

TRUTH GLEANER.

BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL AND CURRENT.

"Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding." -Prov. 23:23

A Christadelphian publication devoted to gleaning and heralding the Truth concerning the problem of life, here and hereafter, the restoration of the Jews to the holyland, the return of Christ as King of all the earth, and the signs of the approaching end of Gentile times.

Volume 2, No. 2

April-June 2003

Watchman, What of the Night? 6th Vial Signs - The Land Shadowing With Wings

With the war in Iraq in the headlines the Bible student is reminded once again that the earth under the rule of flesh is a violent place. Much the same as it was when Noah, a preacher of righteousness, proclaimed of the impending judgments of Yahweh. Violence and wickedness were characteristics of the end of the antediluvian age, it was a characteristic at the close of the Mosaic age, and it is likewise a prominent feature of the last days of Gentile rule (Hab. 2:8). The war has left Tarshish and the young lions implanted in Iraq having just completed a lightening military campaign with unprecedented success. In the space of about three weeks they completely control the country, they have destroyed and scattered the vaunted Iraqi Republican Guard and also the Iraqi regular army. The speed and the overwhelming victory in Iraq are not a trivial accomplishment. Many nations have taken notice. Israeli defense officials and military commanders have expressed amazement over the capture of one of the largest and most powerful Arab countries by what they say amounted to less than three U.S. divisions and British assistance in the South. They are at the present, consolidating their power and attempting to restore civil order and foster a new form of governance for the conquered country. The whereabouts of Saddam Hussein is at present unknown, and some report of his possible death in one of several attempts by the U.S. military to "decapitate" the Iraqi leadership. Whatever the fact may be concerning Saddam Hussein, and whether he survived or not, we cannot be sure, but it is fact that he is politically dead.

Is the conflict for the region over? Perhaps not. President Bush has proclaimed Iraq's western neighbor Syria a "rogue nation," and they are spoken of as perhaps harboring terrorists, weapons of mass destruction, and providing safe haven for escaping Iraqi Ba'athists (the political party of Saddam Hussein) leadership. Colin Powell, U.S. Secretary of State, warned "Syria should review their actions and their behavior." He added "that the United States will examine measures of a diplomatic, economic or other nature as we move forward." What will come of this situation remains to be seen. Syrian political analyst Mohammed Aziz Shukri was quoted as saying, "For the President of the United States to come on television and say that Syria must cooperate, my question is who, in the name of heaven, does he think he is? Is he the god of this earth?" If Mr. Shukri were familiar with the Divine testimony he would know that Yahweh, the God of Israel, uses the wicked as His sword to punish the wicked! *"Arise, O LORD, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword"* (Psa. 17:13). So after a fashion Mr. Shukri is accurate. Tarshish and the young lions would have no power except it were "ordained of God." So effectively they are His mighty ones, furthering His will in the earth, meeting out judgment as Yahweh wills it. President Bush recently said he "is hopeful" Iraq's neighbors (Syria) will "make decisions based on the **new reality in the Middle East.**" The following comment was seen in the Toronto Star on April 15, "Bush spokesman Ari Fleischer recently told reporters, 'Gone is the brutal dictatorship of Saddam Hussein.'" His comments inflamed increasing fears that Syria is next on the list compiled by the Bush administration, who make no secret of their desire to **revamp the Middle East and remove threats to Israel!** (Emphasis mine).

The foregoing statement is significant to the Bible student. The war in Iraq was certainly in the common interest of the United States and Britain. It was a further prosecution of the "war on terrorism" both nations vowed to fight after the terror attack on New York on 9-11. But it was also of great benefit to Israel to have Saddam removed from power in the region. Saddam was a direct financial sponsor of Palestinian terrorism within Israel proper, to the tune of 1.5 million U.S. dollars per month, according to some reports. This source of terror funding has ceased. A priority of Mr. Bush and Mr. Blair, post Saddam, is the stabilization of the region to further the peace process. This is nothing but a continuation of the policy began by Britain (and aided frequently by the U.S.) around the close of the 19th century. Consider Brother John Thomas's comment on Britain's latter-day role as a protectorate of Israel. *"I know not whether the men, who at present contrive the foreign policy of Britain, entertain the idea of assuming the sovereignty of the Holy Land, and of promoting its colonization by the Jews; their present intentions, however, are of no importance one way or the other, because they will be compelled, by events soon to happen, to do what, under existing circumstances, heaven and earth combined could not move them to attempt."* He continued by drawing this remarkable conclusion, *"The decree has long since gone forth which calls upon the Lion of Tarshish to protect the Jews. (Our emphasis) Upwards of a thousand years before the British were a nation, the prophet addresses them as the power which at "evening-tide" should interest themselves in behalf of Israel!"* end quote (*Elpis Israel*, pg. 455 Logos Ed.). This was written in 1849! How true and how accurately has the Word of Yahweh come to pass! Consider the significant role of Britain and the young lions under the hand of Yahweh in the last century:

~~ In the autumn of 1917, British general Sir Edmund Allenby left from Egypt to invade Palestine and liberate it from Turkish rule. On 11 December 1917 he and his officers entered the Holy City Jerusalem at the Jaffa gate on foot. He refused to enter the conquered city on horse, claiming that was reserved for a future conqueror much greater than he was.

~~ In November 1917 the Balfour declaration was issued in which Britain adopted a pro-Zionist stance.

~~ Winston Churchill made this remarkable statement in 1921 to a delegation of Palestinian Arabs after the Cairo Conference. "It is manifestly right that the scattered Jews should have a national center and a national home to be reunited and where else but in Palestine with which for 3,000 years they have been intimately and profoundly associated? We think it will be good for the world, good for the Jews, good for the British Empire, but also good for the Arabs who dwell in Palestine and we intend it to be so..."

~~ The British Mandate of the Middle East under the League of Nations from 1922 through 1948 thoroughly revamped the Middle East and provided for the return of the Jew in great numbers. The Arabic-speaking section of the Ottoman Empire had been redesigned. (The history of the period is strikingly similar to our present day!)

~~ WWII saw the rise of Hitler and his goal of a Third Reich. He sought to rid the earth of the "Jewish problem". He was defeated by the Allied power (Tarshish and the young lions) which provided a great impetus for the further restoration of the Jew to Palestine.

~~ The State of Israel was formed in 1948. This was necessary fulfillment of prophecy and one that gave great strength and joy to the household. Gog comes against "the mountains of Israel." Israel must needs have been regathered nationally for this to come to pass. Both Britain and the U.S. played key roles in the politics that surrounded the birth of the Nation of Israel.

~~ That Britain and the U.S. have supported Israel both financially and militarily since 1948 is well documented, and continues to be a cornerstone of their foreign policy.

Can the attentive Bible student fail to see the pattern of the last century and the great significance of the current state of affairs in the Middle East? When Gog comes against the Mountains of Israel, the Merchant power of Tarshish poses the question, "*Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?*" We must ask ourselves, why would this question be posed unless first of all, the Tarshish power and young lions have a presence there, and secondly that they be in the role of a protector to Israel with "widely shadowing wings" (Isa. 18:1). Perhaps the stated goal of the U.S. and Britain, to revamp the Middle East, will provide for the peace and safety that Ezekiel predicted (Ezek. 38:8,11; 39:26).

The world's view of the Middle East peace process seems to be one of skepticism, but what say the scriptures? Certainly any human efforts for a lasting peace will not succeed. But if, according to the Divine plan, an environment of peace and security is to exist in the land prior to calamity, it will proceed in spite of conventional wisdom or any efforts of man to prevent or derail it. The Apostle Paul in his letter to the Thessalonians wrote for our admonition, *But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.* (1 Thess. 5:3) Does this mean there will be no Arab-Israeli conflict prior to the advent? By no means! We do not eliminate the possibility of conflict and skirmish between Israel and

her neighbors. Will such a conflict reduce Israel to dire straits and require Divine intervention? Not according to the scriptures. For this role is reserved for *Gog, of the land Magog* in a latter-day invasion of Israel foretold by Ezekiel. This great day of crisis and salvation is the theme of all the prophets of Israel. Ezekiel testifies, *Thus saith the Lord GOD; Art thou he (Gog) of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them?* (Ezek. 38:17)

But just as the Assyrian of old perished outside of the walls of Jerusalem in Hezekiah's day, so shall Gog come to his end, and none shall help him. *And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: every man's sword shall be against his brother. And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the LORD* (Ezek. 38:21-23). Although initially a day of great trouble for Israel, she shall be saved out of it (Jer. 30:7). Ezekiel's testimony is very clear and succinct. This is the great day whereof Yahweh has spoken of. This is the day that is to be a great national crisis of events for Israel and a turning point in her existence. Hear Ezekiel further, *Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; 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; After that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid. So the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from that day and forward. So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel. Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord GOD; this is the day whereof I have spoken* (Ezek 39:25-26,22,7-8).

Jesus, whose testimony is the "spirit of prophecy," told his followers what was to come to pass before it happened for a definite purpose. So that their "hearts would not be troubled" and most importantly that their faith might be strengthened and that they would be given courage. A **prepared and faithful** saint is ultimately to the Glory of God, for at the apocalypse of the Lord Jesus, they will shine as the brightness of the firmament for the age and beyond and will redound unto the Glory of their Creator. *I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe* (John 14:29). Brethren and friends, seeing that we know all these things beforehand, what manner of people should we be? Paul writing to the Romans exhorts us as well, *For if the casting away of them (Israel) be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob* (Rom. 11:15,22,25-26). Surely with such vivid signs as our guide, we are not in darkness, that this day should overtake us thief-like. This great salvation of natural Israel is the faithful anticipation of all that hope in the "Gospel preached before to Abraham."

Scott Huie

Editorial For the Glory of Thy Name

One of the most profound and enlightening paragraphs ever written by an uninspired man are these words from the pen of Bro. Thomas:

Men were not ushered into being for the purpose of being saved or lost! God manifestation, not human salvation, was the great purpose of the Eternal Spirit. The salvation of a multitude is incidental to the manifestation, but was not the end proposed. The Eternal Spirit intended to enthrone Himself on the earth, and in so doing, to develop a Divine family from among men, every one of whom shall be Spirit, because born of the Spirit, and that this family shall be large enough to fill the earth, when perfected, to the entire exclusion of flesh and blood (1 Cor. 15:28) (Herald of the Kingdom, 1858, pp. 84–85).

These words bring to our minds not only the Bible principle of God manifestation, but also a very critical point in our understanding of the atonement. It is an absolute truth that *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners* (1 Tim. 1:15), but we must always bear in mind the “end proposed,” as Bro. Thomas says, for our salvation. That is that Yahweh might be glorified and magnified in the earth.

A key scripture quoted very often when dealing with the doctrine of God Manifestation is found in Numbers 14:21: *But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of Yahweh.* This verse does not say that all the earth shall be filled with the glory of redeemed flesh. The emphasis is rightfully on the glory of Yahweh, the one Eternal Spirit, filling the earth to the ultimate exclusion of flesh and blood.

The same principle is expressed in the ultimate objective of the Deity that “God may be all in all.” The Lord Jesus gave total, unreserved acknowledgement to the reality that there is “one God and Father of all, who is above all”; and that when men confessed Christ, such was “to the **glory** of God, the Father” (1 Cor. 15:28; Eph. 4:6; Phil. 2:11). Additionally, we have the words of the

Psalmist: *Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Thy Name: and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for Thy Name’s sake* (79: 9). Here deliverance and forgiveness of sins is associated with bringing glory to Yahweh.

A portion of mankind will indeed be redeemed, but not for their own sakes. It will be to the Glory of the One Eternal Spirit who will be manifest in a multitude of the redeemed.

Christ: His Motivation

The principle of God manifestation was precisely what motivated our Lord Jesus Christ. He was the perfect moral manifestation of His Father on this earth. Bearing the condemned nature, with its natural bias toward sin, His mission and daily meditation was on defeating sin in the very place where it strives to reign supreme; that is the flesh. This was done to the glory of His Father. The Apostle Paul informs us that the righteousness of God was upheld and declared by the full victory His Son obtained over sin. We read: *Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus* (Rom 3:25, 26). Christ upheld and declared the righteousness of His Father in all things in His life and by voluntarily offering up that life in sacrificial death. In so doing, the flesh was morally condemned in a life of perfect obedience and was physically condemned by being publicly shown to be only related to death.

The Mind of Christ

To gain a better appreciation of the extent to which our Lord went to morally defeat sin we must understand Paul’s teaching on the carnal mind. In Rom. 8: 5-7 Paul declares: *For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be*

carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. The flesh nature, when left to its own impulses and desires, produces the carnal mind or the minding of the flesh. The word “enmity” here is the Greek word *echthra* and according to Vine’s Expository Dictionary is the exact opposite of *agape love* (self sacrificing love). We ask the question: was our Lord ever at enmity with his Father? We know He was not. Our Lord, at all times, displayed the epitome of *agape love* towards his heavenly Father and towards those he came to save (Jh. 15:13). In so doing He brought glory and honor to the Father and He is our example.

In addition, the word *against* God is the Greek preposition *eis* and according to Bullinger it is always found in the accusative case. In other words it is a very strong word implying an *accusing* attitude or disposition towards God. Did our Lord ever *accuse* God? Nay, He did always those things which pleased and honored His Father (Jh 8:29). We conclude, therefore, that while our Lord Jesus Christ bore the sin nature, He **never** allowed it to produce or manifest the carnal mind or the minding of the flesh. He **always** manifested the spiritual mind or the minding of the spirit. In this sense, our Lord was never alienated from his Father. He was the perfect moral manifestation of Deity in flesh. More than just being influenced by keeping the word of God in front of him, as the Israelites were to keep the word as frontlets to their eyes (Duet 6: 4-9), our Lord was **The Word Made Flesh**, rendering perfect and total obedience to His God.

Conclusion

Because of these truths we should stand in awe at the glorious majesty and perfection of character manifested in the Son of God which brought honor and glory to the Eternal Spirit. While He is our example, He was the only one ever who could say, with all honesty and humility, *I and my Father are one* (Jh 10:30).

Exhortation

The First Followers of the Lord: John 1:35-2:12

After the temptation of Yahshua in the wilderness, the gospel account of John introduces us to the first five followers of the Lord. As with all incidents of scripture, the events that are associated with these first followers of Yahshua are very enlightening for the student of the gospel. In the seven days following the Lord’s return from the temptation in the wilderness until his first miracle in Cana, there are contained allegorical events that show forth the hope of every believer of the gospel. When the first five followers of Yahshua are examined closely, we find in them exhortation and encouragement. That they are five in number is significant, as five is the number of grace. That they are present at the first miracle of the Lord, the marriage feast in Cana, is allegorical of our hope to be at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

John – The Humble

The first follower called to the Lord was John. As is the custom of the gospel that bears his name, John mentions himself not by name, but in his own humble style. Throughout the entire gospel of John, his name is never mentioned; he identifies himself simply as “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7; 21:20).

The simple way in which John described himself is illustrative of both the humility and the confidence that we each should have. By not mentioning himself by name in his gospel account, John showed forth the type of humility that each of us should have. The gospel is not about self-promotion; it is about God Manifestation. Each of us is like John, striving to suppress the desire of promoting the flesh, while endeavoring to exalt the glory of the Deity. Along with his brother James, we know him as one of “the sons of thunder.” Yet, we see in John, a man who learned to use his assertive tendencies aright. We see a disciple who learned humility and was, therefore, loved by his Master.

In addition to his humility, John was a confident follower of the Lord. How many of us would choose to describe ourselves as “the disciple whom Jesus loved?” What a wonderful feeling it must have given John to write such about himself. We must be like John. We must have his confidence:

And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour (Eph. 5:2)

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:37-39).

John’s name means “Yahweh is gracious.” When we think of John, we see what we must become, as we are those to whom Yahweh has been gracious. And, He has been gracious on account of His love for us:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of your selves: it is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8)

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God (Rom. 3:23-25).

Lastly, it is appropriate that John is unnamed in the account before us, because he is allegorically representative of an innumerable multitude of believers, who are known presently only to the Lord, awaiting his return to bestow his grace upon them in completeness.

Andrew – The Helpful

At the same time John was introduced to Yahshua, so was Andrew. Andrew was always looking to be helpful. It was Andrew who brought the lad with the five loaves and two fishes to Yahshua. It was Andrew and Philip who informed Yahshua of the Greeks who desired to speak with him. Andrew taught us that we must strive to be helpful servants to the Lord’s purpose. We are to be like Andrew and concern ourselves with service to the Lord and to one another.

Andrew seems to have been one of the more prominent disciples of the Lord, as he was one of the disciples who privately asked Yahshua concerning the temple and its fate. His name means

“manliness” or “strongman”; in this, we see great lessons for ourselves. We must be helpful servants of Christ, who stand up for the Truth as well. We must be willing to “play the man” when it comes to spiritual matters:

Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong (1Cor. 16:13).

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil (Eph 6:10-11).

Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (2Tim. 2:1-3).

Andrew is a Greek (Gentile) name. As such, together with John who bore a Hebrew name, we are taught of the two classes that will be drawn to the Lord. That these two men were the first followers of the Lord is significant in the allegory before us. The disciple of the Lord must be humble, confident, helpful, and strong in the faith.

Simon – The Leader

The third follower of Yahshua was Simon. We see many things in Simon that are enduring lessons for us. We see a man who, 53 days after he denied the Lord, stood before an equally hostile crowd and proclaimed the Truth, of who Yahshua was, before all men. In Peter, we see a man who was changed by the word and changed by his association with the Lord. Are we undergoing that kind of change?

Simon’s name means “hearing.” As followers of the Lord, we must also exemplify “hearing,” as hearers and doers of the word:

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world (Rom. 10:14-18).

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed (Jam 1:22-25).

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God (Rom. 12:2).

Yahshua addressed Simon in a way that can teach us more of who we are to be, if we are to receive the same reward as Simon. Yahshua said, “Thou art Simon, the son of Jonah.” This was remarkable to Simon, for they had not yet been introduced; yet, this man knew his name. Yes, Simon was the son of Jonah, and so should we be sons of Jonah, spiritually, if we are to be like Simon. The name Jonah signifies the “dove.” When we think of the scriptural uses of a dove we see that it is a symbol for several important concepts in the scriptures. The spirit descended upon the Lord in the form of a dove after his baptism. In Genesis 8:8-9, we see that it was the dove that returned unto the ark. Since the ark is typical of our Lord, we see that we must be as the

dove, always returning unto our Lord for shelter and rest. In Psalm 55:1-8, the dove is used as a symbol of rest. And in Song of Solomon (2:14; 5:2 and 6:9) the dove is used as a figure of the bride of the Lord. We like Simon have been born of the dove, the spirit word. We seek for rest with our ark as did the dove. And we desire to be a member of that bride of Christ that he describes as his dove.

When we look at what Yahshua said to Simon, we find a great truth if we look below the surface. What was Yahshua saying to Simon? When we translate the proper names, we find that the Lord literally said, "Thou art *hearing* the son of the *dove*." And, indeed, Simon was actually hearing Yahshua, who was born of the spirit, or the dove, of Yahweh.

But, the Lord said something else to Simon that should be of great importance to us when we consider the spiritual significance of Simon being the *third* follower called to the Lord. Simon was told he would, one day, receive a change of name, that he would be called Peter, or "a stone." The number three is the number of resurrection. It is, therefore, fitting that the third follower of the Lord would receive a name change, for unto the third ecclesia the Lord said: *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the ecclesias; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.*

These words are truly remarkable when applied to our situation. At the appearing of Christ, he will give, to those of us who **hear** (Simon), a white **stone** (Peter) and a **new name** (as was Simon). Indeed, we are even now lively stones in the Lord's house.

To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed (1Pet. 2:4-8).

For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree (Zech. 3:9-10).

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name (Rev. 3:12).

It must be remembered however, that just as Simon waited for his name change that we, also, must wait for our name change. Indeed, we must labor for it, as it will come only after a patient continuance in the things of God; after the spirit word has transformed our lives as it did Peter's; and after this corruptible nature we possess is changed to that which is incorruptible and immortal.

Philip – The Friendly Warrior

Now, we come to Galilee and to the next two followers of the Lord. It is important to the spiritual subject before us to note this change of locality. The first three followers were found along the banks of the Jordan, a name that means "descender." The first three

men—John, Andrew, and Simon—were all descending into death, just as the river Jordan descends to the Dead Sea. But, the next two followers were found in the region known as Galilee, which means "a circle." As such, it is significant of things eternal, or that which has no beginning and no ending. In the allegory before us, the next two men, Philip and Nathaniel, are typical of those who will receive the name change promised to Simon, typical of the multitudinous body. Together, these five men represent the process of grace (thus, there were five) that will be completed when the Kingdom of God is established. Philip was the fourth of these five men. As the number four relates to Spiritual Israel, Philip was typical of those who will make up the new city, the New Jerusalem.

Philip's name means "lover of horses" and signifies a "warrior," as only one who was a soldier would have been a lover of horses during the time when Messiah walked among men. As we look at the scriptural significance of the horse, we see that it is, indeed, a symbol of war:

Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? the glory of his nostrils is terrible. He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword. The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet. He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting (Job 39:19-25).

The horse is prepared against the day of battle (Proverbs 21:31). And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS (Rev. 19:11-16).

Philip was a timid man; he was not a warrior in life. But, his timid nature will be set aside in the Kingdom Age when he will become a warrior in the army of Yahweh. We must all strive to take part in the things represented by Philip, to take part in those things which will be an honor for the Saints (Psalm 149; Zechariah 14:5).

Nathaniel – The Studious

Nathaniel means "the gift of God." He was the fifth follower drawn to the Lord. As such, he is representative of the man who will receive grace. In him, we see a man who is typical of the state of the believer when the peace of the Kingdom of God is established. When we attain to the state of things represented in Nathaniel, we will truly understand the gift of God.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of your selves: it is the gift of God (Nathaniel) (Eph. 2:8).

Nathaniel is a man of the Kingdom Age. We see this in verse fifty-one of the first chapter of John. When we are introduced to Nathaniel, he was under the fig tree. In scripture, the fig tree is used to represent the blessings of the Kingdom age, the time of peace when the saints will rest in the beauty of the millennial reign:

*But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. **But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree;** and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it (Micah 4:4). For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree (Zech. 3:9-10).*

Nathaniel was a studious individual. In the Kingdom of God, the studies, to which we now apply ourselves, will be put to good use. It will be a time to teach the nations of the righteousness of Yahweh and of the gift that He has provided through His Son. The Lord said that Nathaniel was an Israelite in whom was no guile. If we are to enjoy the reward typified in Nathaniel, we must not be found with guile within ourselves. We must strive for righteousness now, in this life, that we may have it completely in the age to come (Rev. 14:1-5).

The Marriage Feast

These five men went on to the wedding feast in Galilee. As we look at the marriage feast in Cana, we see further events that were typical of our hope to come. The gospel of John states that it was three days after Yahshua met the last of his first five followers that a marriage feast took place in Cana of Galilee. It was also the seventh day of John's narrative, thus suggestive of the day of millennial rest.

While we always have thought the conclusions, reached by other writers on this subject, are valuable, we have reached some different conclusions in the allegorical meanings of these events. The foundation, on which we build our conclusions, is the call of the first five followers, and the import that this marriage feast was three days after the last follower was called.

Brother H.P. Mansfield had the following note in his Bible concerning this third day of John 2:1: "Implies resurrection through covenant sacrifice – Genesis 22:4; Exodus 3:18, 23:17; Jonah 2:8; Acts 10:39-40". We suggest, then, that in continuance of the allegory started with John 1, the marriage feast in Cana is typical of events that take place after the Kingdom of God has been established.

The third day not only signifies the time of our own redemption, but that of Israel after the flesh as well. Consider the well-known words of Hosea:

Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight (Hosea 6:1-2).

Thus, we are examining the great joy that will be felt by spiritual and natural Israel during the millennial Sabbath. This is implied further by the parallel that exists between the first miracle of Yahshua and that which was Moses' first miracle. Moses turned water to blood (Exodus 7:17), but Yahshua turned water into wine. The Law of Moses taught the necessity of the shedding of blood for the remission of sins. As we know, elements of the Mosaic Law will be reintroduced in the Kingdom age.

And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD (Isaiah 66:23).

And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar (Zechariah 14:16-20).

The Lord used six waterpots, used for ceremonial washings, to change water into wine at this marriage feast. The Law of Moses will, once again, be used to teach flesh (thus, 6 waterpots) what it must do to be saved. The water of the word of God (John 4:14; Ephesians 5:26) will produce joy and gladness through the teachings of the law. The water of the word of God, which will be poured out in the Kingdom Age, will produce joy for the nations that drink of it. It will be wine that makes glad the heart (Psalm 104:15).

Our goal brethren, is to be like these five men. We labor now to display Godly attributes in our lives (John and Andrew), and we desire to receive our new name and the white stone of immortality (Peter). We yearn to participate in the conquering of the nations as warriors of God (Philip); yet, we long for the peace and joy of the Kingdom Age (Nathaniel). We hope to teach all nations the Truth through both the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ. We desire to be among those who "draw water out of the wells of salvation" and assist the nations in turning that word into the joy represented by wine. Let us examine these men, and learn what we must from them, that we may be at the marriage feast that is soon to come.

Alex Briley

Exposition

The Doctrine of the Resurrection (Part 1)

The doctrine of the resurrection is a subject that is common to all that bear the name Christadelphian. However, the manner in which it has been understood and taught as an integral part of the Gospel message has suffered undying debate within the brotherhood. While it is not the purpose or intent of this article to settle the debate, it is our purpose, in part one of this article, to consider the principle of resurrection as identified in the Statement of Faith, considering the implications of the scriptures referenced therein; and in part two to examine scriptures bearing on the subject in the Old Testament through type and shadow; and return at last to the New Testament to look at plain and easy to understand language

presented by the Master and the Apostles themselves. From these it is hoped that the reader may be assisted in appreciating this vital principle that gives hope for life eternal, and a glimpse of the awesome power of the "Uncreate," *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself* (Phil. 3:21).

Resurrection Outlined in the Statement of Faith

The 1877 Christadelphian Statement of Faith that was originally published by the Birmingham England Ecclesia, Article X, under the heading of "The Resurrection of Christ," reads as follows:

Article X: *That on the third day, God raised him from the dead, because he was an Holy One whom He could not suffer to see corruption.*

Appended to this statement are references (1) I Cor. 15:4; Acts 10:40; Acts 13:30-37; and (2) Acts 2:24-27; Acts 4:27; and again Acts 13:35. You might note that in later editions of the Christadelphian Unamended Statement of Faith, that all of these references have carried forward under Proposition XIII, except some editions have omitted Acts 4:27. It is clearly recognized that the Christadelphians who coined this statement believed that the resurrection of our Lord was a fundamental doctrinal truth. It also stands to reason that the particular scriptures referenced had meaning that we would do well to take heed. Let us begin with Acts:

Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. (Acts 2:24-27)

For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together. (Acts 4:27)

Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. (Acts 10:40)

But God raised him from the dead: And

he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people. And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. (Acts 13:30-37)

Let us pause and consider what we have looked at here so far. We see that Christ was raised from the dead, a simple fact; and that though all the people were gathered together against him, as if they thought that they could snuff out the plan of Yahweh, he rose again the third day according to the Divine purpose. And then we are told, and this should not escape our attention, that his resurrection is somehow connected with "the promise that was made unto the fathers" (Acts 13:32) "in that" (Vs 33) "He hath raised up Jesus again; as it is written in the second psalm, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee." This promise, according to the account, has been "fulfilled unto us their children," and we note here that we are children by adoption, and that we are adopted by the operation of the blood of the covenant with Yahweh through knowledge, faith, and baptism "in that He hath raised up Jesus again."

The second Psalm becomes very interesting in light of Paul's interpretation here, because we see now that resurrection is a critical means, or mode of operation; it is a cog within the overall mechanism on which the whole plan of God depends. Consider the second Psalm in light of this and we see that without resurrection, there can be no taking possession of the uttermost parts of the earth, there can be no conquering, there can be no ruling with a rod of iron by the Christ, much less the Saints. The argument is plain and simple as Paul presents the case to the brethren in Corinth, some of whom had denied the resurrection altogether:

And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures...Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen,

then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive [zooopoieo, to (re-) vitalize:-make alive, give life, quicken]. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. (I Corinthians 15:4, 12-23)

There are simple truths contained in this passage with such force of argument as to demand recognition by anyone who claims to understand the truth:

~~ **Truth Number One:** If there is no such thing as resurrection from the grave, then Christ could not have been raised therefrom, and his sepulcher, like David's, would remain occupied until this day. In such a case we would be, as Paul says, *most miserable*.

~~ **Truth Number Two:** If Christ did not rise from the dead, then our faith is vain. How is this so? To what "faith" does Paul refer? Is he not speaking here concerning the hope of the resurrection from the grave? What power or effect does Christ have upon the grave, either to open it or to keep it shut? Much in every way as the scripture declares concerning The Christ: *I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.* But is not resurrection a principle to be exercised apart or independent from Christ, his work, or his own resurrection? This scripture would not make it so, and we are not aware of any scripture that can prove otherwise. However, there is a balance of things to consider: Whether resurrection *can be* exercised by the independent power of the omnipotent Creator outside of the scope or operation of the atonement, brought into force by Christ's covenant sacrifice, is not our concern, nor would it be wise to challenge the power of the Uncreate! From a practical standpoint, resurrection is the recomposition from soil and dust, a body into which the character of a person, reserved in the mind of Yahweh, is recreated exactly as it was before. As Adam was created from dust before there was a need for a redeemer, or a covenant sacrifice, we need not argue about what Yahweh has the power to do of His own will. We can understand this further in light of John the

Baptist's rebuke to those who believed that blood kinship accounted them as children of Abraham when he says, "*And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham*" (Matt 3:9). If we consider these scriptures in balance with one another, the truth is understood correctly. Yahweh is all-powerful. He can raise up from stones bodies to become the spiritual seed of Abraham IF he should so choose. But **this is not the end proposed** by the mighty work that Yashua has rendered, and in which we have hope. *Hope is the key!* Do we have hope whether or not some will be raised outside of the bounds of the covenant? This writer has no such hope as this. Rather, such would become a matter of dread for those many Sunday School scholars, whose intellect is not in question concerning the knowledge of the Truth (who could pass a baptismal examination intellectually), but whose faith has not been developed sufficiently, whereby a conscience becomes convicted, and so neither are they mature enough to count the cost. Is it wise to teach "hell torments" to immature babes, that they are to be condemned for what they cannot yet discern? To teach them, on the other hand, that they are responsible for nothing, would be no less a miscarriage of godly principles. Hence, Bro. G. E. Clementson wrote: "*The question has been called the 'Responsibility Question.' It should have been called the 'Resurrection Question.'*" To that we can but say, Amen!

What then do we have hope for? It is the same hope in which David had assurance saying, *Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption* (Acts 2:24)?

This is the same principle that Paul described in the negative: *And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.* (I Cor. 15:14-15)

~~ **Truth Number Three:** But because Christ has indeed risen from the dead, becoming the "*Firstfruits of them that slept*" he is therefore worthy to open the graves by the power invested in him by The Father (Rev. 5:9), and upon the force of the promise sworn by an oath in Yahweh's name (Heb. 6:13), Yahweh will fulfill that promise to those whom He has separated out as a peculiar treasure. This is a hope and an invitation of life extended to all as "*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*" (II Peter 3:9). Even the name of Yahweh conveys this message of hope, as the

name begins with the Hebrew letter *Yode*, signifying an open hand.

~~ **Truth Number Four:** I Corinthians chapter 15 is a treatise on the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead from the grave; this being a precursor to any possibility of giving an account and, God willing, to receive the greater gift of eternal life. But Paul's argument is that there is a necessary connection of our hope, our faith in which we can have absolute trust, with the resurrection of our Lord and Master. Again, whatever is possible outside of that which is our hope is of little concern, nor is there any power to save in it by forcing the argument as a first principle truth. We have before us now in the inspired Word the many witnesses that say they saw our Lord in the flesh for as many as 40 days upon this earth before he ascended by a cloud into heaven. Why should this be so important to a believer? Because we have trust in these witnesses, and because we have hope in that the same principle by which Yashua came forth from the dead can have the same effect upon us. What principle is this? We answer, the principles enumerated in the promises to the fathers of old, brought into force by the blood of the everlasting covenant, plainly revealed to be the blood of Christ. This is proven without a doubt by the following scriptures:

And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words (Ex. 24:6-8).

While the sprinkling of the blood upon the people and the altar brought them into the bonds of the Mosaic order, these things prefigured the work of Christ and his blood, without which none of the Mosaic sacrifices would have effect. But what has this to do with resurrection? The reader is referred to Revelation 6:9-11 where we are introduced to voices emanating from under an altar. These are they that have been slain for the witness of Jesus (our altar, offering, and priest), as well as those who are typically related to the altar by virtue of covenant relationship, their lives being "poured out" in service to Yahweh. Together, as one witness for the things of the Truth, these inquire as to how long it will be before the redemption of their bodies and the vengeance upon them that dwell on the earth. This redemption will only come about by the one who is represented by the type: He is "*my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower*" (Psa. 18:2), of whom Hannah prophesied saying, "*the LORD shall judge the*

ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed" (I Sam. 2:10). The blood, as we have seen from the Mosaic type, was sprinkled upon the horns of the altar. That Christ, being the antitype of the Altar parable was a beneficiary of this righteous act of obedience, laying down his life's blood, is illustrated in Paul's letter to the Hebrews thusly [For a more in-depth review of the Altar parable, the reader is referred to *The Truth Gleaner* Vol. 2, No.1, Page 8]:

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen (Heb. 13:20-21).

That this principle of hope is also extended to others whose lives are bound up in the Yahweh name, having been sealed in their foreheads with words of life, is seen from the prophecy of Zechariah concerning the resurrection of the Saints. Zechariah declares in verses 14 and 15 of chapter 9, that at the terminus of the seventh trumpet, the raised and glorified Saints will go forth as "whirlwinds from the south," being a symbol of warfare when the fury of Yahweh is poured out through glorified Saints, and as the antitypical Davidic sling stone they will mortally wound the kingdoms of this world (Psa. 110:5-10). The Saints in this prophecy are identified with the horns of the altar, including the bowls used to bear the blood thereto (Also see Isa. 63:1; Rev. 19:13). The four horns of the altar, the Cherubim, the four carpenters, and the four living ones are in the scriptures synonymous terms. But how do they come to their present position in the prophecy? What principle is in operation that makes it possible for these, from among the myriads that have passed into the dust of the earth, to come forth to such a glorious day? Is it not they who are the object of the promises to the Fathers of Israel? Is it not they who are the sanctified ones, hidden in the life of the Lamb beneath the antitypical altar? Zechariah (Chapter 9) gives us a definitive answer when he declares:

As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee.

Here it is very plain and simple to see that it is the power of the everlasting covenant, confirmed through the shedding of Christ's blood, that necessitated the resurrection of Christ, and will also necessitate the resurrection of all those that are his brethren. Hence, they are "*prisoners of hope.*" There is no need to draw an inference here, or to prove

the principles we uphold by proposing words that are the opposite of the words that do appear. The truth is as plain as day! But bear in mind that the power was not in the blood itself, which is only subject to decay, but in the Word of Yahweh who assured fulfillment of His promise in providing a savior of the race, and so it is written, "*So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it*" (Isa. 55:11).

Now, it is true that this connection we draw between the blood of the covenant and resurrection is not agreed to by all, and some may think that we desire to tie the hands of Deity by making such a profession, but this is not our aim. Yahweh will do right in matters that are His alone to decide, and to argue to the rather can only "*gender strife*." But let us be clear about what we do say, and what we do believe is necessary to know as a first principle of truth; that is, that covenant relationship *necessitates* the resurrection of the believer as it did with Christ, of whom the scripture says:

Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it...herefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope (Acts 2:24,26).

We see from this testimony that David understood the ramifications of the covenant promise: those who enter into it "*shall rest in hope*," that neither shall they be holden of the grave, and therefore, must come forth according to the law that declares, "*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad*" (II Cor. 5:10).

Valid baptism, and hence, to enter the covenant set in place when Yahweh promised to mortally bruise the serpent's head while only suffering a temporary bruise upon the woman's seed, is to bring the power of the promise of Yahweh's covenant upon ourselves after the example of Christ himself. To separate this promise from the believer is, in the writer's opinion, to make the Truth of none effect, and to rob the Son of Yahweh of the mighty victory he has wrought. The truth is that covenant sacrifice is the key, even of hell (the grave) and death (or escape from its power to corrupt eternally if not judged worthy). A key is an important part to any mechanism that relies upon it to operate. The truth as it is in Jesus is no different. Thus, without all the parts in their proper place, the mechanism does not work [for a more in-depth exposition of the principle of the "Key" as regarding resurrection, the reader is referred to

the article in this issue titled, "The Gate of His Enemies"].

There are many examples of this principle of one element supporting another in the inspired Word. For example, could the Ark of the Covenant be conveyed without the staves that fit by design through the rings that were in the sides of the Ark? Or could the walls of the tabernacle stand without the boards fit neatly into the tenons behind and silver sockets beneath, together forming a complete structure? Or was the order and glory of the tabernacle complete without the altar and the laver of the court, and all the holy implements within the tabernacle in their proper place? If these things were possible, then we might be able to separate the blood of Christ from the resurrection of Saints to the Bema, but otherwise, No!

(To be continued in the next issue Lord willing)

A. B. Bryan

Exposition The Gate of His Enemies

In Judges 16:1-3, we read the following account concerning Samson:

Then went Samson to Gaza, and saw there an harlot, and went in unto her. And it was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they compassed him in, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet all the night, saying, In the morning, when it is day, we shall kill him. And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron.

In this scripture reading, we find Samson to be in quite a predicament. He had entered into Gaza, the city of his enemies, and word quickly spread that he was come. The men of the city then decided that once and for all they would take care of this mighty Judge of Israel. To do this they would compass him in the city, keeping him within the walls of the city so that when the day came, they could kill him. They would fasten the bar which bolted shut the gate of the city, cutting off all means of escape. In the morning, the victory would be theirs over their enemy, and the champion of Israel would be brought low. This was not, however, to be the end of Samson, for we know that Samson arose at midnight, and left the city. Not being content with just breaking out of the walls of the city, he proceeded to take with him the doors of the gate of the city, the two posts, bars and all, which he put upon his own shoulders and carried out of the city and placed on a hill in the direction of Hebron, a city about 20 miles to the east.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit which acted upon him, Samson had taken away the power which the men of Gaza had over **their own city**. Their gate had been lost out of their control, and in the process their hold upon Samson was lost as well.

Our subject deals with possessing the gate of the enemy. One example can be seen here in the life of Samson. We would like for you to keep this image in the back of your minds, that of a strong man empowered by the Spirit of God, proceeding forth against his enemies, taking away the control of their own city.

Promises Made to Abraham

As we keep these things in mind, we would like to consider the promises made to Abraham, as recorded in Genesis 22:17-18.

That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

The promises made to Abraham are fundamental to our overall belief and knowledge of God's plan for the earth. Here we find that after Abraham obeyed the voice of the Almighty in willingly putting his son upon the altar to slay him, the Almighty again confirmed His promises to Abraham. These promises include the declaration, that "thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies." We are not left in

doubt as to whom this seed is for we are told through the divinely inspired words of the Apostle Paul that, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to **thy seed, which is Christ**" (Galatians 3:16). So we know that the Abrahamic promises are primarily related to Christ. We also know that these promises are secondarily related to those who are Christ's through baptism and heirs according to the promise. "And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29).

Regarding the possession of the gate of his enemies, how does this relate to Christ? One way which we often think of is how the Lord Jesus will return to this earth to conquer the nations. He will possess their kingdoms and establish his own as spoken to us in Daniel 2:44, "And 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 pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

The Fall of the Kingdoms of Men

The striking of the Stone (our Lord Jesus Christ) upon the great image of Nebuchadnezzar's vision is elaborated by Bro. John Thomas in Eureka Volume IIB, page 263:

"This Babylonish kingdom in its latter-day manifestation, the Spirit styles apocalyptically, "that Great City Babylon;" and is the arena upon which will stand erect and complete in all its parts the entire Image, which, in these latter days, is to be smitten by THE STONE, or Angel of the Rainbow.

Now, a similar fate awaits the Roman House that in the days of Belshatzar befel the Chaldean House of this same kingdom of men. . . . Cyrus the Persian, besieged the Shinar House. He dried up "the great river Euphrates" from the city; and marching their "sanctified ones" along its bed, captured the House of the Kingdom, and slew Lucifer, the Son of the Morning, with the sword. But in these things that were transacted against the original Babylon, there was a mystery. Cyrus, whose Hebrew name *Choresch*, which is a contraction of *Chayoraish*, signifies *Like the Heir*, was, as his name was intended to express, the type of Christ in the execution of his mission against "the Great City Babylon" of the latter days. Yahweh's sanctified ones, the Medes and Persians, under Cyrus, were also typical of the saints, who with Christ Jesus "the Heir of all things," and "joint heirs with him," at the head of the armies of Israel, are to enter the Great City when "the great river Euphrates," in a political sense, shall be sufficiently "dried up" to admit of their passage through into the Roman House of the kingdom of men, in which they will slay the Papal Lucifer- "the Beast and the False Prophet"- the Little Horn that has Eyes and a Mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. The great river Euphrates, which flows into the Great City, has dried up greatly; that the way of these kings from the Sun's rising may be prepared: . . . what, then, remains, but that Yahweh whom we seek should suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant whom we delight in? and having broken, as a thief into the strong man's domain, bind him with chains and cause Babylon to fall, no more again to rise and curse the world with her cruelty and deceit.

Thus, through a latter day capture of the gate of his enemies, our Lord Jesus will accomplish the taking of the gate of his enemies promised to Abraham, causing the final and permanent ruin of their city and forever vanquishing their power to subvert the word of God through their sinful practices.

The Gate of Those Which Hate Them

The possession of the gate of the enemies is also recorded as a blessing upon Rebekah by her family as she departed to meet Isaac. In Genesis 24:60, we read, "And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let **thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.**"

Again, our thoughts turn to the destruction of the nations and the establishment of God's kingdom. The anti-typical Isaac (Jesus the Christ), when joined to his bride Rebekah (the redeemed saints) will go forth to conquer the gates of their enemies, and to "Rejoice over her, *thou* heaven, and *ye* holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her." (Revelation 18:20) These verses give reference to those things yet to be accomplished at the *second* appearing of our Lord on this earth.

We can also see how the work of Christ in his *first* coming fulfils the promise that Abraham's seed will possess the gate of his enemies. Considering the language addressed to Abraham and to Rebekah, we see the terms "enemies" and "those which hate." This hatred, we believe, can be traced back to the garden of Eden where the serpent was told: *and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel* (Genesis 3:15).

This enmity, or deep hatred, provides us with an enemy which the seed of the woman (who is also the seed of Abraham) must contend with. The battle of this enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman must produce a victor.

Christ himself gave reference to this in parable as recorded in Luke 11:14-22. In verses 21 and 22 we read:

When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

The strong man armed who keepeth his palace is sin in all its forms. But in Christ, we find one who is stronger and able to overcome him, spoiling his goods. Jesus was able to demonstrate to the people that he was that stronger man, through his healing of those who were afflicted with the results of sin. The denying of sin in the days of his flesh became the manner in which he would overcome and defeat his enemy, which is death itself.

If sin and death were the enemy of Christ, what would we call the gate of his enemy? Certainly, this would be the grave and its power to hold those who have been condemned to death by sin. The gates of the grave hold within them all who enter, except for those who can find some means of deliverance.

Drought and heat consume the snow waters: so doth the grave those which have sinned. (Job 24:19)

I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes. (Hosea 13:14)

The process of coming forth from the grave required a ransom. Someone to redeem them from the death. We know, of course, that this ransom was paid through the blood of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Not only was Christ able to emerge from the grave to conquer sin, but in the process he was also able to establish a method by which others could follow him. He is the first fruits, and by him others will follow.

The Keys of Hell and of Death

Remember again our analogy with Samson. Not only did Samson escape from the city, but he took with him the bars and the gate itself! No longer did the men of Gaza have power over their own city. Christ has in effect done the same.

I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. (Revelation 1:18)

Christ possesses the keys of hell (the grave) and of death. This verse can properly be seen in two ways. First, Christ has the ability to raise from the dead those who are his for judgment in the last days, and secondly, he has the power to raise them to spirit nature, where death hath no more dominion over them. The remarkable method in which Christ was able to be a victor over death, by first submitting to its hold, and then coming forth out of the grave through the working of the Almighty's power according to his oath is recorded in 1 Corinthians 15:54-57:

*So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us **the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.** (also in Isaiah 25:8)*

Abraham's Possession

We would like to make mention of one interesting fact. We know

that Genesis 22 records that Abraham was promised that his seed would possess the gate of his enemy. We have related this to the idea of Christ possessing the keys of the gates of the grave and of death. It is interesting that in Genesis 23 we have the record of Abraham going out to the inhabitants of the land to make a purchase. What was it that he had need to get for a possession?

*And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre: the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan. And the field, and the cave that is therein, were made sure unto **Abraham for a possession of a buryingplace** by the sons of Heth. (Genesis 23:19-20)*

Perhaps it was coincidence, but it is noteworthy that Abraham's sole possession of land in the days of his flesh was that of a grave. One day Abraham's greater son, the Lord Jesus, will return to this earth with the keys to unlock that grave and deliver Abraham, Sarah, and all of the faithful to a possession of everlasting life and inheritance in his Kingdom.

But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:57)

Rodney Dodl

Correspondence

In the Day Thou Eatest Thereof Thou Shalt Surely Die

A reader writes in part:

Dear Bro. Mike:

Greetings in Israel's Hope! . . . I was wondering about an issue that has been on my mind for some time and I thought I would see what your view is on it. Lately, the view that Gen. 2:17 means an "immediate slaying" of our first parents on the day they sinned has been pushed to a degree I have not seen before. I have also read that some view this issue as the root cause of Amended/Unamended differences. I have always understood the subject basically the way it is in "Elpis Israel." What is your view of this?

*In Christ,
Sis. -----*

Our reply:

Dear Sis. -----

Thanks for writing. I will try and set forth my view of this issue as best I can. First, let me state that this is my view and not necessarily that of the TG committee.

Honestly, I have gone back and forth on this issue over the years. I read *Elpis Israel* before coming into the Truth and saw the events in Eden as Bro. Thomas sets them forth

therein. A few years later, having read Bro. Andrew's *Blood of the Covenant*, I came to see the matter as he did. In more recent years, however, I have come back to how I originally saw it.

The *Statement of Faith* declares this concerning the events in Eden and the Edenic law: *That the first man was Adam...and he was placed under a law through which the continuance of life was contingent on obedience.* (Article 4)

It is important to note that the *Statement of Faith* does not specify whether the law meant an immediate slaying on that day or whether death was to commence on that day (i.e. a process ending in death). It simply states that continuance of life was contingent upon obedience. Article 5 then details the fact that Adam broke this law, and was sentenced to return to the ground from whence he was taken. And, of course, Article 3 details that it was this *position* and *state* to which man had been brought because of sin that necessitated the appearance of Christ. It does not say that it was an "immediate violent death" that necessitated the appearance of Christ.

The view being promoted today, which you allude to in your email, seems to be that if you understand the Edenic law as meaning "a process ending in death" then your

understanding of the atonement is somehow deficient. This goes a bit far in my view. For example, the notion has been put forth that if you believe in the *process* view then you must conclude that Christ could have died a *natural death*. I have never known any Christadelphian, who believed in the process view, to have concluded this. And this certainly wasn't Bro. Thomas's conclusion. One can understand the verse to mean that death was to commence that day and still recognize the need for blood-shedding and that the righteousness of God was declared by the public demonstration of the rightful end of sinful flesh in the sacrifice of Christ.

Believing in the *process* view doesn't mean one misunderstands the atonement, nor does believing in the *immediate violent death* view, for that matter. However, I would suggest there are some concerns with the *immediate violent death* view that do not arise if it is understood as set forth by Bro. Thomas. Here are some of them: (And again, let me state clearly, that I am not suggesting by putting these forth, that someone who believes in the *immediate violent death* view is somehow astray. I personally do not believe that this particular detail of the events in Eden rises to the level that some apparently feel it does.)

First, I am not fully satisfied with the

immediate violent death view because it could be argued that the serpent told the truth. The serpent stated: *Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.* If the Edenic Law meant they would be slain on the same day they transgressed then the serpent told the truth, **because they weren't slain on that day.** I have reservations about a view that forces this conclusion.

Second, is it not at all reasonable to understand the meaning of the Edenic Law in the context of the actual sentence passed? Our first parents were no doubt "dead" in the eyes of the law the very day they transgressed (Eph. 2:1). But, this death would be carried out by a process of corruption and resolution to dust. The sentence was *for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.* And this really gets into the "Hebrew idiom" issue. The Hebrew idiom, as I understand it, expresses not so much the immediacy of an issue, but **its certainty.** This **certainty** Bro. Thomas fully understood (See *Elpis Israel* pp. 70-71, Logos Edition). So whether it is immediate or a process, the Hebrew expression is putting forth the **certainty** of the outcome; namely, death. As mentioned, this is consistent with the *Statement of Faith*: Adam sinned and **certain** death was the result. This is what **must** be understood.

Third, there is also the issue of "substitution." Some have pointed out that the lamb in the garden, pointing forward to Christ, "paid the penalty" of the Edenic law. It will also be said that God "inflicted" a "violent" "punishing" death on His Son to pay the penalty of the Edenic law for Adam and Eve, and ultimately the race. Now Bro. Andrew recognized this issue of substitution in the *Blood of the Covenant* and covered himself on it by saying that Christ was a *continuation as regards nature*, and I accept this. I do not believe that Bro. Andrew, or anyone else who agrees with him on this point, is teaching a substitutionary atonement. However, the real issue is: How should we understand what the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished in his sacrificial work? The whole purpose of Yahweh in the earth is *as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of Yahweh* (Num. 14:21). The atonement was the ultimate thing that brought glory and honor to the Father. Was the glory of Yahweh manifested by God "inflicting" a "violent," "punishing" death on his only begotten Son? Or was the glory of Yahweh manifested in the loving, perfect obedience of His Son, who put down the flesh in his life at all times (this was a 33 1/2 year long **process**), and then performed that crowning act of obedience by **voluntarily** submitting to a death whereby the flesh nature would be destroyed (cut off) and rightly shown to be only related to death and

condemnation? The glory of Yahweh was unquestionably revealed by the latter.

Fourth, this subject, in an indirect way, also bears on the responsibility question. Bro. Andrew's *Blood of the Covenant* contains a great deal of "legal logic" which is quite good and helpful in trying to understand the Creator's dealings with mankind. Bro. Roberts himself commented that it contained *a number of good things.* However, there is also a measure of inconsistency in it as well. One of the main premises of the work is that God cannot or will not resurrect any outside of covenant relationship, who have knowingly rejected the Gospel invitation, for to do so would violate his own law (specifically the Adamic sentence of death). However, the very first thing Bro. Andrew has the Almighty do is violate his own law! If the Edenic law meant immediate slaying on the day they sinned then we have the Almighty disregarding his own law. The explanation for this is that He only did so because another of His attributes then became operative namely, His mercy. The mercy and grace of Yahweh were no doubt the reason for the continuance of the race and for the providing of a Savior (Gen. 3:15). This is the case whether the Edenic law meant an immediate slaying or a process. But driving this point to an extreme would only prove the notion that God is able to bypass His own law. One could argue that if He can bypass the Adamic sentence of death because of His mercy, then He can most certainly bypass it for the sake of one of His other attributes (His justice) and bring forth some, who are outside Christ, to a resurrection to condemnation, if He so chooses. Conversely, if He did not violate His own Law in Eden, this could be used to prove that He will not violate His own Law concerning resurrection out of covenant. In each case, the point unduly pressed, only results in proving the opposite! As you may observe, to press either point to an extreme can only result in confusion. Logic has its place when reasoning out the scriptures, but it should not be used to make our fellow brethren offenders for a word, regardless of which belief on this point one may hold.

Finally, a few words of Bro. Roberts come to mind. In 1888, reflecting on the "renuciationist" controversy and the "partial inspiration" controversy, Bro. Roberts observed that both were *characterized by an animus* (attitude or disposition) *against Dr. Thomas' writings.* I do not believe this issue is anywhere close to the above mentioned controversies in importance. However, we need to be aware of Bro. Roberts's comment today in things that are put forth. Are certain views promoted because they oppose what Bro. Thomas taught? This bears on your point that some view this issue as the root cause of Amended/Unamended differences. Is it

really? Or is it just being put forth as such? Unamended believers should bear in mind that this was an issue that Bro. Williams himself struggled with (see *Selected Works of Thomas Williams* pp. 488-489) and in more recent years the "violent death" view was very much opposed by the main instrument of the Unamended community (see the February 1987 *Christadelphian Advocate* pp. 27-37). It would certainly be a sad day in the Unamended community if it becomes no longer acceptable to understand this issue as set forth in *Elpis Israel!* Bible students in the Unamended community, particularly our young students, should be admonished that they will never go astray by combining with their Bible study the sound expositions of Bro. Thomas. In fact, the student of God's word will experience a mental engagement of spiritual meat known by few in the earth.

I hope I haven't created even more confusion in your mind. Again, this is an issue that I myself have gone back and forth on. I do not believe we need to be a trained lawyer to grasp the principles of atonement. In fact, taking an overly legal approach is something that can sometimes develop extremes that stifle us from applying the principles of atonement in our daily lives and in our dealings one with another. It is how we apply the principles of atonement in our lives that creates the necessary balance and this God desires us to understand and perform.

I will leave you with a couple of good quotes from Bro. Islip Collyer's book *Conviction and Conduct* which have been helpful to me. He wrote: *Some attempts have been made to explain the sacrifice of Christ as if it had arisen out of the complications and technicalities of imperfect human law. God's law has been treated as if independent of His will, and the whole subject has been obscured* (p. 112). And again on p. 115 he writes: *When the apostles speak of the sacrifice of Christ they make no effort to develop a technical argument such as would appeal to a lawyer, and if only we can clear the mind of false impressions, and get back to the apostolic definitions, the difficulties vanish.* This, in my view, is good advice when it comes to the endless analysis of the technical meaning of the Edenic law. We must be careful that we are not thinking up legal quandaries concerning the atonement where none exist.

In the hope of Israel,
Bro. Mike

A Gleanings...

The Truth as Expounded by Bro. Thomas Finality

To the charge of holding "*that the knowledge of Scripture, in the writings of Dr. Thomas, has reached a finality...*" **WE PLEAD GUILTY.**

If we were ignorant or unfamiliar with the Scriptures, or were like those who when they attempt to write or speak, have to look at them through the telescope of dictionaries, concordances, and such like, we should not have ground sufficient to entertain this conviction; but our acquaintance with them in daily intercourse for a lifetime enables us to be confident on the point.

Our reading has not been confined to the Scriptures, or to the writings of Dr. Thomas. We have read what others have to say in many realms of human thought. We have, therefore, all the materials to form a judgment: and our judgment is distinctly to the effect imputed - that, *in the writings of Dr. Thomas, the Truth is developed as a finality, and that they are a depot of the Christian doctrine.* In this sense we are "committed to Dr. Thomas."

Dr. Thomas has been laid aside in the grave for a season: and so long as God permits life and health, we shall defend the mighty results of his labors against all

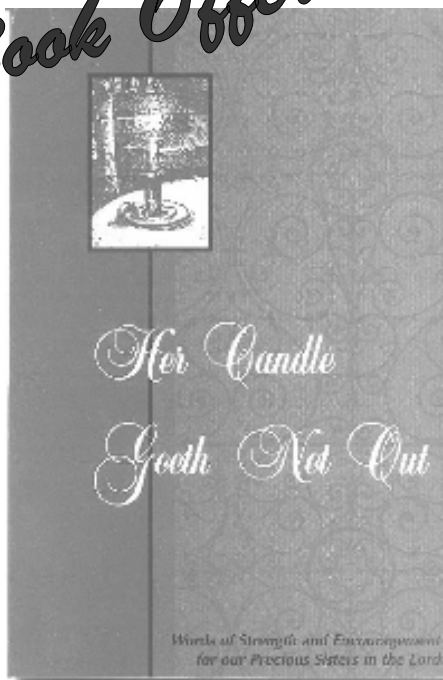
ridicule and opposition from friend or foe. Were he in the land of the living, some who are in hostility would be in a different attitude towards him. When he appears, they will be ashamed.

Meanwhile, God who used him in the doing of His work, lives to note the gap made by his death, and the results which were not unforeseen to Him. In His sight, and with His help, we shall hold fast to the Truth brought to light by his means; and, please God, will rejoice with him at the near-impending realization of all the hopes of the saints, in the day when bitterness of present warfare will only add sweetness to the hour of triumph.

We shall try to endure the odium which calls this a dictatorial spirit. The clear perception, strong choice, and resolute defence of that which is true and good is not the offspring of dictation; nevertheless, if enemies or friends choose to consider it so, we must heed them not. It is this spirit that enables a man to say at last - "I have fought a good fight: I have KEPT THE FAITH!"

Robert Roberts

Book Offer



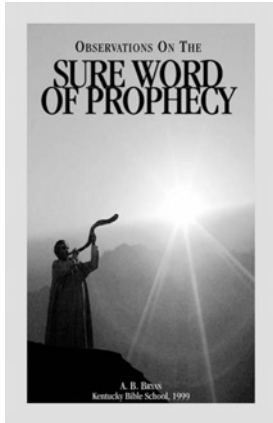
A new Christadelphian work titled, Her Candle Goeth Not Out, is now available for purchase. This 65-page booklet is a compilation of essays by experienced sisters on living the Truth, words of encouragement and comfort concerning: Our Hope, Our Attitude, Study Habits, Marriage, Children, and other topics. We believe that this booklet will be of interest for all Sisters, although it was written primarily for our young sisters. The following is an excerpt:

"A child must be taught to love the events of the Ecclesia. They must develop a desire to go to Sunday School, to Bible classes, to hymn sings, to gatherings, to Bible Schools. How does this desire come about? This desire comes about by THE EXAMPLES WE SET with early training in their lives. They need to see from us, their parents, that knowlege and wisdom in the Truth is most important and the reward is much greater than anything the world has to offer."

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The Truth Gleaner is published quarterly by the Truth Gleaner Publications Committee. Articles submitted for publication may be sent to the Editor, Michael T. Jasionowski, at email@truthgleaner.org. The committee welcomes donations to help defer the cost of publication. They may be sent to:
Truth Gleaner Publications / 23240 Brouwertown Rd. / Howey-in-the-Hills, Florida 34737.

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