go free at the year of Jubilee.

OUR OWN POSITION

When we come to consider the spiritual import of the lessons that emerge from this epistle, we soon recognize that these three men (Philemon, Onesimus, and Paul) were a living parable. Acting out different roles in the situation, we have a reflection of our own situation. Once being unprofitable servants, we are begotten again through faith to become sons of the Living God.

Verse 11 of the Epistle speaks of Onesimus who was

“in time past to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me”.

Compare the highlighted words with those used to describe Gentiles before they became believers:

“You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:1-2)

Again:

“they are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no. not one ...” (Rom. 3:12).

The reconciliation of Onesimus with his Master through the apostle Paul follows the pattern of our own reconciliation with Yahweh, through the operation of His Son:

“God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:19).

It is our own reconciliation with God through Christ that we think upon each week, as we bread bread and drink wine to shew the Lord’s death till he come. There is another aspect that comes out from the Old Testament background to this epistle that foreshadows Messiah’s role as a servant. Verse 15 speaks of the servant being reconciled: “that thou shouldest receive him for ever”. This cites Exodus chapter 21, where we read of how a servant who wished to continue his service, rather than to go free on the 7th year.

“If the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife and my children; I will not go out free: then his masters shall bring him unto the

judges: he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever” (See Exo. 21:1-6).

The point has been made many times that these things pointed towards Messiah himself as a voluntary servant who loved his Master and family. Psalm 40:6 is brought to bear on the matter:

“Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou digged (margin.) burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required”

Consider now these words as quoted by the Spirit in the New Testament:

“Wherefore when he came 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”

We can more readily see the reference to the Ear in relation to Exodus 21, than the “body prepared” of Hebrews chapter 10. What has “a body prepared” to do with a servant, his ear, and the door?

The marginal rendering of Exodus 21, and verse 3 might be helpful here:

“if he came in by himself (*marg. With his body*), he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. If a master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master’s and he shall go out by himself” (Exod. 21:3-4).

The verses which follow describe what we have already seen, that he could choose to keep his wife and children by continuing his service.

What is the significance of “with his body”? How else could a servant come, if not “with his body?” The point being made here is that the servant is destitute. He has nothing to offer in service, but his own body. He had no riches, no means of redeeming himself: he was just as he stood. Even so our Master came by himself as “a body prepared”. There was nothing else he could give, there were no other offerings that his Father required. Jesus was the supreme example of a willing servant, who loved his family and remained faithful to his Master.

I WILL REPAY

There is another point that comes out of Philemon, again in connection with this Old Testament background, which reflects our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul, foreshadowing Christ, speaks of how Onesimus had sinned against his Master, and Paul’s willingness to make amends:

“If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account. I Paul have written it with mine own hand: I will repay it ...” (Phil. 1:18-19).

We have already considered the Old Testament circumstance being reflected here: a brother could choose to become a servant voluntarily, continuing to give “his body” in service. It would appear however, that Onesimus had sinned in some way against Philemon – in what way we do not know, other than it cost Philemon something, maybe money, or goods, or some other thing. In a similar way, we have sinned against Yahweh, and are in no position to redeem ourselves. Having being servants of sin, we need to be redeemed like the servant under the Law, and the purchase price is the blood of Christ:

“ye are not your own ... for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

Again:

“Ye are bought with a price: be not ye the servants of men” (1 Cor. 7:23).

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the ecclesia of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28)

Like Onesimus, we are in need of redemption, and we are without strength to save ourselves. The Apostle Paul was willing to make up the deficiency of Onesimus’ sin against Philemon by his own hand. We are in a similar situation: we have sinned: in times past we were unprofitable servants – we are in need of redemption.

As the above citations show, there is a sense in which as believers, we are “bought” and “purchased”. Not as the churches teach, however. They teach that forgiveness is a kind of commercial transaction: a debt is owed, and is in need of being repaid. We cannot pay that debt ourselves, but Christ is able. The death of Christ is seen therefore, as paying the debt on our behalf. But the most significant flaw in this doctrine, is that there is no forgiveness. The debt is not forgiven, it still has to be paid, and although somebody has paid for us – the debt itself was never forgiven, just paid by a different person.

By contrast, Salvation through the grace of Yahweh is different; there is forgiveness with Him that he might be feared. By faith and trust in His Anointed, though we will still die (unless we remain until the coming of Messiah again), we can find true love and forgiveness in the sight of the Almighty.

Returning to Philemon, we find that the Old Testament background is of a man who is a slave because of dire circumstances, such as poverty etc. But he can be redeemed from his master (sin) by the payment of a price. Our Master pays the price for our redemption: not the payment of debt, but by a different figure: the purchase of that which previously belonged to King Sin. The issue is not that of a debt being paid by a third party instead of forgiveness, but rather redemption accomplished by the sacrifice of Messiah. King Sin has multitudes of people following after him, but Christ has paid a price in order to deliver us from him.

The condemnation of sin, and a declaration of the righteousness of God are vital aspects of forgiveness according to Scripture. Just as under the Law, a man could be redeemed from a servant by the payment of a price, even so we are “bought with a price” from King Sin, who pays nothing but death as wages to those who obey him.

The central theme of this epistle is that of reconciliation. Philemon was exhorted to receive a repentant servant as a brother, not a bondsman. Just as Paul was instrumental in bringing about a reconciliation between the master and his servant, even so For Christ’s sake, we are forgiven for those “unprofitable” sins, committed “in times past” and reconciled to God. But in considering these things, and the example of Philemon, we have a powerful exhortation to be reconciled with our brethren and sisters with whom we are at odds with. The example of Onesimus is also a powerful exhortation: although he ran away from his master, he did not seek after the things of this life, but rather by some undisclosed means, met up with the Apostle Paul. That meeting must have been a wonderful experience, and it concluded that Onesimus could not forsake his responsibilities towards the one whom he had deserted. He had to go back, but as a forgiven brother, and no longer an unprofitable servant. Considering these things, we each have to determine how we individually fit the types in this brief epistle. For those who wish to be reconciled to their Master, we can give attention to no better than the example of Onesimus who became no longer “unprofitable”, but instead shows that there is always a way back. We must learn from the Apostle Paul, as did he, that seeking to follow the way of Truth we will become united with our Master, and rejoice with him for everlasting days.

Christopher Maddocks

THE PRAYER OF HANNAH (3)

In our last article we considered the fallibility of man’s strength and the importance of trusting in God’s strength. We saw how David who trusted in God’s strength, was eventually lifted up from the dunghill to inherit the throne of glory and above all how the Lord Jesus Christ who was poor and needy has been exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on high and given “the name which is above every name” and is destined to reign on the throne of glory in Jerusalem.

Hannah continues her prayer in verse 9, again showing the fallibility of Man’s strength:

“He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail”.

We find similar words in the song of David in 11 Samuel 22:

“He maketh my feet like hinds’ feet: and setteth me upon my high places.
. . Thou hast enlarged my steps under me; so that my feet did not slip. . .
And I have consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise:

yea, they are fallen under my feet. For thou hast girded me with strength to battle: them that rose up against me hast thou subdued (caused to bow) under me”. (v.34, 37, 39-40).

David trod his enemies under his feet, because Yahweh girded him with strength, “for by strength shall no man prevail”. Man cannot prevail with his own strength (cp. V.4). Moreover, the Lord Jesus Christ, in his death trode the serpent power of sin under foot and when he comes again will tread his enemies under foot as we read in Isaiah 63:3:

“I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury”.

Verse 10 of the prayer contains very similar words to those found in 11 Samuel 22 and in Psalm 2. We read in 11 Samuel 22: 14-18:

“Yahweh thundered from heaven, and the most High uttered his voice. And he sent out arrows, and scattered them; lightning, and discomfited them. And the channels of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were discovered, at the rebuking of Yahweh, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils. He sent from above, he took me; he drew me out of many waters; He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them that hated me: for they were too strong for me”.

The Hebrew for channel is rendered mighty in Job 12:21. These very graphic words can no doubt be applied to the deliverance of David from his enemies, the mighty. But we believe they can also be applied to the resurrection of Christ who at his death, like Jeremiah sunk into deep waters (Ps.69: 1-2), but at his resurrection was drawn “out of many waters” (2 Sam.22: 17).

The words in 11 Samuel 2:10, “he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed”, are similar to those in Psalm 2 which speaks of Yahweh’s anointed (Christ, see Acts 4:25-27). So we read in Psalm 2:6-7:

“Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: Yahweh hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee”.

These words in Samuel would have a primary application to David and then apply in their fullest sense to the Lord Jesus Christ, as we see from Psalm 2.

As we said at the beginning, at the time of the prayer of Hannah, great changes were impending. The kingdom was about to dawn in the person of David through whom Israel would have salvation from their enemies. I would like to draw my thoughts to a conclusion by considering Psalm 78:60-72 which covers the whole background of these early chapters of Samuel. Let us firstly consider verses 60-64:

“So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which he placed among men; And he delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy’s hand. He gave his people also over unto the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance. The fire consumed their young men; and their maidens were not given in marriage. Their priests fell by the sword; and their widows made no lamentation”.

It is possible that the tabernacle was positioned in Shiloh in Mount Ephraim because Joshua was of this tribe. But his was not its final dwelling place. It was forsaken in the time of Samuel as we have been considering and the wicked priests, Hophni and Phinehas fell by the sword and the shock of the tabernacle being taken into captivity and of their death caused their father, Eli, to die. Phinehas’s wife was unable to mourn, for she died in childbirth and memorialised what had happened in the name she gave to her son, I-chabod, The glory is departed.

We then read in Psalm 78:65-66:

“Then the Lord awaked as one out of a sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine. And he smote his enemies in the hinder parts: he put them to a perpetual reproach”.

These words must be speaking of the exaltation of David, Yahweh’s Anointed and his smiting of Goliath. Let us note that the psalmist speaks as though it is Yahweh who is doing this. Yahweh smote Goliath through David as we see from David’s words to Goliath:

“I come to thee in the name of Yahweh of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. . .this assembly shall know that Yahweh saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is Yahweh’s and he will give you into our hands” (1 Sam.17: 45-47).

David always saw the true issues. It was not what he did, but what Yahweh did through him. How important it is that we look at things in this way:

“While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal” (11 Cor.4: 16-18).

We need to be aware of what God is doing and what our heavenly Father may be doing through us.

Returning to Psalm 78, it was David who conquered Mount Zion from the Jebusites (1 Sam. 5: 6-9). As we know, after Shiloh was forsaken, the ark firstly went into captivity in the land of the Philistines, then they returned it and it abode in the house of Abinadab in Kirjath-jearim. It was David, because of his love for Yahweh, who desired to bring the ark to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6), thus ful-

filling Psalm 78:68. It was his son Solomon who fulfilled verse 69 in building the temple in Jerusalem. Finally in Psalm 78:70-72 we read of David as the shepherd of Israel. He was a shepherd in saving Israel from Goliath. As the shepherd went before his flock so David went out before Israel and went in before them (Num.27: 17) and “fed them (or ruled over them) according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands”.

David is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. He firstly had to overcome the weaknesses in himself through his experiences as a shepherd before he overcame Goliath. So Jesus, at his first coming, overcame the flesh in himself and when he comes again as Yahweh’s Anointed, he will overcome the latter day Goliath, the kingdoms of men, as represented by that great image in the prophecy of Daniel which is to stand upon the earth in the latter days. We see these things in type in the prayer of Hannah. Samuel was born before the glory departed from Israel. The glory returned in the reign of David with Zadok as priest. The glory of God was manifested at the birth of Christ. It departed when he ascended to the right hand of the Father. The glory will return when the Lord Jesus Christ returns to the earth. May that time soon come :

“If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above. . .Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also APPEAR WITH HIM IN GLORY” (Col.3: 1-4).

Carlo Barberesi

Concluded

Walking in Truth

The second epistle of John speaks of the apostle’s delight to a certain woman (representative of the ecclesia), whose children who followed the way of righteousness:

“I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children *walking in Truth* as we have received a commandment from the Father” (2Jno. 2:4).

The same sentiment is echoed in verse six:

“this is love, that we *walk after his commandments*. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, *ye should walk in it*” (2Jno 1:6).

The emphasis then, is to do with our walk in life: we must be found “walking in Truth,” as did holy men of old. For our exhortation today, we propose to con-

sider this aspect of walking, as expressive of the principles of our spiritual journey towards the Kingdom to come.

The first example to consider is that of Enoch. Genesis chapter 5 writes of him:

“Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: and Enoch walked with God: after he begat Methuselah three hundred years ... And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him” (Gen. 5:21-24)

There would seem to be a particular relevance in the birth of Methuselah, for it was after this event that it is testified that Enoch walked with God. There may be a clue in the name that Enoch chose for his son. “Methuselah” is said to mean “when he is dead, it shall be sent” (Jones Dictionary of Old Testament Proper Names). But what shall be sent? It would appear from the time periods described in Genesis that Methuselah died the same year that the Flood came upon the earth. So it is, that Methuselah’s name would appear to be a prophecy of the judgments that were to come upon the earth immediately following his death. This naming by Enoch was expressive of his faith, and from that point onwards, he “walked with God”.

This suggestion is supported by Jude, who tells us that Enoch spoke of the coming judgments:

“And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all ...” (Jude 1:14-15).

So it was that Enoch spoke of the coming judgments of his day, yet which foreshadowed the judgments that will come to pass when Messiah returns to subdue the earth under his righteous reign.

Another holy man of old, who walked after the manner of Enoch is Noah:

“These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God” (Gen. 6:9).

Again, Noah, being a “preacher of righteousness” warned of coming judgments, and his building of the Ark was the ideal visual aid to express his faith. By contrast to the world at large, which was worthy only of death and destruction, Noah “walked with God,” and built the ark to the saving of his house. Interestingly, Hebrews chapter 11 speaks of Noah’s faith:

“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” (Heb. 11:7).

Notice this point: his building was not to the saving of his house only. True, this was the first and most significant aspect, but also associated with it was the condemnation of the world. The building of the ark was a tremendous sign of Noah's expectation for the flood to come, and the world's rejection of that sign brought condemnation upon themselves.

A third example which is particularly relevant is that of Abraham, the Father of the Faithful. Genesis chapter 17 recounts how that:

“When Abram was ninety years old and nine, Yahweh appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am Almighty God: *walk before me*, and be thou perfect” (Gen. 17:1).

Notice again, how that the Scriptures emphasize Abram's walk in life: it was to be before his God, the implication being, it was to be in the way of righteousness.

In each of these examples, the individuals are portrayed as being on a journey – but they were not alone, for they each were led of Yahweh, and so “walked with God”. The prophet Amos spoke of this aspect:

“Can two *walk together*, except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3).

The implication then, is that by walking with God, these men were agreed with Him, and He with them. They were his Sons by faith, and walked together with Him to guide, guard and encourage them on their journey to the inheritance of his providing.

We briefly referred to the example of Abram above. His “walk” is a most interesting case to consider. Genesis chapter 13 describes the “walk” he was commanded to engage himself in:

“... all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever ... arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it: for I will give it unto thee ...” (Gen. 13:15-17).

It was a token of Abram's faith then, that he was to walk through the promised land, trusting that at some point it would be given to both he and his Seed for an everlasting possession. Indeed, when we consider the Bible narrative concerning Abraham, we see how he spent the rest of his life walking throughout the land, as a stranger and sojourner. What is particularly interesting is how the New Testament speaks of him as:

“the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised” (Rom. 4:12).

The footsteps of Abram's faith were all over the Promised Land. He spent his life walking through it, in faith that one day it would be given to him. And we

share that same faith: seeking to walk with our God, in the hope that we might receive the inheritance as the spiritual seed of that righteous man.

There is an example in Scripture of a man who did just that. Deuteronomy chapter 1 describes how that 12 spies were sent out to survey the land, before Israel were to enter, and take it. But ten of the spies, once they realized that the obtaining of the land involved significant effort and faith, undermined the faith of Israel as a nation. They were afraid of the Anakim, a great and tall people, and so rebelled against the commandment of God to war against them. They walked throughout the land, but did not share Abraham's faith.

Caleb, and Joshua however, were of a different spirit. As a Gentile and a Jew, these were both faithful, and recognized the Divine Power that was with them, to save. Of Caleb particularly it is written:

“... Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed Yahweh” (Deut. 1:36).

He, like Abram walked through the land in faith. This aspect is again emphasized elsewhere, where Caleb himself spoke to Joshua that he might be given his inheritance:

“... Moses sware on that day, saying, surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed Yahweh my Elohim ... now therefore give me this mountain, whereof Yahweh spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakim were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be Yahweh will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as Yahweh said” (Josh. 14:9,12).

Notice the implicit faith and trust of Caleb, that Yahweh would help him overcome the mountain of opposition presented by the Anakim. This is a faith which is most instructive to us: sometimes the problems of life become great, and seem ready to overpower us. Yet through faith in our Heavenly Father, we can overcome, if we but walk in the steps of Abraham and Caleb. There is no power upon earth that can take our inheritance away from us ... except our own selves, if we grow weary and faint in the way. We must therefore walk with God, as did these men of faith, with confidence that what God has promised, He is able to give.

Associated with this idea of walking, is the idea of *following*. Accordingly, we read of Caleb (above) that “thou hast wholly followed Yahweh my Elohim”. In the walk with Him, He takes the lead, and guides us where to go. So we read: “a man's heart deviseth his way: but Yahweh directeth his steps” (Prov. 16:9). Again, the Psalmist wrote: “He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his Name's sake” (Psa. 23:3).

LEAVING THE PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

So long as we are led by Yahweh, and follow His Ways, it is guaranteed that we shall reach the promised destination. However, one of the central themes of the book of Proverbs, is that there are two ways: the way of Truth, and the way of Folly. Accordingly, Proverbs chapter 2 speaks of the “evil man” “who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness” (Prov. 2:13). By definition, to walk in the ways of darkness is not to walk “with God”. “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1 Jno. 1:5-7). Notice the development of the idea implicit in the description of ‘walking together’: being agreed, there is fellowship between the Children of Light, and their Father who begat them. Again, by definition therefore, if we forsake the Light of the World, we walk in darkness, we do not have fellowship with the Almighty, and the shed blood of His son will not cleanse us from all sin.

Proverbs chapter 4 is all about these two ways:

“enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men” (Prov. 4:14).

Again:

“the path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble” (Prov. 4:18-19).

These are the Narrow and Broad ways that Messiah spoke about (Mat. 7:13). The Way of the Wicked is a broad way, and most of humankind walk blindly in darkness towards their destination of destruction. The way of the Righteous is a narrow way, not being designed to accommodate the swinish multitudes, but only the “few” who choose to follow, and walk with, the Lord.

There is a tendency in the world in which we live, to constantly be looking for new things. That which is “old” is lightly regarded, as men and women are encouraged to be progressive, seeking to develop beyond their forbearers. When we preach the principles of the Truth to them, particularly in terms of the covenant of marriage, and personal conduct, we are regarded as being “old fashioned”, not keeping up with the times. However, the reverse is true: we seek to live by the principles that will govern the life and kingdom to come – we are therefore, ahead of our times! The paths that we walk along are both old and new: they are the paths that the patriarchs walked along, and they are the paths that shall pertain to days yet future: principles by which the World shall be compelled to live by. So Yahweh spake by his prophet:

“Thus saith Yahweh, 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. But they said, We will not walk therein: (Jer. 6:16).

Such was the refusal of Israel to turn back to the ways of their Fathers. But in real terms, our position is the same as theirs – do we walk in the counsel of the ungodly (Psa. 1:1), or do we seek after the “old paths”? These Old Paths lead us back to the promises made to the Patriarchs many centuries ago, and they are life eternal.

Israel, though they dwelt in the land upon which Abram walked, did not walk in the steps of his faith – and so they, and their land were to be trodden underfoot of the Gentiles:

“... they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be **trodden down** of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Lu. 21:24).

Again, Daniel 8 describes how “both the sanctuary and the host” would be “**trodden under foot**” (Dan. 8:13). Though they were to be the “salt of the earth”, they proved themselves to be unworthy of preservation, and fit only to be trodden down by men.

When we consider examples of faithfulness: men who “walked in truth”, we think more particularly than any other, Messiah himself. Jesus, as the seed of Abraham, has gone before us, and laid down footprints for us to follow. So it is written:

“He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked” (1Jno. 2:6).

And again:

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: (1 Pet. 2:21-22).

The steps of Messiah take us through tribulation into glory. Christ gave us an example of suffering for righteousness’ sake, and although his heel was smitten (Gen. 3:15) and his walk in life was interrupted for three days and three nights, he rose again to life eternal. Between him and his Father, there was perfect harmony: they walked together in agreement. United in love, and in one mind, when we behold the Father and Son, we see a unity in which believers should strive to walk. Even as Christ prayed: “neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word: That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (Jno.17:21). Let us therefore, walk in the Light, even as He is in the Light, that we might be one with Messiah, walking in the steps of Abram, Caleb, and Messiah himself – that at the time appointed we will reach our destination, and take up our inheritance with them.

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