

*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 1

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

<i>The Restoration of Israel to God (4)</i>	2
<i>One Solitary Life</i>	6
<i>How Do We Respond to the Sacrifice of Christ</i>	7
<i>God's Object in Restoring Israel</i>	15
<i>Adding to Our Faith</i>	22
<i>The Book of Esther</i>	27
<i>A Closer Look at Daniel 2</i>	30



“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)*

The Restoration of Israel—to God (4)

In our previous articles, we briefly considered the spiritual reformation of the Jews and the outcome of this, an inheritance back into the land of promise. God says Jerusalem, “This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and the countries that are round about her” (Eze. 5:5). During the millennium, this city will be both physically and spiritually “A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid” (Mat.5:14). Her people’s shame over killing their Messiah will bite deep into their conscience.

In the early days of that glorious age, the spiritual turnabout will be so widespread that Isaiah writes, “*thy people also shall be all righteous*” (60:21). Ezekiel adds: “for in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord God there shall *all the house of Israel, all of them in the land serve me*” (Eze. 20:40). Later, Ezekiel describes this heart felt obedience as a “sweet savour” (verse 41), reminding us of Noah. Having come out of the Ark, he offered a burnt offering at which God smells “a sweet savour”: Behind the physical offering, God saw the obedience of Noah as the “sweet savour”.

Likewise, he sees the remnant of Jewry turning to him in the same light. The pattern of the destruction of the world and the saving of a remnant come through. The cry of God through Isaiah is, “Awake, awake, put on *thy beautiful garments* O Jerusalem, the holy city ...” (Isa. 52:1)

Who or what are these garments? Earlier the prophet had written, “Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold, all these gather together, and come to thee (returning Jews to Zion, see previous verses) as I live, saith the Lord *thou shalt surely clothed thee with them all as with an ornament, and bind them on thee as a bride doeth*” (49:18). Her glory and permanence depend upon her people serving the Lord. To God, she has been naked during many centuries awaiting the glad day when under her “great king” (Mat. 5:35) she would be “clothed” with her children. No wonder Isaiah exhorts his readers to “... give him [God] no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth” (Isa. 62:7). The grand purpose of God set before His people at Mount Sinai will then begin to be realised in a way not previously seen in its fullness: “and ye shall be unto me a Kingdom of priests, and an holy nation” (Exo.19:6).

Jeremiah writes concerning the twelve tribes, “And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it” (33:9). This marvellous vision of a reformed and Godly Israel should be a significant part of our preaching message. Israel are to be the leading nation in the Kingdom Age under the Lord Jesus Christ, as Isaiah records: “for the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee [Israel] *shall perish*; yea, those nations shall be *utterly wasted*” (60:12). Our hearts should warm to these messages of hope and talk about them amongst ourselves, for this is what the nations will do in the kingdom! “And they [the nations] shall call them, The Holy People, the Redeemed of the Lord, and thou shalt be called, Sought out, a city not forsaken” (Isa.62:12). This is the “great nation” promised to Abraham. Of course we can be an integral part of the promises to the patriarchs, but we must never forget the natural seed in our preaching, and prayers. The array of Scrip-

tures provided (and there are so many others!) in these articles, emphasise this significant Christadelphian teaching.

During this long period of Gentile Times, God has caused His people “to abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice” (Hos. 3:4). In other words without the Lord Jesus Christ and his atoning sacrifice, but also they are without “an image, and without an ephod and without teraphim” (verse 4), perhaps items to do with idolatry. It is noticeable that after the return from Babylon they did not turn back to the forms of idolatry worshipped before. The word “abide” (verse 4), according to the Hebrew Scholar Gesenius, means “to remain for someone” - that “someone” is Yahweh their God manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ. When he returns, the glorious last verse of Hosea 4 will be fulfilled: “Afterward shall the children of Israel *return*, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days ...”

MERCY AND TRUTH

There are two words used in Scripture which have a particular bearing on the promises to Abraham, Israel’s return to God and subsequent forgiveness linked with the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Godly servant of Abraham having had a successful search for a wife for Isaac, worships and praises God with these words:

“and he said, Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his *mercy and truth*: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master’s brethren” (Gen. 24:27).

Those two words—“mercy and truth” linked here with the important matter of finding a wife for the “seed of Abraham” - Isaac, are used throughout Scripture. I have selected just a few and we shall see their bearing upon the topic we are considering.

The prophet Micah describing the awesome power of Israel after they have been reformed and forgiven (chapter 7, verses 14-19) says:

“Thou wilt perform the *truth* to Jacob, and the *mercy* to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old” (verse 20).

Please read the whole of Psalm 89, which deals with the kingdom of Messiah and in verse 14 we have the words “Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: *mercy and truth* shall go before thy face.” The rulership of Jesus will be based upon the principles enshrined in the promises to the patriarchs. Flowing through the words of Mary (Lu. 1:50,54), and Zacharias (verse 72 and 78) the word “mercy” is used, connected with the promises to Abraham (verse 73) and forgiveness of sins for Israel (verse 77). Finally, in Romans chapter 15, the Apostle Paul demonstrating that Jesus Christ was God’s servant for the Jews and Gentiles writes: “now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the *truth of God to confirm the promises made unto the Fathers*: and that the Gentiles might glorify God for *his mercy*,” verses 8 and 9. He then quotes four references from the Old Testament to establish that the Gentiles are linked with the repentant

Jews in the salvation offered in Christ Jesus. It is appropriate then that in three of the references quoted, the words “mercy” or “truth” are to be found, and in the final quotation the one through whom that grace is extended—the Lord Jesus Christ.

- (1) Verse 9 = Psalm 18:49, the word “mercy” is used in verse 50
- (2) Verse 10= Deuteronomy 32:43 the word “merciful is used in that verse
- (3) Verse 11= Psalm 117:1 the words “merciful” and “truth” are used
- (4) Verse 12= Isaiah 11:10 “the root of Jesse” is the banner provided by God.

So our salvation is closely aligned with the redemption of Israel, as Paul writes “For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall *the receiving in of them be, but life from the dead*” (Rom. 11:15).

It appears from Scripture that the Angels will help in the initial setting up of the Kingdom. The writer to the Hebrews cites Psalm 8, and applies it to the rulership of the earth under Jesus and “his brethren”: “For unto the Angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come (that is, “the world” of Psalm 8) whereof we speak”. There is much to be done by the Redeemed, the pattern being set before us in the work of the Master and his disciples in the First Century (see notes below).

THE ROLE OF MORTAL ISRAEL

So let us concentrate on the role of the mortal nation of Israel, remembering the words of God to Israel that they are to be a “kingdom of priests”. The disciples, Jesus said, “... shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Mat. 19:28). Their particular responsibility will be in the control and guidance of the nation. The tribe of Levi will again assume the responsibility of offering sacrifices in fulfilment of the words of Jeremiah 33:17-22, and Malachi 3:3-4, but also instructing the people in the Word of the Lord, as they failed to do in the past (see Mal. 2:4-9). It is stressed in the Prophets that God will provide “pastors” and “shepherds” who will lead and feed his people: “And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding” (Jer. 3:15). Amongst these shepherds will be mortal Jews helping their brethren and sisters, and visitors to Israel, using their talents in his “vineyard”.

From the Scriptures culled in the former articles, we have tried to demonstrate that only converted Jews will be allowed to remain in the land, so at the beginning of the Millennium there will be enthusiastic compliance to God. It is important to note that both David (Psa. 51:19) and Malachi (4:3), under Divine Inspiration stress that the offerings given by the priests and people will be “in righteousness.” They, along with their fellow Jews will have appreciated that only under the “new” covenant in Christ Jesus is forgiveness found (Jer. 31:31-34) so that the priests and people in giving their offerings will appreciate as no other generations of Jews have the following words of Paul: “Therefore by the deed of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for *by the law is the knowledge of sin*: But now the righteousness of God without the Law is manifested, *being witnessed by the Law* and the prophets” (Rom. 3:20-21). Furthermore, God says “... my word ... it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto

I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11).

The Law given by Moses was part of that Word of God. When did the twelve tribes of Israel in unity and in righteousness offer animal sacrifices with understanding of their real significance? Maybe in the reign of Solomon or David, but this pales into insignificance compared to what the Scriptures note of the Kingdom to Come. So the Laws and Commandments given to Moses are termed by Paul: “...the Law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good” (Rom. 7:12). This will be seen in the kingdom. At long last the ritual of the Law will be seen in both its beauty and weakness, God’s Word concerning Sacrifices has not returned “void” to him. The lessons arising from the types and shadows being brought out by immortal and mortal “shepherd” teachers will be a wonderful experience. Out of the lessons of the Law, Grace will truly be revealed. Israel will be the host for the visiting representatives coming to worship in Jerusalem (see Deut. 33:18-19?), and this desire by the Gentiles to worship God is presented to them and indeed for us: “and many people shall go [to Jerusalem] and say, COME YE, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord ... O house of Jacob, COME YE, and LET US walk in the light of the Lord (2:3-5).

The problem was “they were filled *with the customs of the east*” (verse 6, RV). Are we similarly filled with “the customs of the west”? May we learn the lesson.

*Oh! Mourn ye for Zion, her beauty is faded
Her joy is departed, her glory is fled
The light and the hope of her prospects are shaded:
She wanders in darkness, her comforts are dead.*

*Oh pray ye for Zion, though sad and forsaken,
Though scorned and derided, despised and forlorn
The truth of Jehovah, our God, is unshaken,
Her night shall usher a glorious morn*

*Oh! Labour for Zion, though now in her blindness
She knows not her Saviour, Messiah and Lord;
Yet, guided by mercy, the life-tones of kindness
Shall win her dull ear to the voice of His Word*

*Oh! Watch ye for Zion; the day-spring is breaking
Her night has been gloomy, but shortly will end;
Her long-promised Shepherd His lost sheep is seeking,
The heart of the obdurate nation will bend.*

*Oh! Hope ye for Zion! Jehovah has spoken;
Jerusalem’s outcasts shall yet be restored;
The bonds of the fetter-bound slave shall be broken,
And Judah set free at the word of the Lord*

Brian Woodall

ONE SOLITARY LIFE

He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman.

He worked in a carpentry shop until he was thirty, and then for three years he was an itinerant preacher.

When the tide of popular opinion turned against him, his friends ran away.

He was turned over to his enemies.

He was tried and convicted.

He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves.

When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave.

He never wrote a book.

He never held an office.

He never owned a home.

He never went to college.

He never travelled more than 200 miles from the place where he was born.

He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness.

Yet all the armies that ever marched, and all the governments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, have not affected life upon this earth as powerfully as has that One Solitary Life.

(Author Unknown)

How do we respond to the sacrifice of Christ?

We come together each Sunday to remember our Heavenly Father's faithfulness as exhibited in the emblems before us upon the table. The question I wish to consider is how does this sacrifice we have come to remember move each of us to personally respond?

In Romans Chapter 12 and at 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."

Brethren and sisters, there must be a response and that response must be ongoing. Our baptism was a suitable initial response to this tremendous act of love, while we were yet sinners. The word "present", they're in this verse indicates a once only action, that is to

be renewed each day. We understand this in the same as one's marriage vows.

Our bodies are to be given as "living" sacrifices. This word "living" importantly speaks of a principle of life, true life, life being an energising quality that wells up in us and flows out from us in actions that are morally life giving. This word "living" also carries the ideas of being powerful and efficacious.

1st John Chapter 3 and verse 16

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren, as living sacrifices, which is our reasonable service in the light of his faithful example. Thus in response to this greater love, we have come to remember. The love of Christ ought to constrain us to so serve one another by love in this reciprocal way imitating him.

So then, since we last met around the emblems, how have you personally served another brother or sister during the last week? What personally did you lay down or aside in terms of your own desires and resources, time, effort, money or possessions to fulfil that simple act of service? Can you think of an occasion during the last week?

Brethren and sisters, we cannot let our official service of the ecclesia be the fullness of all of our personal voluntary service for one another. Surely it's the minimum not the maximum of what we are prepared and willing to do in response to his sacrifice?

Now although the Master's sacrifice we have come to remember was once for all, in terms of it being efficacious for sin. His

service on our behalf did not finish there. Brethren and sisters the Apostle Paul declared in Galatians "the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith (or faithfulness) of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Now in the Greek those two actions at the end of that quotation, of the Master "loving" and "giving" himself are ongoing principles. In other words the Lord Jesus Christ is even now at the right hand of our Heavenly Father still loving and giving himself for us, as our High Priest and mediator.

Hebrews Chapter 7 and verse 25

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Those two powerful and efficacious actions of loving & giving will never be complete until these vile bodies we possess are changed like unto his glorious body. When we too in the mercy of our Heavenly Father are partakers with him of divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

So as the one we have come to remember continually serves us by love, as the captain of our salvation and our High Priest, so we too are to be imitating him continually by serving one another. The life of the Master becomes the pattern we must lay down in our own lives day by day and you cannot do this if all the contact we have with one another is for three hours on a Sunday and another two on a Thursday night.

Returning for a moment to Romans twelve,

this point is clearly implied in the Greek for the word “living” for it is a (present active participle) simply meaning that it is an ongoing principle that the saints are to continually and daily live by, why?

Because in doing so we imitate the Father who has called us out of darkness into his marvellous light, that we might manifest, declare and publish the praises, the virtue, even the moral goodness of our God.

Personal sacrifices even the smallest of them can be tremendously powerful and efficacious, because they touch people, they move people and they impact people. Often leaving a deep impression upon the individual concerned, which can last for years. Sacrifices brighten dreary days, they give hope and more importantly they change lives. In the case of each one of us here today brethren and sisters our lives were turned around by the supreme sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are shortly to remember.

The Master once said the following “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” We tend to commit this concept of an abundant or extraordinary fullness of life to the age to come. Now although that is undoubtedly true brethren and sisters, it is not what the Lord Jesus Christ meant here. For in the Greek both uses of the word “have” in this verse are in the present tense, so they are present possibilities now!

Our Heavenly Father is the Living God; He is the originator of life in all of its fullness and abundance, which is evident from the whole of creation, which surrounds us. Likewise He desires his children to likewise possess and creatively impart life to those with whom they have to do.

Let us remember this principle of true life the Master desires to see in our sacrificing is to be an energising power that wells up

in us and compels us to act on behalf of another.

In John Chapter 13, verses 34 – 35

“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

Notice the point “by this shall all men know” that we are followers of the Master. Is this true of our lives brethren and sisters? Can it be seen day by day? Or is it only seen on meeting days?

When you or I interact with another person be they in the truth or without, we are not to know whether our actions might be providentially used by our Heavenly Father to further his purpose with that individual in some way?

Each of us brethren and sisters are a vessel, which our Heavenly Father is filling with his spirit word, even this word of life. Each and every one of us is a truly unique vessel. A combination of natural characteristics and talents not found anywhere nor in anyone else in exactly the same measure.

Subtly blended together with the spirit word, so that we as individuals might pour forth our lives in service one for another. That we each might fulfil the unique role we have to play within ecclesial life, so the Excellency of the power and the glory may be of God, and not of us.

Brethren and sisters we talk about ecclesial life, but it is not really life, is it?

The ecclesia is meant to be a dynamic organic life-imparting organism constantly bearing fruit in its season. Yet to me, there often seems little evidence of this principle

of life, present when we meet together.

Now partially this is due to our reserve of culture and other worldly influences upon us, so that we function, more like an organisation than a living organism. In main the Pareto principle applies 80% of the work is done by 20% of the people involved.

So that we have what is known as the football problem in our ecclesia's, we have 22 members exhausted in need of a rest due to the work and 20,000 plus sitting in the stands in dire need of spiritual exercise.

This actually fellows the worlds method of instruction, in what is known as the Greek method, which was more classroom like, academic, passive and theoretical in it's approach. Think about it brethren and sisters most of the addresses we listen too are information based. In that they impart some more bible-based knowledge, but do not impart to us the very means of applying it to our lives, which is exactly what we need help with.

Whereas the Hebrew or biblical model of learning was more like coaching, because it's relational, based upon life experience, so its experiential and was basically on the job training.

John Chapter 8 and verse 28 & Philippians Chapter 4 verse 9

“I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.”

The goal here is of life change or transformation that ought to be the goal of every address, we give brethren. But how many

talks have we each heard that truly changed the way you personally lived? How many talks have you heard that really fired you up, motivated and inspired you to change some aspect of your life?

Our meetings have become in many ways too passive and as a result seem lifeless not only to any outsider who may come through those doors, but sadly also to many of us. I have no doubt that individual brethren and sisters come here week by week and are desperately in need of having this principle of life imparted to them. Either through the exhortation or through the words or actions of another and yet sadly how often do they go from here not having received that necessary life giving injection they need?

There is not one of us, brethren and sisters, who have not gone home from a meeting at some point and said apart from the fulfilling of the command, what was the point in me being there? No one really spoke to me, beyond hello & goodbye; every interaction was only surface level and casual. Nor did I really speak to anyone beyond those same pleasantries of life. Why do we waste these God given life-giving opportunities to really connect and help one another?

Have you ever felt as a stranger in your own meeting, by this I mean if you do not make the effort to speak to someone then no one comes to speak to you. So that even in a room full of people, you feel very much alone and isolated?

Now all of the above being part and parcel of our common experience, sometimes there actually is genuine ecclesial life. For equally there is not one of us brethren and sisters who have struggled to come to the meeting in such need and have indeed received that injection of life through some kindness from another brother and sisters.

Ecclesial life, brethren and sisters implies that we actually do “life together”. That this principle of life, which is after all meant to be dynamic, powerful, efficacious and energising, is both seen and felt, when we come together. For that to be the case brethren and sisters we will all have to come prepared to sacrifice one for the other, through lovingly giving of ourselves to each other. For as we read elsewhere “love seeketh not her own”, but “those things which are Jesus Christ’s”.

Our meetings should have a buzz of excitement and expectation about them that is sadly lacking. We ought to come prepared and desiring, each one of us to impart this principle of life one to another and to have it likewise imparted unto us. Ecclesial life is meant to be a relational experience where one person empowers another by sharing their God-given resources and experiences. This is one of the key purposes of an ecclesia.

Ecclesial meetings are not just a place where our individual vessels might be filled with the spirit word, but also the chief place within which we might outpour the contents of our vessels. Where we can learn in a safe environment learn just how to impart life by our words and deeds, so we will be better able to shine as lights in this evil age.

So we could ask the following question – into whose life have you personally come today prepared to pour this principle, this energy of life into?

Think about the Master for a moment, brethren and sisters when you read the gospels, whenever the Lord Jesus Christ interacted with an individual it had an impact upon that persons life. Now not all of those impacts were positive, but an impact was present nonetheless, that is what you

and I ought to strive for in our interactions.

The Lord Jesus Christ worked with many disciples; we read in Luke that He instructed seventy disciples whom He then sent out. Then there was the twelve his constant companions throughout his tribulations into them He poured his life. Finally from within that band of twelve, He chose three Peter, James and John to have a much closer/deeper relationship with.

In this interaction of the Master we see a model brethren and sisters in how we can indeed deal with one another in ecclesial life, so that we too might give ourselves as living sacrifices one for another. This meeting is not seventy strong, so it is possible to interact with everyone as the Master did with that large group of seventy disciples.

We could all surely find twelve people in the meeting, we could become much closer to and because of our natural diversity they would not all be the same people. Likewise we could all personally work to touch, move and impact three people in a much more intimate relationship.

The question you want to ask yourself is not who do I most like and get on with here? But rather whom can I give the most benefit and whom can I gain the greatest benefit from?

When we speak of the Lord Jesus Christ laying down his life, we generally do so in a couple of ways:

- * Upon that cruel Roman stake
- * In his three and a half year ministry

We come to remember the first, because of all that it accomplished in the purpose of

our Heavenly Father; thus we do show the Lord's death until he come. Secondly we see him in the days of his flesh laying down his life in service to his Father and in that we see him leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps. We see his complete singleness of focus, his determination and his endurance under trial to fulfil our Heavenly Father's will.

Yet there is another sense in which our Lord Jesus Christ laid down his life:

In pouring his life into his close disciples that they might later be Apostles

He laid his life literally down into the lives of those men, so that their enemies later remarked of the Apostles "they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."

We too brethren and sisters need to lay down our lives in a similar way, pouring forth our lives into one another. How different would our ecclesia's be if we were all prepared to really invest in one another? How soon would the divisions present between young and old, between long time members and so called newbies, between those with different ideological positions to the truth disappear or be at least greatly reduced?

After all we all have so much to give one another, since our experience of life, our backgrounds, even our current circumstances and our understanding and application of the truth are all different.

There are people in this room who have gone through great suffering; health related illnesses, even long term and chronic pain, the loss of loved ones through death and other means. Also financial suffering, loss of a job, being made redundant, career change, others

dealing with isolation and loneliness, or age and infirmity. These are all common human experiences we could help one another through, if we were prepared to make the time and effort to share ecclesial life together.

Also there are people in the room who have brought up children, who have had their children come into the truth, there are those who have run businesses, who have done much in the work of the truth, who know how to manage money. The more you think about it the longer the list becomes of experiences that are worthwhile to share.

Those individuals have successfully navigated the trials and problems of life both within the truth and in terms of everyday life. These things are not necessary age dependent, because common trials affect us at different stages in life, so there is no one here who does not have something to impart.

Who could you impart some of life's wisdom too today brethren and sisters? Who do you see has a need brethren and sisters that you could help fill?

Equally there is no one here who does not need some help with regards to the stage of life they currently find themselves in and its particular challenges. This is true of both our normal everyday lives, as well as ecclesial life. The question is though are you willing to let someone else concern them selves with you to invest, entuse and influence your life?

Let me give just one example from my own short life in the truth. Before I came into the truth, about eighteen months before I was baptised a brother and sister in the ecclesia where I was attending the lectures took an interest in me. I have no idea why, but they did, I came into the

truth from the outside. Well this couple that befriended me invited me one evening after the lecture back to their home for a chat and some supper. That action became a regular occurrence, which lasted right up until I left the meeting to go to university, some four and a half years after I came into the truth.

So this couple invested six years into my life, after I came into the truth we also did a midweek evening usually listening to a tape I provided (around 5 hours a week). That interaction, which was both spiritual fellowship and social in nature, was crucially important to my development in the truth.

Although today some 300 miles separate us, I try to speak to that brother at least once every ten days, if not every week. There is an example of doing ecclesial life together.

Neither of us knew back then that our interactions with one another would form a relationship that was so life changing and equally neither of us would give up the enormous blessing we have gained as a result. You see the beauty of it is this that when you invest and pour out your life into someone else there is an equal benefit, blessing in return. This couple who I supposed mentored me during my early years in the truth acted like the one we have come to remember in laying down their life in part for me. Pouring into my life their life experience of the truth.

Think again of the disciples, the Master prayed and found these men to invest in, they did not find him and the same is true of each one of us.

John Chapter 15, verses 13 – 17

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another.”

So this couple took the initiative and invited me back to their home. Through those six years of friendship in close proximity they deeply penetrated my life like salt and light. Our time together was where life lessons were caught by example, from being shown, rather than just being taught. Studies show brethren and sisters that when we show and tell another person something using this Biblical model of teaching. The recall over time in the lives of the people impacted is over 60%, as compared to just telling them, which has only a 10% recall later.

The Master befriended these twelve and especially the three of his inner circle, He taught them by example and He took responsibility for them and made a commitment to them, for nearly three years. As a result the disciples gained in experiential knowledge, developed trust and faith and were empowered to continue his work. That same Master through the living word and through providential care is trying to do the same with each one of us. He is also asking that we aid one another

in the same way.
John Chapter 13 and verses 12 – 17

“So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.”

Take a moment brethren and sisters to think about the brethren and sisters that have impacted your life in a similar way to how this couple and indeed a number of other brethren and sisters have done to me. How could you use their examples to enable you to flesh out this principle of imparting life one to another here in West Bromwich?

Now as we finally come to remember once more the Master in these simple emblems of bread and wine. Let us see in this symbol of the bread, the instruction of the word of life enlightening our minds and enabling each one of us to understand. How the life of Christ ought to be manifested in our daily lives, as we do life together.

Likewise let us see in this simple cup of wine not only the price that was paid, but also more importantly the choices that the Master made. His faithful service of his Father in a life of pouring forth, ministering to others, as a living sacrifice. Where

every breath he took was used to fulfil the Fathers will, even to the laying down of his life, as the acceptable sacrifice for sin.

Since ecclesial life is meant to be a relational experience where one person empowers another by sharing their God-given resources and experiences. Who are your twelve and especially the three you will benefit from doing life together?

Brethren and sisters, just how will our remembering of this supreme sacrifice impel each one of us to lay down our lives as living sacrifices? Which is holy, acceptable unto God and is our reasonable worship in the light of the one we remember now.

Wayne Marshall

God’s Object in Restoring Israel

“SALVATION is of the Jews”:

The statement is Christ’s own, to the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob while he rested there, weary with his journey. It affirms a fact that is repugnant to many people, yet most true and beautiful in itself. Even some people who love the truth when they hear it, but give it not afterwards the thoroughness of attention which is requisite to enable them to apprehend the strength of the foundation on which it stands, grow weary of this aspect of the matter. They say, “The Jewish affair is altogether too narrow an affair for us. The Jews are a small people in every sense: their land is a little country: their religion is exclusive and bigoted. We want something larger: something nobler, something more in harmony with the general sympathies of mankind.” And so they turn for relief to the various schemes and arrangements which the Gentiles have

devised for their entertainment and benefit. They make a great mistake, as they will find out sooner or later. Give them time enough, and they will see things as they are, assuming they possess the necessary capacity for discernment. They will find out there is no salvation apart from the Jews. There is no hope in natural life.

“Every man walketh in a vain show. Surely they are disquieted in vain.”
“Every man at his best state is altogether vanity.”

This is David’s testimony (Psa. 39), and those who turn from the hope of Israel will find it is a true one. There is no promise in natural directions except such as are destined to be broken. The young man steps upon the scene with much promise in his own eyes and the eyes of spectators: healthful and graceful and strong, and gifted and ardent—(let him also have plenty in his hands)—he thinks himself an exception to the vanity of which perchance he has heard much. He thinks the vanity a fact as regards the past and the old people around him: he thinks it in some way due to a want of enlightened views and wise practical appli-

cation of scientific principles: in his own case, he is persuaded, as he hurries with buoyant step and bounding spirit along the bustling highway of active life, that he will be able to extract a different result from what appear to him the noble energies of life and the lofty aspirations of “heaven-born humanity.”

Ah! give him time enough. Give him sixty years more. Follow him, and ask, “Where is he now?” Perhaps he is still in the land of the living. He has not yet descended to the silent abode of past generations. Let us have a look at him. There he is crouching by a fireside corner, a shivering old man, elbowed out of the race by the rising generation, who are kind to him perhaps, but patronisingly kind, and only waiting to see him, with relief, breathe his last breath, and take his place among the countless myriads who have lived and died before him. He lingers a little: but at last the day comes, and the grave closes over him, and how soon his name is forgotten.

“Surely every man at his best state is altogether vanity.”

There is no promise except in Christ. In

THE DAY’S REVIEW

*Let no soft slumber close my eyes,
Ere I have recollected thrice
The train of actions through the day;
Where have my feet marked out their way?
What have I learnt, where’er I’ve been,
From all I’ve heard, from all I’ve seen?
What know I more that’s worth the knowing?
What have I done that’s worth the doing?
What have I sought that I should shun?
What duties have I left undone?
These self-inquiries are the road
That lead to virtue and to God.*

(anon)

him there is joyful hope of good things to come—every good that can be conceived by the heart of man, and good that cannot be conceived. But who is he? It was he who said,

Salvation is of the Jews.”

You cannot have him apart from his word. In having him you have a Jew. You cannot isolate him from his surroundings. You cannot have him apart from what he is. He is a part of a system of God’s work upon earth, albeit he is God in that work. It is a work by and in the midst of the Jews. Jewish history is the history of that work. Christ is the terminal point of that history, the culmination of the work, the flower and fruit of the Israelitish tree. The Christ of the Bible is not the Christ of popular religion. The Christ of popular religion has no Jewish association or connection. Of course they know that historically he appeared among the Jews; but in their view of him, he might as well have been born among the Chinese or the Ancient Britons. The Christ of the Bible is the seed of Abraham, the son of David, the King of Israel, as well as the Son of God. To him give all the prophets witness. We have had a reading from the prophets this morning (Ezekiel 36), and we shall find, although it mentions him not by name, it brings him before us in portraying to us that “restitution of all things” to which his coming stands related, and of which Peter said God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began (Acts 3:21). Let us look at it.

It is an address to “the mountains of Israel”—the hills and valleys of the Holy Land in desolation. This at once marks it off from all connection with popular religion, which has nothing to do with the mountains of Israel. Popular religionists may be interested in the mountains of Israel in an antiquarian way: association with Bible history imparts attraction to these places in the eyes of a few: but practically, they feel no connection. The mountains of Israel are in no way identified with their expectations and hopes. It is different in the truth. The mountains of Israel have a living interest in connection with futurity. They are interesting on account of what has already taken place there, but much more interesting on account of the purpose God has conceived “according to the good pleasure of his will,” in relation to the beautiful earth we inhabit; beautiful, yet gloomy and afflicted in many ways; of which purpose the land of the mountains of Israel in the geographical sense is the basis. The mountains of Israel have been greatly honoured in the past as the scene of Yahweh’s communications with the earth: they are to be much more honoured in the future in the display of His visible might thereon in the overthrow of the assembled hosts of the nations, and the establishment of an actual visible government that shall bless all the world with the arrangements necessary to secure glory to God and on earth peace. The mountains of Israel have seen Christ in their midst: they will look upon him again. He ascended from the Mount of Olives: and at his return “his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives” (Zech. 14:4).

Our friends say, “What have you to do with the mountains of Israel? You belong to Birmingham. Let the mountains of Israel alone. They are all very well in their place; but that place is not the place you give them. Palestine is a poor place, and the ‘mountains of Israel’ as you call them, only mounds of rubbish—interesting rubbish perhaps, in a way, but rubbish.” If our friends could see with Bible eyes they would not talk in this strain. To see with Bible eyes is to see things in the light of what God intends as disclosed in the Bible. What He intends in this matter is very clearly and very early and afterwards very

frequently made known. It lies at the root of matters. It is found at the beginning. Abraham, to whom the promises were made (Gal. 3:16; Heb. 7:6), was called in his day to go to this very place: not for a then present purpose, except as regarded his own proof, for—

“He received none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on.”

He sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country (Heb. 11:9). He was afterwards to receive it for inheritance (verse 8), but he saw the fulfilment “afar off,” and confessed that meanwhile he was a “stranger and a pilgrim” (verse 13). The everlasting inheritance of a land which is the glory of all lands, which is the object of Yahweh’s special regard from year’s end (Deut. 11:10-12), and which he has chosen as a place of rest and renown for His Name in the endless ages coming (Psa. 132:13-14; Exod. 15:17), was promised to the individual and faith-evincing Abraham: and in this promise we are directly interested if we are Abraham’s seed (Gal. 3:29). That land is the appointed centre for the manifestation of the divine glory in the age to come, and the source from which the covenanted blessedness will yet outflow to universal man. All this is made known to us in the covenants of promise, and brought very clearly before us in this address by the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth “to the mountains of Israel.”

“Thus saith the Lord God, Because they (the enemy) have made you desolate, and swallowed you up on every side . . . and ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and are an infamy of the people: therefore, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord God; Thus saith the Lord God to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes, and to the cities that are forsaken.”—

You see, that is addressed to the land, just in the state in which it now lies—the state that excites the sneer of the common run of en faith in coming blessedness in connection with it is expressed—such people point to the arid desolation of Palestine, and say, Is this your paradise? Is this your kingdom of God? Is this your much talked of glorious land? What can we say? Our answer will not have much weight with them; but it is a strong answer for all that. We say, “Our interest and our hopes are in no way due to the excellence of the land itself; they arise exclusively from God’s choice of it and what God has promised concerning it. We believe He has chosen it: we believe what He has promised: and if you do the same, you will share our interest. If you do not believe, it is because you are not cognisant of the evidence which compels belief, or being cognisant of it, choose to ignore it.”

What it is that God has to say to the mountains of Israel in their desolation and dishonour?

“Behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown: and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded: and I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bring fruit: and I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings: and ye shall know that I am the Lord.”

Observe the statement:

“Ye shall know that I am the Lord.”

There is more force in this than at first sight appears. It is a virtual admission that the state of things existing before this renovation of the land and people of Israel would seem to justify a doubt that Yahweh was participating in their affairs. This is the characteristic of the present situation of things in the earth. We see Israel scattered and blind: their land a derision and a desolation: the Gentiles exercising the upper hand, and nothing to indicate that the God of Israel who brought them out of Egypt is taking any notice, or that He exists at all. An angel appearing now to any leading man of the house of Israel and saying the Lord was with them, would be liable to be answered as Gideon answered a similar salutation on the eve of deliverance from the Midianites:

“If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? And where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of?” (Judges 6:13).

There is an answer to this natural question as applied to the present state of things. It is contained in the very chapter which records this encouraging address to the mountains of Israel. Look at verse 17:

“Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way, and by their doings: their way was before me as the uncleanness of a separated woman. Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it: and I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them.”

Israel’s troubles are the result of Israel’s sins, and not of the power of the enemy or of God’s disregard of what is going on. But there is to be an end of the troubles after a time:

“I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you unto your own land.”

It is of very great importance to notice the reason of this coming change in the position of the house of Israel. A superficial view would suggest that as Israel’s dispersion has been the result of Israel’s transgressions, Israel’s restoration would be the result of Israel’s reformation. The contrary is plainly stated here:

“I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel . . . Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel” (verses 22 & 32).

If not for any reason affecting Israel themselves, what is the constraining reason leading to their restoration? Here it is (verse 22):

“For mine holy name’s sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen whither ye

went.”

In what way did Israel profane Yahweh’s name in the midst of the heathen (the nations)? Here is the answer:

“When they entered unto the heathen whither they went, they profaned my name, when they (the heathen) said unto them, These are the people of the Lord, and are gone forth out of his land” (20).

That is, the effect of Israel’s dispersion was to lead to Yahweh’s dishonour. Israel was pointed at contemptuously as the people of Yahweh, as much as to say, “If the Yahweh of these people were what they claim, they never would have gone forth out of His land, for how could the Creator of heaven and earth be prevailed against by the Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Greeks and the Romans?” Thus as Paul told them:

“The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you” (Rom. 2:24).

This is one reason of their restoration. God proposes to avert the dishonour of His name by their national recovery:

“I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them: and the heathen shall know that I am Yahweh, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before your eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen,” etc.

If the declaration of Yahweh’s coming purpose stopped here, there would be a certain amount of moral confusion which would interfere with the comfort of the prospect. We should feel it strange that a wicked nation should be brought together merely to stop the taunts of Gentile nations, and produce an adequate recognition of the greatness of Yahweh among them. But there is no room for such discomfort. It is a characteristic of all divine ways that more than one purpose is served by the same instrumentality. Yahweh’s declaration by Ezekiel goes on to say:

“A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them . . . Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations” (26-31).

Here is the nation in an humbled and reformed condition after restoration. There are frequent glimpses of this in the prophets. Isaiah speaking of the same era of regeneration, says (Isa. 60:21):

“Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever.”

The means by which this great national change is to be effected is revealed in other parts. Yahweh will “give them pastors according to his own heart, who shall feed them with knowledge and understanding” (Jer. 3:15). These pastors are the twelve disciples raised

from the dead (Matt. 19:28), and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets, the glorious hierarchy of the kingdom of God (Luke 13:28-29; 20:35-36). Under such leadership, aided with the latter-day and bountiful outpouring of the Spirit of God on all flesh, Israel will soon be brought to the glorious condition depicted. Some will prove incorrigible, but these will be weeded out: for it is written,

“I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain. I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth” (Zeph. 3:11-13).

A restored regenerated nation like this will be a praise and a name and a glory to Yahweh in the midst of the earth. We learn that then the Gentile nations will comprehend the mystery of Israel’s fall and dispersion during Gentile ascendancy:

“The heathen (the nations) shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword . . . Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and *will be jealous for my holy name*” (Ezek. 39:23, 25).

This object of Israel’s restoration—for the honour of Yahweh’s name—is the one that least appeals to the sympathies of the natural man. It is one thing that makes the subject so uninteresting and positively distasteful to the common run of people. They might have a kindly thought for the restoration of the Jews on “the principle of nationalities,” or because of the vigour of an ancient patriotism, or the interest excited by an historic race; but this “theological ingredient” mixed up with it excites their aversion. What is this but the prejudice of barbarism? An enlightened state of mind takes just the opposite attitude. Enlightenment recognises God as the “possessor of heaven and earth,” and the Bible as the present index to His mind; and His views and objects therein expressed, the ultimate light in which everything is to be contemplated. In this way of looking at things, the divine purpose is the only stable element in the situation. Human life and human history are in themselves but shifting shadows on the ocean—mere elements in the working out of the divine purpose. The “theological ingredient” is the only philosophy of the whole.

God’s relation to the case gives us the only rational solution of what the highest intellects feel to be the universal mystery. This relation we apprehend by means of the Scriptures and by that means only, and when apprehended, it alters our relation in harmony with itself. We become no longer interested in nations from an ethnological point of view. The “principle of nationalities” and all other aspects as they present themselves to a merely natural observer, fail to interest. They are only apprehended in their actual nature as transient appearances; phases of affairs incident to the great purpose governing the whole evolution. God’s relation to a matter becomes the only real element. Consequently, it comes to pass that while the Jews as a race would excite in the subjects of this enlightenment no interest, and the question of their futurity and the disposal of their land would be dismissed as an arid and uninviting subject, as the factors in a divine problem they excite

surpassing and everlasting interest. Standing related to the revelation of God in the past, and involving the working out of His glorious purpose in the future, they become capital and supreme subjects. Involving Yahweh's honour, they are dear to the hearts of all Yahweh's children, while current interests and greatness, bringing with them only the melancholy ascendancy and renown of man, fall dead on their hearts.

Yahweh's jealousy for the honour of His name appears a stern and unattractive feature of the Bible at first; but a great change comes over the mind when the nature and effects of the jealousy are apprehended. It is not a human jealousy, which denies to others their due. It is the desire for the ascendancy of eternal and beneficial truth. The honour of Yahweh is founded on the eternal constitution of things. All things are in Him; they are the concretion of His own invisible energy. Consequently, if they are not in harmony with Him, there can be no well-being. Without the honour of Yahweh, there can be no well-being of man; for man's highest interests are bound up with the recognition, love, service and obedience of His Creator. In the nature of things, it is man's highest happiness to give to God the highest praise. Consequently, Yahweh's jealousy of His name is one of the glorious attributes of the eternal character. The desolation of Israel's mountains for the time being brings dishonour: for His own glory, He has declared His purpose to recover them from their desolate state, and to people them with His own restored and regenerated nation, and to establish upon them the glorious edifice of His long-promised kingdom for the blessing of all the earth. We have listened to His address to those mountains this morning, and as the children of the hope of Israel, jealous for the honour of Israel's God and earth's Creator, we rejoice in the prospect of the unspeakable blessedness which will descend upon them in due time in the appointed way.

By Bro. Robert Roberts, Seasons of Comfort Vol 1, pages 472-479

Adding to Our Faith

In seeking to progress from milk to the solid food of the Holy Word, the apostle speaks thus:

“... leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection: not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God” (Heb. 6:1).

In these words, we find that Repentance and Faith are two foundation principles for the believer in Christ. That is to say, they do not form an end in themselves, but rather form a basis, or foundation upon which an edifice should be built. Our reading in 2 Peter speaks of those things we ought to build upon this foundation:

“... giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity” (2 Pet. 1:5-7)

Here then, are seven qualities to be developed upon the basis of a faith in the true Gospel. The apostle continues to describe the importance of these:

“if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 1:8).

We must therefore consider these qualities with all due diligence so that they might abound in us also. It is to that end therefore, that we shall proceed to examine each one in turn:

Virtue

Virtue is the first of those principles that should be erected upon our foundation of faith. The first Epistle of Peter also speaks of “virtue” thus:

“... ye are a chosen generation ... that you should shew forth the virtues (AV Marg.) of him that hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light” (1 Pet 2:9)

What we find from this passage is that the virtue which we must learn to fill ourselves with, and “shew forth” is not of our own righteousness. This is a mistake that the Jews made in the time of Christ: they sought to establish their own righteousness without faith in Him:

“... they being ignorant of God’s Righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God” (Rom. 10:3)

Instead of seeking self praise and the approbation of those around them, true disciples of Christ ought rather to seek the glory of Yahweh, and submit themselves to the principles of His Righteousness. The attributes of Yahweh that comprise His Glory were declared before Moses:

“... Yahweh passed by before him, and proclaimed Yahweh, Yahweh El, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and Truth, keeping mercy for thousands” (Exo. 33:6-7).

These are the virtues which we must seek to develop: moulding our character to become more like Yahweh, as “it is written Be ye holy, for I am holy” (1 Pet. 1:15-16). Seeking to add to our faith this fine array of virtuous things, we seek to become more like our Maker as time progresses.

Knowledge

Knowledge is a vital addition, yet which can take much time to grow. Notice that in 2 Peter 1, these qualities are already based upon a foundation of knowledge and faith. Sometimes it is thought that all we need to have is a grasp of the most basic of First Principles, and that will suffice us in respect of our spiritual needs. However, this position is lacking, in that the Bible teaches otherwise. So Peter gave the closing exhortation:

“grow in grace and *in the knowledge* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 3:18)

And again:

“... put on the new man, which is *renewed in knowledge* after the image of him that created him” (Col 3:10).

We can add to this: the example of unbelief on Israel as recorded through Hosea:

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because they have rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee ..” (Hos. 4:5).

Knowledge therefore is some thing we must seek to develop. Not simply in order that we can accrue a knowledge of various facts and figures (vitaly important though they are), but rather to develop wisdom, and an understanding of Divine ways, knowing both good and evil. “Solid food belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Heb. 5:13-14).

Temperance

The word literally means: “self control”. As Messiah taught “in your patience possess ye your souls” (Lu. 21:19). A lack of self control manifests itself in various ways, from uncontrolled anger, to uncontrolled grief. The example given by the Spirit-led Apostle, speaks of a competitor in the Olympic games:

“every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible ...” (1 Cor. 9:25).

Those who strive to receive a corruptible prize must have total self discipline and control – how much more then than those who seek an incorruptible crown. The same idea comes through many times in Scripture. Consider the following words to Timothy:

“thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier” (2 Tim. 2:1-40).

The figure is different, but the message the same: we ought to have self-control in all our ways, that we might not be lured away by the attractions of what we might call the world outside.

Patience

The word in the Greek signifies endurance, and the idea is one of enduring hardships in the cause of the Truth. It is a quality that must be developed in Christ’s brethren, in order that we might be able to withstand in a day of evil. James spoke of it thus:

“my brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into diverse temptations; knowing this,

that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing” (Jas. 1: 2-4).

Patience therefore, is manifested in our approach to “diverse temptations”, or “trials” as the word can be rendered. Again, this quality of Endurance is for a purpose: to develop our characters as a loving Father chastises his children for their own good, teaching them right and wrong. As we read elsewhere:

“despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth ever son whom he receiveth” (Heb. 12:6-7).

When we are in times of trial therefore, we ought to be able to rejoice in our tribulations (difficult though they may be), knowing that such things are tokens of God’s love towards us, to mould our character into an array of attributes suitable for perpetuation into eternity.

Godliness

The word here, signifies reverence. Lack of reverence is a blight in the society in which we live. But moreover, it can be a problem amongst the household of those who ought to know better. Reverence is fundamental in our approach before God:

“thus saith the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I will dwell in the high and holy place, with him that is also that is of a contrite and humble spirit ...” (Isa. 57:15).

We must therefore be of a humble and a contrite spirit before our God. Humility and reverence are two different qualities, but they are closely related: humility brings reverence, and contrition is a manifestation of humility. There is no room for self pride in His Presence, as will be made known before all at the last.

The same word is used in 1 Timothy chapter 4:

“exercise thyself unto godliness (reverence). For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness (reverence) is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come” (1 Tim. 4:7-8).

Just as men and women exercise themselves in order to become as fit as they possibly can, even so the believer must exercise himself in spiritual things – for the reward is greater.

Brotherly Kindness

It is written in the proverbs that “a man that hath friends must show himself friendly” (Prov. 18:24). And how much more should that principle apply to those who profess to be Messiah’s brethren!

Brotherly kindness, we would suggest, might solve many of the problems now besetting the brotherhood. We must display such friendship and love to those of like precious faith. “See that you love one another with a pure heart fervently” (1 Pet. 1:22) is the Apostle’s maxim. Again, it is written: “be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love in honour preferring one another” (Rom. 12:10). And again, “look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others” (Phil. 2:4). The list could go on: the theme is an essential one to grasp.

These principles are things which we must embrace in the context of Fellowship. It would appear for many that fellowship is all about making sure we don’t be defiled by our brother’s offences. However, Bible fellowship is about brotherly love – but more than this: “with a pure heart” Not feignedly, but a real “fervent” desire to help each other along the way towards the land of Inheritance. Whilst we fully endorse the need and scriptural command to withdraw from unrepentant errorists, that is only part of the doctrine of fellowship – the other side is the rejoicing with, and admonishing of and from those of like precious faith, that together we might lift up the hands that fail, and strengthen the feeble knees, and prepare each other for the coming kingdom.

Charity

The word here is *agape* which signifies “love”. This is the highest form of love that a man can have towards his fellows: it is the love the Messiah spoke of in saying: “greater love hath no man than this, than that a man lay down his life for his friends” (Jno. 15:13). It is thus a sacrificial love, and one which subsist between Christ’s brethren. As the Master said in prayer to his Father: “I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them” (Jno. 17:26). Just as Messiah laid down his life in service to his Father, and his brethren, even so we must lay our lives down in service towards Yahweh, and our brethren. Not in the same way of course, but following a principle of rendering a loving service before God and man.

In each of these aspects, we behold features that show forth a pattern of righteousness, that is abundantly seen in Messiah, our Saviour. He showed forth the Name and Virtue of His Father. He had, and implemented knowledge of Scripture, particularly in relation to his own death and resurrection spoken of there. He, above all men had total self control, remaining in humble obedience to his Father. He displayed reverence in prayer to Yahweh. He showed forth loving kindness and *agape* love towards his brethren.

When we look to Christ as the Word Made Flesh, we find a convergence of all of these attributes in him. An in him, we have an example to follow: “let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:5).

Christopher Maddocks

The Book of Esther

Concerning Esther, it is well known that she represents the Divinely beautiful Bride of Christ:

The name “Esther” means “the Myrtle Tree,” a figure that represents the Saints in the vision of Zechariah chapter one, verses 8-11, when Christ with his Saints (the myrtle trees) conquers the world, and it is now “at rest,” for they are the Stone-Power of Daniel chapter two, which destroys the kingdom of men. Esther was also called “Hadassa,” which means “the star.” Jesus is termed “the bright and morning star” in Revelation 22:16, and the apostle Paul speaks of the Saints as stars differing in glory in the kingdom when the whole earth is filled with the glory of Yahweh (Psa. 72:19, Hab. 2:14). In 1 Corinthians, he speaks of the glorious resurrection, likening it to a man sowing seeds which he casts upon the top of the ground (not buried as we do). We sow different seeds (v 37), but God gives it the kind of glory He Wills (v. 38). As there are different kinds of flesh (v. 40), there are also different kinds of bodies celestial (heavenly bodies—v. 39) - Yahweh and the Angels—also terrestrial (earthly bodies) so also there is a difference in glory (v. 41). Each saint will be as a star in the Kingdom: “so is the resurrection of the dead”. 1 Corinthians 15 is about the resurrection of the Saints.

Esther 2:7 records that Esther “had neither father nor mother”, so Mordecai brought her up and took her “for his own daughter” - so as the Bride of Christ forgets her own people, and her father’s house. Psalm 45:10, also verse 13-17 speaks of this in terms very similar to Esther.

In Esther 2:14-15, we read: “she required nothing more than what was given to her, so also with the Saints, as Paul says, “we are his workmanship”, He is moulding us: he is the potter, we are only the clay (see Eph. 2:10; Isa. 64:8; Rom. 9:18-24). So going back to Esther 2:15, we read “Esther obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her.” She was so outstandingly beautiful, and in verse 16:

“So Esther was taken unto king Ahasuerus, into his house royal”, which is identical to Psalm 45:15 which is a prophecy of Christ’s multitudinous Bride. “And she obtained Grace and Favour in his sight” - so also will the Bride of Christ. So he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti”, who was rebellious and represented Israel whom Yahweh “put away,” divorced (Jer. 3:8), because they had committed spiritual adultery. “I was an husband unto them” (Jer. 31:32). So “the royal crown” was set upon her head, representing the Crown of Life which fadeth not away (1 Pet. 5:4). The Bride also has Father’s Name in her forehead (Rev. 14:1, 3:12) - that Name is the glorious Name Yahweh which speaks of his wonderful purpose to dwell in, and manifest Himself in a people drawn out of the human race. It was first revealed to Moses in Exodus 3:14, in the Hebrew: “I will be who I will be” “I will be” hath sent me unto you .. This is my Name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations” and frequently we read: “Yahweh is his Name” (cp. Amos 9:6, 5:8. Jer. 16:21). It is very sad to hear brethren read “LORD GOD” - especially those who know better, knowing the “LORD” is “baal” - and they will even read “The LORD is his Name. It is difficult to see how such are among those who “love thy name” (Psa. 5:11): “and they that *love his name* shall dwell therein” (Psa. 119:132) “Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me *as thou usest to do unto those that love thy Name*” (Isa. 56:6): “also the sons of the stranger (us Gentiles) that join themselves to Yahweh (as we have), to serve Him, and *to love the Name of Yahweh*”. We also have that lovely verse Isaiah 26:8: “Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Yahweh have we waited for thee: the desire of our soul is to thy

Name, and to the remembrance of thee.”

Coming back to Esther 2:18, we read: “Then the King made a great feast unto all his princes” etc. This brings to mind the two great feasts of the future, both symbolic, but very different. Firstly, we read in Isaiah 25:6-8: “This mountain” is Zion, where the glorious Temple seen by Ezekiel in vision will be built, and called “the house of prayer for all nations” (Mark. 11:17, Isa 56:7) and notice “my holy mountain” and Isaiah 2:2:

“The mountain of *Yawehs’ house* shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it”.

The word “flow” in Hebrew shows the beauty of the Hebrew language. The nations flowing as a river—but uphill—the idea of a flowing stream flowing through the stones, with the sun shining upon it, glittering, dancing, joy, all contained in the word rendered “flow”. The people will go up to Zion full of joy and thanksgiving and they will continue to grow in grace and truth, giving praise and thanksgiving unto Yahweh the giver of all good.

The other symbolic feast is that of Revelation 19:7-9 and 17-18, where we see the similarity between Esther’s preparation and the preparation of the Bride who made herself ready. But many are not clear about verse 9. So many think that those “called” in this verse are the saints—which is not so. In the natural, the bride and bridegroom invite people to their wedding, so Christ and his Bride are calling certain ones—so that blessed and called cannot refer to the saints. They do not—cannot—invite themselves to the marriage supper of the Lamb, which is the same supper of verse 17, to which the same invitation is given to “come” with a loud voice to all the fowls that fly in mid-heaven (between the Gentile Heavens and the New Heavens of chapter 21). These fowls are Israel, His battle-axe and weapons of war (see Eureka vol. 3, page 656-658). Revelation 19:17-18 is here quoting Ezekiel 39:17: Israel shall be like a young lion devouring the prey (Num. 24:8-9, Num. 23:14).

In Esther 3:1, Haman the Agagite (Num. 24:7) Agag = “violent”. Here was the exalting of wickedness to high places (the heavenlies - see Eph. 6:12). King Sin was to be worshipped, or “reverenced” (Strong: 7812) - that is the reason why Mordecai refused to bow down to him, or worship him. “Thou shalt worship Yahweh thy Elohim, and Him only shalt thou serve” (Mat. 4:10). Haman, King Sin—sin’s flesh—so full of pride and arrogance, and overflowing with anger went out of his way to destroy Mordecai with all

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the Jews (v 6, 9, 24-25). Note the two words in verse 25: “wicked device”. These two words are only used together here and Ezekiel 38:10, where they are rendered: “evil thought,” just prior to Russia coming down, intent on Israel’s destruction.

Esther 3:7 describes “the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus” and the twelfth month. Therefore, verses 8 to 15 were agreed and signed for the dreadful day of slaughter set for the *thirteenth* day of the *thirteenth* year of Ahasuerus. Israel were sold for “ten thousand talents of silver (verse 9; 7:4). It was this amount of silver that David and the Princes gave toward the future temple of Solomon (1 Chron. 29:7); it was also the amount owed in the parable of Jesus (Mat. 18:24).

Esther 4:1 is the 13th occurrence of the word “sackcloth”. The word “enlargement” in verse 14 occurs only here and Genesis 32:16 (Strong’s No. 4438), and means “breathing space”. Esther 6:1: “Royal” occurs 26 times in the book, rendered in verse 3 “kingdom” (Strong 4438) The number 26 is the numerical value of the Name “Yahweh”. Chapter 5, verse 2, Esther “obtained favour in His Sight” - so also does the Bride of Christ. “Vashti the queen occurs 6 times, also “enemy” and “ring”. “Esther the queen” occurs 12 times. “queen Esther) 2 times, “the queen” 3 times. So we have the number 17 again: see 2:16, “tenth,” “Seventh”. There were 13 men hanged: Bigthan, Teresh (2:21-23) Haman (7:10), and his ten sons (9:13-14).

Esther 7:10 describes “the prince of this world” lifted up in Type of Sin’s flesh (see Jno. 12:31-33). Chapter 8 and verse 1 speaks of “Haman the Jew’s Enemy” - a phrase only recorded of this evil man. Verse 9 is the longest verse in the Bible, comprising 91 words in the English, 41 in the Hebrew.

The book of Esther is the only book that does not directly refer to the Almighty, but His Name does occur in four acrostics—as shown by Bullinger in his *Companion Bible*. The first is in Est. 1:20: “all the wives shall give” spoken by a Gentile; here the name “Yahweh” (YHVH) is backwards:

- 1) **H**i **V**ekal **H**annashim **Y**ittenu
- 2) Spoken by Esteer (Yabo = let come) **Y**abo **H**ammelek **V**eHaman **H**ayyom (Est. 5:4)
- 3) 5:13 “yet all this availeth nothing” - **Z**e**H**eynenn**V**shove**H**le**Y**
- 4) 7:7, “evil determined against him by the King”—**k****Y**Kaletha**H**elay**V**haraa**H**

In Esther 8:10, So in the Kingdom, all will be done in the Name of Yahweh and his beloved Son.

Verses 15-16 comprise a wonderful Type of the saints in the Kingdom
Verse 17: many became Jews, so also in the Kingdom all will become Israel (see also Zech. 8:23). Also, compare the end of verse 15 “the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad” with Proverbs 29:2, and 11:10. Mordecai came out of great tribulation, received a golden crown, and was arrayed in white raiment. “Fine Linen” 8:15, and in 10:3, Mordecai was next unto the King, just will the Bride will be next unto Christ, the Great King, sitting upon the Throne of his father David in Jerusalem, and reigning over all the earth when it will be filled with the glory of Yahweh as the waters cover the sea. “May he

soon come” is our constant prayer: “Even so come Lord Jesus” - Amen.

Ted Bailey

A Closer Look at Daniel 2

The second chapter of Daniel’s prophecy is one which is well known to many Bible Students. Visualising the kingdoms of men in the form of a metal man, Nebuchadnezzar was shown a depiction of world history in advance. Beginning with himself (i.e. “thou art this head of Gold” (Dan. 2:38), the prophecy proceeds to describe the world kingdoms that would supersede his: “after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee” &c. This succession of kingdoms would come to an end with the crushing of the entire Image by a Stone-Power:

“in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in piece and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. *Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure*” (Dan. 2:44-45)

The point which has often been noticed, is that the various kingdoms of men represented by the individual components of the Image are present to be destroyed by the Stone-Power. That this is so is confirmed by the parallel passage of Daniel chapter 7. This chapter closely parallels Daniel chapter 2 in a number of specifics. Whereas Nebuchadnezzar saw 4 empires depicted in his dream, Daniel 7 describes those same empires in terms of 4 beasts. And of these beasts, it is testified that they exist at the coming of one styled “the Ancient of Days,” the time of the judgment:

“I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld, even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. *As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away; yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time*” (Dan. 7:11-12).

But notice, though the parallel between the two passages is clear, there are also differences. Daniel 7, as cited above, tells us that with the exception of the fourth beast, all of the other beast-nations will have their lives “prolonged for a season and time”. This is clearly different than Daniel 2, which states that the stone power will destroy those same nations: “it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms ...” (Dan. 2:44)

It is evident therefore that Daniel 2 is looking beyond the prolonging of life during the Millennium, to the final end, when those nations shall be consumed by the fiery wrath of God (see Rev. 20:9). There are several other indications that this is so: Revelation chap-

ter 20, speaking of things at the end of the Millennium describes: “I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and ***there was found no place for them***” (verse 11). As the Margin indicates, this language is lifted right out from Daniel chapter 2, and verse 35: “the wind carried them away, ***that no place was found for them***”. The similarity of language between the two prophecies speaking of the same time is striking.

This exposition helps us to understand a repetition in the judgements described in Daniel chapter 2. Verses 34-35 reads:

“thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the Image upon his feet ***that were of iron and clay, and break them to pieces***. Then was ***the iron, the clay***, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces together ...”

Notice here, the “iron and clay” are judged twice: once when the Image is stuck on it’s feet, secondly, with all of the other constituent parts. In the light of the forgoing, we can perhaps in these things see the judgment upon the “Iron and Clay” feet when Messiah comes, but again later at the end of the Millennium. Again, there is a parallel: Ezekiel 38 describes the confederacy of nations which are vanquished by Messiah and his warrior-brethren as “Gog” and “Magog”, and the same terms are used in Revelation 20:8 of the force assembled by man against Yahweh’s Anointed after the Millennium. The point being, that there is comparison between the two epochs of judgment, before and after the Millennial rule of Messiah.

GOD MANIFESTATION

Of the stone-power that is to crush Nebuchadnezzar’s metal man, it is said:

“forasmuch as thou sawest ***that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands***, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold, the Great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure” (Dan. 2:45).

We find then, that the stone had an origin. It’s derivation was “out of the mountain,” and verse 35 tells us that it “became a great mountain”. In other words, the stone power *will become a replica of that from whence it came*. The idea of a rock being hewn from a greater mass is not unique to Daniel. Isaiah also speak thus:

“hearken unto me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek Yahweh: look unto the Rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit from whence ye are digged” (Isa. 51:1).

Again, “the Rock” is often used in Scripture as a title of the Father. Take the following examples from Deuteronomy chapter 32:

“... He is *the Rock*, his works are perfect ...” (verse 4)

“... then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed *the Rock* of his salvation” (verse 15)

“of *the Rock that begat thee*, thou art unmindful ...” (verse 18)

See also verses 30, 31, and 37. From these verses, we learn that the Children of God are those who are begotten by “the Rock” - or as we have already implied, they are stones hewn out of the Greater Mountain. And in this, we can pre-eminently see Christ, the exact likeness of His Father, “the express image of his person” (Heb. 1:3)

This hewn stone which smites the image of man’s dominion, is said to become a “great mountain, and filled the whole earth” (Dan. 2:35). That is, as we have said, it became a replica of that from whence it was formed. Yahweh Himself is the Mountain from which the Stone is derived, and the fact of the Stone itself becoming a mountain, is for the earth to be filled with a likeness of Yahweh. Even so it is written: “the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Glory of Yahweh, as the waters cover the sea” (Hab. 2:14). Again, we can see an explanatory parallel—Daniel 2 tells us the earth shall be filled with the likeness of a mountain; Habbakuk tells us it will be filled with the Glory of Yahweh. We surmise then, that the two are the same, one being explanatory of the other.

THE MYSTERY REVEALED

There is another striking parallel between the circumstances of Daniel 2, and those pertaining to the Apostolic preaching of the Gospel. The whole scenario depicted in Daniel 2 is to do with a secret, or mystery being revealed:

“then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions that they would desire mercies of the God of Heaven concerning this secret ... then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven” (Dan. 2:17-18).

The chapter speaks of the wisest men of Nebuchadnezzar’s court:

“the secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets...” (Dan. 2:27).

Notice the pattern outlined here: there was a “secret” that the wisest men of Babylon could not make known, let alone correctly interpret. It had to be revealed through one of Yahweh’s choosing, one of the captives from Israel. This is the pattern which we have presented concerning the preaching of the Gospel by the Apostles:

“we speak *the wisdom of God in a mystery*, even the *hidden* wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: *which none of the princes of this world knew* ...” (1 Cor. 2:8).

If there be any doubt that there is a deliberate allusion being made, consider the following two passages, and see how the case of Daniel being cited:

“... God hath *revealed* them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, *the deep things* of God” (1 Cor. 2:10)

“... He *revealeth the deep and secret things*: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

There is also a parallel in the reason for the vision being made known: it was to avoid certain death “that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon” (Dan. 2:18). In addition to making known human history in advance for the benefit of those who sought after spiritual things, another reason of a more immediate consequence was to release the brethren from a death decree. Even so with the Gospel: whilst it provides us with wisdom and knowledge, it’s real power is it’s intrinsic ability to save those who pay heed to it.

It is written in Hebrews 11:3, that “through faith we understand that *the worlds (ages) were framed by the Word of God*”, and in Daniel chapter 2 we have an example of this. But more than this, we have many factors involved in the establishment of Yahweh’s coming kingdom, including what we call “God Manifestation,” or the replication of Yahweh’s glorious attributes throughout the earth: a Holy Mountain concerning which it is written: “they shall not hurt, nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Yahweh, as the waters cover the sea” (Isa. 11:9). We must therefore give attendance to the reading and study of the Word, to prepare us for that great day.

“it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? For after that in the Wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (1 Cor. 1:19-21)

Christopher Maddocks

