

The Berean

*A Christadelphian Magazine devoted to the exposition
and defense of the Faith once for all delivered
to the Saints; and opposed to the dogmas
of the Papal and Protestant Churches!*

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

Please send ecclesial communications to:
Bro. Jim Phillips, 592 PR. 3004, Lampasas, TX. 76550 USA
Assisted by bro. Fred Higham
Email: jkphil2222@yahoo.com

Song of Songs	466
King of Kings from the Berean Christadelphian, 1952	480
Temples by H. A. Sommerville	484
The Millennial Pilgrimage of the Nations by John Thomas	489
What Sets the Heart on Fire by John Thomas	494
Thus Saith Cyrus, King of Persia, Berean Christadelphian 1952	497
Hints for Bible Markers by Beryl Snyder	502

...they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Song of Solomon

The purple colors is the speech of the groom

The blue color is the speech of the bride

The yellow color is the speech of the daughters of Jerusalem

Son 1:10 Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold.

Son 1:11 We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver.

Son 1:12 While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.

Son 1:13 A bundle of myrrh is my wellbeloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.

Son 1:14 My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi.

Son 1:15 Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes.

Son 1:16 Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed is green.

Son 1:17 The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir.

Son 2:1 I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.

Son 2:2 As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.

Son 2:3 As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

Son 2:4 He will [shall] bring me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

Son 2:5 Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love.

Son 2:6 His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.

Son 2:7 I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he [it] please.

Song of Songs Part Three

As we come to verse ten of chapter one, we come to the first section of the bride and groom graphically praising each other. We have mentioned before the uniqueness of this Song in this respect, especially from the bride's perspective. Throughout all the pages of the Scriptures, the emphasis has been on the failings of the bride. We are provided with many lessons concerning what we are not to do, along with the consequences of failure. But in this Song, all is praise.

It is only logical that there must be a reason why God will redeem his chosen few. This song gives us that reason. We all know that the reason God saves the few out of this world, is that He redeems those who reflect

His glory. Bro. Thomas taught us long ago that the plan and purpose of God was not human salvation, but rather, God manifestation. Manifestation means to declare, or exhibit. Deity's chosen name reflects that.

Deut. 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD:

This would be more properly reflected as:

Deut. 6:4 Hear, O Israel: He who shall Be Mighty Ones, is He who shall Be.

The “Mighty Ones” expressed in the name of Deity are those who embrace and reflect His character. Those of the few who Deity will glorify. And those are they He celebrates in this song.

The first characteristic that is attributed to the bride concerns her cheeks and neck. Her cheeks, say her groom, are beautiful with rows, probably a reference to the binding of garlands, or wreathes around her cheeks, and under her jaws. Her neck with chains.

The cheek or jaw among the redeemed is always set with the purpose of going straight forward in our work. The work of garland, made of the vines of plants and wrapped around our lower faces, are the reward to the victorious. The plants from which the garlands are constructed demonstrate our hope in eternity. The groom sees the bride, already awarded the great price, and enduring to the end, and he celebrates her great victory.

But the garlands also keep our face straightforward, not turning away in difficulty, not shrugging away from the work. Our cheeks and jaw stands strong, confident in the garlands, and set for the defense of divine principles.

But our cheeks, the groom knows, suffers greatly. And he knows what great strength it takes for his bride to hold her head straight in the face of such adversity. Remember Micaiah as he stood before King Ahab?

1 Kings 22:21-24 “And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him. And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade *him*, and prevail also: go forth, and do so. Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee. But Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near, and smote Micaiah on the

cheek, and said, Which way went the Spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee?"

The Christ-groom knows the difficulty to speak what is true, not fearing retribution from the Chenaanah class of men, but remaining steadfast in obedience to divine principle. It was written of the groom himself:

Isa. 50:5-8 "The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed."

And therefore to us he commanded:

Matt. 5:39 "But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."

The term for neck is consistent with the thoughts that come through for the cheek. Specifically, what is referenced is the back of the neck which bears the burden of the load. Because the bride has willingly born the burden she was assigned, she is considered as decorated in chains. The chains, no doubt are to her honor, as are the garlands; but they also reflect her steadfastness to her principles in the face of hard work under adversity. As she said earlier, "They made me keepers of their vineyard."

Next (v. 11) we see the daughters of Jerusalem promising to do great works for the Bride and Groom. We see this as the children of Israel (God's fillies) begin to construct the tabernacle in the wilderness.

Exo. 35:5-10 "Take ye from among you an offering unto the LORD: whosoever *is* of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD; gold, and silver, and brass, And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' *hair*, And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood, And oil for the light, and spices for anointing oil, and for the sweet incense, And onyx stones, and stones to be set for the ephod, and for the breastplate. And every wise hearted among you shall come, and make all that the LORD hath commanded."

Exo. 36:5-6 "And they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the LORD commanded to make. And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither

man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing.”

The people brought much more than what was required, when they perceived it required by the groom and the bride, yet 12 times these same people rebelled in the wilderness.

The same thing happened when David was acquiring things for the construction of the Temple.

1 Chron. 29:6-9 “Then the chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers of the king's work, offered willingly, And gave for the service of the house of God of gold five thousand talents and ten thousand drams, and of silver ten thousand talents, and of brass eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron. And they with whom *precious* stones were found gave *them* to the treasure of the house of the LORD, by the hand of Jehiel the Gershonite. Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the LORD: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy.”

The daughters of Jerusalem, those who cannot yet commit to being the bride, desire to do good, but as Jesus said in his parable of the sower, some have little earth, and they whither, some are blown about by every wind of doctrine, and some spring forth bringing great amount of fruit becoming the bride. It is the commitment we are willing to make, which defines the difference. As sinners, we are saved by faith. As saints, we are saved by works.

We now come (v. 12-14) to the first place where the bride celebrates her groom. And what we see her first celebrating is the redemption her groom provides. Spikenard, Myrrh, and Camphire are all symbols involved, one way or another, in redemption. When a man realizes that he is a dying creature, the first thing he tries to find is a cure for whatever is ailing him. That cure is found by the bride through following the footsteps of the true shepherd. He, alone, it is who provides such a redemption from the tragic disease called sin and death.

The bride begins her praise noting that it was her spikenard which gave pleasantness to her groom the King, at his table. The literal translations all choose “circle” to replace “table.” This more closely resembles the most notable use of spikenard in the Scriptures, which of course was

Mary's anointing Jesus with Spikenard six days before the Passover, when in Bethany, the night before his triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

That evening in Bethany, Jesus was surrounded by his close circle of associates, all apprehensive about the things that would follow, knowing full well that the authorities were lurking for Jesus to make an appearance. Had the disciples all not said, when Jesus set his face to go to Jerusalem for the Passover feast:

John 11:8 “*His* disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?”

John 11:16 “Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

After dinner, no doubt the meal which broke the Sabbath fast, Mary broke open an alabaster box and poured the spikenard ointment on Jesus' head. The fragrant, oily substance flowed from his head, down his body to his feet, where Mary washed his feet with her hair.

The Song of Solomon is the only place in the Old Testament where the spikenard is mentioned. It was an extremely precious ointment. Judas, upset over Mary's act of love and benevolence, claimed that the amount of spikenard poured on Jesus was worth 300 denarius. A denarius was generally considered a day's wages, so the value of the spikenard was virtually equivalent to what a laborer might make in a year. This makes the spikenard the most valuable of ointments. As Mary was expressing her willingness to part with all that she had for her saviour, so the bride in the Song expresses her wishes that she should provide only the best for her groom and King.

The plant from which spikenard is derived is a plant about a yard tall, with pink, bell shaped flowers. Interestingly, the part of the plant that produces the fragrance is not what you can see by looking at the plant, but from the rhizome, a part of the root of the plant which grows underground, and which becomes the root for future plants. In this we see that the true splendor of Christ lies in his death and resurrection, providing the basis for the forgiveness of sins in his death, and then giving life not only to himself, but to the bride who celebrates his death and resurrection.

Of the three spices the bride mentions in connection with the groom, the most prominent throughout the Song is myrrh, which the bride says she holds close to her breasts. The King James reads as if she is holding the

groom between her breasts, but it should be read as the myrrh which she is clutching all night. The Jewish Publishing Society translates it:

Song 1:13 “My beloved is unto me as a bag of myrrh, that lieth betwixt my breasts.”

Betwixt her breasts, really means that she is clutching the bag of myrrh close to her heart. She is expressing a love, her emotional attachment to the groom for what he will do. She clutches her thoughts of him in his trials, next to her heart.

Myrrh comes from several types of scraggly, poorly leaved, small trees, seldom higher than nine feet; that grow in the worse locations imaginable. These, as a class, are called the myrrh trees. Their pitiful appearance gives us to understand the words of the prophet Isaiah who told us:

Isa. 53:2 “For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him.”

That truly is the myrrh tree. Now to harvest the myrrh spice from the tree, men go by and with a spear or sword, put a gash into the sides of the tree. This piercing of the sides of the tree, calls to mind Jesus’ being pierced in the sides, hands and feet. The Psalmist wrote in Psalms 22:

Psa 22:16 “For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.”

Over time, a liquid begins to come out of the gashes in the tree, a bit watery at first, which is called the stacte, which is one of the ingredients used to burn incense inside the holy place. Because of the damage to the bark in the piercing of the tree, there are resins or gums which form over the scar. These harden over time into a reddish-brown resin, which interestingly, are called tears. This calls to mind Jesus, as he prayed for strength against the great trial he was about to endure:

Luke 22:44 “And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.”

These tears are then gathered up and stored a bit longer, till they fully harden. Then they are crushed to give off their aromatic splendor. It is impossible not to see the similarities in the sacrifice of Christ to the creation of myrrh.

Myrrh was intimately involved in the worship services of the law. Usually, it was mixed with something else. In the case of the Holy

Anointing Oil, it was mixed with Cassia, (which is a bark from a tree similar to Cinnamon,) Cinnamon, Calamus (which is a spear-like plant with a sweet smell) and olive oil. In the incense for the incense altar, it is mixed with Onycha (also called the Rose of Sharon, a pretty little white flower with five petals, symbolizing the law), Galbanum, and Frankincense, both resins from trees like myrrh itself.

Myrrh might be mixed with gall, to form a pain killing drink, such as they offered to Jesus on the cross; or they might be mixed with aloe, to form a healing salve such as they used as they wrapped him for burial.

Myrrh had been one of the gifts the wise men of the east had brought to Jesus at his birth. They brought him gold, because he was a king. They brought him Frankincense because he was a priest, and they brought him myrrh, because he was the purifying sacrifice.

So that the bride should clutch the myrrh close to her heart shows her love of her groom who would endure such a trial that she might live. Next she exclaims that her groom is to her, as a cluster of camphire near the vineyards of Engedi.

Camphire again focuses us directly on the atonement. Camphire is directly translated from the Hebrew word “Kopher,” which literally means “ransom.” Ransom means to pay a price for deliverance. This was something that no man by himself, no matter how accomplished, could do for another.

Psa. 49:6-7 “They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him:”.

Man could not of himself do this, but the King, the great groom of this Song was the ransom. Jesus himself said this:

Mark 10:45 “For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

There is much confusion over the term “ransom” in the Christian world around us, as to what the ransom Christ paid, was. The Christian world believes that in his death, Jesus paid the price of a violent, vicarious death which we are all due, do to sin, that we all might go free. The logic of this fails on the most basic level. If Jesus paid the price of our death, then we ought not to die, which we do. If the ransom is paid, why does the penalty continue to exist?

Jesus paid the price of our ransom in his death, but the ransom paid was the declaration of the righteousness of God.

Rom. 3:24-26 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; To declare, *I say*, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

In his death, Jesus declared (exhibited) the righteousness of God. The word “declare”, here, really means to exhibit. God set Jesus forth to be our propitiation, our Mercy Seat—the place where we go for the forgiveness of our sins—through faith in his blood. The things that were accomplished in the death of Jesus exhibited to the world that God alone was righteous, and sin-cursed man was not. When we acknowledge this—have faith in this—God is willing to forgive us our sins. This declaration of God’s righteousness, this destruction of the diabolos on the cross is the ransom that Jesus paid for us.

Heb. 2:14 “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil (diabolos, sin’s flesh).”

Jesus did not destroy the Christian world’s devil on the cross, as they constantly warn us of his supposed actions to this day. Nor did he destroy sin, as others tell us, as man continues to sin continually. No, what he destroyed on the cross was the body he bore, which when properly understood and believed, was the ransom for us all.

Now, while the word Camphire literally means “ransom,” it is also the name of a flower, today called the Henna plant. The flowers are white and golden in color, and give off a very pleasant, perfumed odor. These flowers are made into a dye that is golden in color. The mercy seat, or propitiation of Rom. 3:25, which is beaten out of pure gold, is thought to have given this plant its unique name—ransom.

But the leaves of this plant are quite famous for its use as a red dye. Thus we get the true picture of the ransom. The reddish plant grew to blossom into the vivid and odiferous display of the white of righteousness and the gold of tried faith. So it was with the groom. He was born of a woman, born red in sin.

Psa. 51:5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

But he blossomed into such a plant that in the last year of his life, after walking quite publicly amongst them for two and a half years, he could confidently ask:

John 8:46 “Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?”

Now this cluster of Camphire is said to be in Engedi. In so saying, the bride is again noting the beauty of her groom, among a world of desolation. Engedi is an oasis on the west coast of the Dead Sea. It is little but baren rocks and desert, till one comes to the oasis of Engedi. David hid from Saul among the rocks of Engedi, while Saul searched for him among the rocks and the wild goats. It was here that David found Saul asleep in a cave and cut off the skirt of Saul’s robe. And in the kingdom age, Engedi is noted as a place where fishermen shall spread their nets, against what is today, quite literally a Dead Sea. The following is a note from a travel agency about the Dead Sea:

“Located on the border between Israel and Jordan, the Dead Sea is one of the most intriguing natural phenomena on Earth. Aside for some microorganisms and algae, this salt water lake is completely devoid of life. There’s no seaweed, fish or any other creatures found in or around its turquoise waters.”

So the clusters of camphire at Engedi expresses the brides understanding of the trials of her groom, that he is her ransom, her salvation, and her King. That he becomes so through great personal tribulation and anguish. And she loves him the more, for it.

Having completed for now her praise of her groom for the redemption he has provided her, the groom acknowledges the things she has said. He praises her for her fairness, that is, how pleasant she is in his eyes, and he notes a quality in her eyes. Previously, he had commended her for her steadfast dedication, her unwillingness to be moved in the face of adversity. And now he recognizes her source of understanding. She has doves’ eyes.

Eyes symbolize knowledge and understanding. It is the source of all learning. The dove was the peaceful anointing of the Holy Spirit on Jesus at his immersion in the Jordan River. In seeing her eyes as “doves’ eyes” the groom is commending his bride for her understanding of the divine plan of salvation, in having seen him as the glorious source of her own redemption.

She instantly affirms that this is in fact what she sees, and that she knows that her redemption, leads to immortal life. Our bed (couch), our place of rest is green, that is, full of life and growing, not withered, or even capable of withering. And our house, our abode is crafted of cedars and fir. These are hard woods, ones that endure.

So the picture as we close chapter one is the Groom commending the Bride for her unwavering dedication to the divine teachings she has learned in following the paths of the Shepherd, those paths set forth in the law, the prophets and the Psalms concerning her groom; and her confidence that through the redemption she has in him, she will gain eternal life. When He saw her a slave in Egypt, He saw in her his fair bride. He saw in her a complete dedication to him, and He called her out of Egypt. In setting forth His divine principles, she understood them, and embraced them, never losing her desire to bring along with her, her sisters, though her efforts brought her much tribulation.

Chapter two begins with the groom identifying himself as a distinct lily among the lilies. He calls himself the rose of Sharon. Sharon was a plain north of Joppa and south of Mt. Carmel, between the mountains of Israel and the Mediterranean Sea. It was an area where those with livestock loved to go to allow their flocks to feed.

On these plains, there sprung up without any cultivation, a plant of the lily family, a beautiful purple plant called the Meadow Saffron. It bloomed a lone purple flower on a stock with no leaves in the fall, the leaves appearing later.

In Jesus referring to himself as this plant, he is identifying himself with the lily, to the flower to which he compares his bride, while at the same time showing that he was formed, not by the will of man, but by the will of God. We see this lesson given to the bride, over and over again in the Scriptures.

Exo. 20:24-25 “An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.”

The lesson is that man could not, of himself, save himself. It was needful that God should provide a saviour. For no man, born entirely of human design would ever be able to be that ransom for mankind we wrote earlier

of. For this reason, the mother of the groom praised God for her son who would be the altar made without hewn stone, and that flower which would spring apart from human cultivation this way:

Luke 1:46-47 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

Having now brought attention to his uniqueness, the groom again praises his bride for her similar uniqueness, in that she had set her face firmly towards him, and stood out in a population made up mostly of thorns.

Thorns has been used by God from the beginning to represent the challenges and obstructions that would be in the way of mankind because of sin.

Gen. 3:17-18 “And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;”

Often these thorns are said to be in the sides, but sometimes even in the eyes, making discernment of the path of the shepherd difficult.

Josh. 23:13 “Know for a certainty that the LORD your God will no more drive out *any of* these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you.”

But his beloved stands among the thorns, certainly not untouched by them, but having struggled through the traps, and the entanglements the thorns present, she has been able to blossom into her groom’s desire.

How was she able to do so? She now tells us. It is because her love for her groom surpasses all other things in her life. Her whole desire is to sit in the shade of him, her most fruitful tree, and to be taken into his banquet house, over which the banner is love.

The bride understood from the beginning that the saviour was to be unique among men. And so she describes him as a tree bearing sweet, refreshing fruit that one might come upon in a forest of trees bearing fruits only satisfactory for the common animals of the forest. But the fruit he provides exceeds all else. His fruit is unique. It is different. It provides life. In making this point, David began his Psalms this way:

Psa. 1:1-3 “Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

And Solomon likewise observed:

Pro. 11:30 “The fruit of the righteous *is* a tree of life; and he that winneth souls *is* wise.”

This is what the bride understood her groom to be, and why she compared him to a fruitful tree among the forests. He was to be righteous, and to declare the righteousness of God for the redemption of sin. He was to do what the law could not do, which was to give life. And so she desired to sit and bask under the shade of this bountiful tree.

She longed to be taken to his banquet house. This literally translated is “the house of wine.” Again we see the bride’s focus to be on redemption. The wine poured out represented the blood of Jesus, poured out. And as we have already pointed out, it was poured out to declare the righteousness of God.

In some circles, we are told that the blood or wine represents life. That the blood prophesies that we are saved by the life of Jesus. This is a complete misunderstanding of the symbols. The symbol is explained to us in Leviticus.

Lev. 17:11 “For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar, to make atonement for your souls; for it *is* the blood which maketh atonement for the soul.”

It is not merely blood which makes the atonement, but blood upon the altar is that which makes the atonement. Blood upon the altar is poured out. Blood poured out is death. This is what is intended by the symbolism. It is the death of Christ by which atonement was made.

Her great desire to be taken to the house of wine demonstrates the brides great desire for redemption. It is a desire for the fulfilling of Jesus’ words:

Matt. 26:29 “But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.”

Then will the bride come into the house of wine—the banqueting house—having obtained redemption through her groom, with the banner over her being love.

Was love not the greatest commandment and the second greatest commandment under the law? This is the banner that hangs over the bride.

Mark 12:28-31 “And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.”

These are the commandments upon which all the law and the prophets hinge. This is the commandment that Jesus gave his disciples in his last address to them as he walked among them.

John 15:12-17 “This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 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.”

This is the banner the true bride desires to fly over her. The banner is earned, for the true bride will have demonstrated her love by enduring the thorns and standing, at the last, as a lily among the thorns. She demonstrated her love by actions. Jesus put his bride to the proof:

John 14:15 “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”

That is the test. That is the proof for whether or not we are the bride. Do we desire then banner over us to be love, and are we worthy of such a banner? The bride is.

In closing out the first section of the Song, the section prior to the appearance of the groom, the bride makes an appeal to the daughters of

Jerusalem, or those who either are learning the truth, or who know it but have not yet committed to it. Her appeal may at first, seem quite strange.

The appeal is not to not wake up love till it is ready. The King James reads as if the daughters of Jerusalem are not to wake up the groom till he is ready, but this is not the case. Note the italics on the word “my” in the KJV.

The bride is warning the daughters that to commit one’s life to Christ is a serious commitment. It is a powerful obligation. It should be taken with the utmost aforethought, and dedication. But it is a step that should be taken.

The bride charges the daughters by the roes (gazelles) and the hinds (does, or female deer.) To “charge” here, is taken from a word meaning to take sevens. That sounds strange to us, but it hearkens back to a time when one would swear seven times to affirm a thing. The bride is again emphasizing the seriousness of this undertaking.

The gazelles and the feeding does give us the idea of gracefulness and peacefulness. But both are also on what we might describe as hair triggers. They are elusive. They are ready to move on at the first sign of danger. Such is our life in the truth, and why the bride would adjure those coming to the truth to understand what they are committing to.

The truth, by itself, is very beautiful, logical, and peaceful. It is as graceful, (full of grace) as the gazelle. It is as peaceful as a herd of deer foraging on an open plain. But the truth doesn’t exist anywhere, in such a vacuum where this characteristic is apparent, except within the ecclesia—and then only when the ecclesia is well maintained. And the ecclesia really had not been formed, during the time described in the first two chapters of this Song.

The thorns, the smiting on the cheeks, the distractions to the path of the shepherd, and the attacks on the character of the bride elect are the norm, for which we must always be on guard, and ready to take the steps necessary to preserve the truth. Usually, this means fleeing from the thinkings of the flesh with their corruptions that are more attractive to the masses and fleeing to the narrow and confined path of the Shepherd. The challenge the bride is making to the daughters of Jerusalem is that she must be prepared for this:

2 Cor. 6:17 "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you,"

King of Kings

This article appeared in the Berean Christadelphian for 1952 when the now deceased queen Elisabeth's father, King George VI died suddenly at the young age of 56. The article seems appropriate for today, simply remembering that it is the death of Queen Elisabeth II, which has occurred.—JP

At the time of writing a cry of anguish has rent the British nation. "The King is dead." The Prime Minister declared: "My friends, when the death of the King was announced to us yesterday morning, there struck a deep and solemn note in our lives which as it resounded far and wide, stilled the clatter and traffic of 20th-century life in many lands, and made countless millions of human beings pause and look around them." On this occasion it appears fitting for us also to "pause and look around us," not of course in the way indicated by the words of Mr. Churchill but in relation to our own position in this day and age.

As strangers and pilgrims in the midst of a decaying order we must not allow the reelings of nationalism to affect our hearts and minds beyond what is commanded, but at the same time we must not go to the other extreme by acting as revolutionaries. One sometimes meets those within the fold who tend to regard those in authority with feelings not in accord with the Scriptures. The apostle Peter states—

"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well; for so is the will of God.

"Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king" (1 Pet. 2:13-17).

We are therefore enjoined scripturally in accordance with the word of God to observe with due deference "those in authority," and the prophet Daniel clearly puts the position when he says that "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will" (Dan. 4:7).

We are exhorted to do the will of God and not to be in conflict with His purpose, but we observe present day events with absorbing interest, for so many signs proclaim the day of the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords.

All the present perplexities that confront those in authority during this storm-tossed age will present no difficulty to Christ, the Anointed of God, who with a mighty and out-stretched hand will restore law and order where there is at present only anarchy. Peace and righteousness will be the order of his reign. The psalmist in the Spirit paints a beautiful picture in Psalm 72. Moreover, Christ's power will be omnipotent as the Psalmist again reminds us in Psa. 2—

"Ask of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron: thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now, therefore, ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth!"

And returning to Psalm 72:

"Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him."

This 20th century, with all its "clatter and traffic" already referred to, and its general apathy and avid wickedness, is undoubtedly the period when the tremendous impact of spiritual power comes into collision with the powers of this present world.

We therefore do well to "pause and look around us" for, as "called-out ones" from the present order, we must take stock and ask ourselves individually if we are going to fit into this new and spiritual order. The invitation to each one of us is to become kings and priests in the Kingdom of God. In other words, we are potential rulers in the future constitution soon to be set up in this sin-stricken world, and if the preparation in the *natural* order requires such a thorough study and application to fit the holder of the crown to rule in the kingdoms of men, we must give the most earnest consideration to *our* high and holy calling.

In the present structure of human society there is much that offends, within the various worldly kingdoms, and indeed much that is anathema to the Creator in the character of those that rule. It will not be so however in God's Kingdom, for its order will be not only peace, but *righteousness*, and being in perfect tune with the Infinite, its rulers will be in complete accord with its constitution.

The City of God wherein the Supreme Ruler will exercise his kingship, and which will be the seat of Government, will be characteristic of the whole Kingdom; of this City we read:

"There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27).

"Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14).

"For without (outside) are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" (5:15).

Our calling is therefore so lofty, beloved brethren, that there is nothing in the present age that can be used as a plumb line or yardstick to guide and direct us. Our course is plain, and we must look unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, for in looking to him we are looking to the world's future ruler and only in this way can we really visualize the nature of the order over which he will rule.

It is said that in those who command obedience there must first have been the will to obey within themselves, and in Jesus we have that divine assurance that he completely subjected his own will to that of his Father, "Not my will, but Thine, be done" (Matt. 22:42).

Here was the most perfect obedience for it involved the giving of his own life in the cruel death upon the cross. If we would be co-rulers with him there must, then, be complete *obedience* to will of God.

Again, if *righteousness* be the order of that reign (Isa. 32:1) it must be a characteristic of those who are to reign with him, and this is confirmed by Jesus himself for does he not say,

"Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness . . . Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:6, 10).

In these days of warmongering also, those who would reign with Christ must remember that *peace* is another attribute of that future glorious reign. This again is commended by Christ—

"Blessed are the peacemakers."

And this is peace in complete perfection as spoken of by the apostle Paul, who in writing to the Colossians says,

"Let the peace of God rule in your hearts,"

and to the Romans,

"To be *spiritually-minded* is peace."

It is not possible to enumerate all those attributes that are required of those who would inherit the glories of the future age but that moving passage of the apostle Paul in writing to the Philippians will convey something of those things that remain, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Yes, we do well to pause and ponder—if we are not to be castaways. The history of the Truth right through the ages has been one of division, falling-away from the commandments, and a lowering of spiritual standards, and during the last few years the process appears to have been accentuated. Bre. Thomas and Roberts sowed the seed in the last century to great profit, but today we see what was once a united household, riven from stem to stern, and there are those who even decry the labors of our late brethren. Let us not be among their numbers for we undoubtedly owe our position of hope to their efforts.

In this connection let us conclude by a few words from the pen of Bro. Thomas. In Eureka III he refers in part 4 (starting on pg. 594) to the prophecy in Eze. 38:13 concerning the power or powers that challenge Gog, the Northern Invader, when he comes down upon the mountains of Israel.

"Sheba, and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil?"

He then produces evidence to establish that Britain and her associates are the challenging power to the Northern hordes, and that following upon her maritime disasters in the Red sea (Psa. 48:7) she will have to decide whether to have peace or war with Christ and the saints, whom he describes as the New Arabian Power.

He then proceeds,

"If the British Sheba Cabinet have acquired accurate knowledge of its divine Elohist character, there is sufficient Millenarianism in high places, to counsel and to cause it to seek as a suppliant, the favor of the 'greater than Solomon;' so that, as protector of the Tenth in the midst of the land, including the ancient territory of Tyre, it might be accepted, after the examples of Hiram of Tyre and the Queen of Sheba, as the humble servant and ally of 'The Great King.' This arrangement, of course only temporary, would fulfill Psalm 45:12, 'The daughter of Tyre with an offering, even the rich of the people, shall intreat thy favor.'"

There were many brethren of old who believed that the late Queen Victoria would lay her crown at the feet of the King of Kings, but time proved that their hope was premature. Much has happened since then, however, and (unknown to the world in general) the purpose of God has moved rapidly forward, and as we write Queen Elizabeth is being acclaimed following the death of her father.

Time for the preparation of meeting our Lord may well be short and we do well to examine ourselves:

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock."

Temples

The Temple of Solomon was exactly twice the dimensions of the Tabernacle in the wilderness constructed by the Children of Israel according to the pattern that Moses received in the Mt. Sinai. The Tabernacle was 30 cubits long and 10 broad (which is considered 45 to 55 ft. by 15 to 18 ft., the cubit being 18 to 21 inches). Like the Temple later, it required much gold to overlay it (see Exod. 38:25).

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

The length of the Temple that Solomon built was 60 cubits, its breadth 20. It was a fixed building constructed of stone (the Mosaic Tabernacle being a movable structure of wood). The Temple was of 3 parts—the porch, the Holy Place, and the Most Holy—the porch being additional to the above dimensions, for the king divided the house proper into 2 parts: the inner (Most Holy) *being* 20 cubits long, and the Holy Place being 40.

The whole interior was lined with woodwork, richly carved, and overlaid with gold—the gold of Ophir (1 Chron. 29:3-5). The Temple was 7 years in building (1 Kings 6:38)—an obvious type of the living Temple that God is developing in the earth over a 7000-yr. period. It was built around 1000

B.C., just about exactly in the middle of the 6000 years that precede the Millennium.

Before the Temple stood the 2 brazen pillars—Jachin and Boaz ("Established" and "Strong")—which were 18 cubits high, beside the chapters (capitals) 5 cubits more. The Temple differed from the Tabernacle in having little chambers which were for the abode of priests and attendants, and the keeping of treasures and stores.

It was David who proposed to replace the Tabernacle with a permanent building (2 Sam. 7:1-3). The gold and silver prepared and donated by David has been estimated to have been in amount as much as 2 or 3 billion dollars' worth. The Temple was built on the site prepared for it by David—once the threshing-floor of Ornan, or Araunah, on Mt. Moriah, which David had purchased (1 Chron. 21:24-25). Solomon's Temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar.

THE SECOND (ZERUBBABEL) TEMPLE

After the return of the Jews from captivity we learn there was another Temple constructed (Ezra 6:3-4). This was built by Zerubbabel about 520 B.C. The 3 "rows" of stones (Ezra 6:4) are thought to be 3 "stories." The dimensions are not less than those of Solomon's Temple (see v. 3).

This latter point may seem strange in view of the fact that the ancient men who had seen the Temple of Solomon wept when they saw the new one being built (Ezra 3:12). However, it lacked the lavish display of gold and silver and the grandeur which characterized Solomon's, so that may account for the weeping, together with all the memories of the past glories of their nation, and the calamities which had come upon it, that would be brought to their minds on this occasion.

HEROD'S TEMPLE

This was still not the Temple that Jesus and the disciples saw, for about 500 years later (as Josephus states) Herod tore this one down to erect another on the same site. This was the one of which *it* is recorded in Jesus' day (John 2:20)—

"Forty and six years was this Temple in building."

The ruins of this Temple still show in places, resting upon the foundations laid by Zerubbabel, and beneath them the more massive substructures of Solomon's Temple. While the stones of Solomon's Temple were very massive, yet they were dressed where they were quarried, so that there was no sound of the hammer or axe in the erection on the finished site.

This is confirmed by recent discoveries of an ancient subterranean quarry with stones like those used in Solomon's Temple, ready dressed. They would, no doubt, be moved on rollers down the Tyropoean valley to the very site of the Temple. Here again we have a beautiful type of the hidden preparation of the stones for the living Temple, each in its natural place, so that when they are brought together on the final day all will fit together perfectly.

There will be no hammering or shaping then—it will be too late. Those that do not fit will be rejected.

EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE

The ignorance which prevails concerning this Temple is reflected in the brevity which characterizes the account of *it* in Smith's Bible Dictionary. There it receives a bare acknowledgment, with the explanation—

"It is not a description of any temple that ever was built, or ever could be erected, at Jerusalem, and can consequently be only considered as the "beau ideal" of what a Semitic temple should be."

However, by the aid of our pioneer brethren we are able to understand this vision of Ezekiel was in perfect harmony with other prophecies of the restoration of sacrifices in the millennial age, as from Eze. 20:40-41 and Isa. 56:7, where we see the declaration of restoration of sacrifices (when Israel is restored) is made.

The same verse in Isaiah also speaks of this future Temple as the "House of Prayer for All People," thus connecting sacrifice with universal prayer. And see Isa. 60:7—

"All flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on Mine altar, and I will glorify the House of My glory."

Aside from such testimonies from other prophets, Ezekiel in his vision not only describes the Temple so minutely that it has been followed by architects, but he also tells of the offerings to be made therein. Eze. 40 begins the vision and description of this Temple—much larger than any we have been considering. Ch. 42:13 speaks of the "meat offering, sin offering, and trespass offering." In 40:46 he tells of the "chambers for the priests, the keepers of the altar."

Chap. 40:38-39 speaks of washing the burnt offering, and of tables whereon to slay the offerings. Ch. 40:44 speaks also of "chambers for the

singers," indicating other parts of the service as it was in the time of the former Temple.

Hence, we can realize that this Temple is not merely (as some commentators teach), "A dream which can never become real," but a divine, detailed prophecy of the magnificent "House of Prayer for All People" which shall be erected when Christ—the "Prince" of Ezekiel and Daniel (Eze. 44:3 & Dan. 12:1)—shall come.

A REAL TEMPLE IN A REAL KINGDOM

The important thing to become familiar with is—not just the dimensions of this great Temple—but the fact that it is a REAL prophecy of a Temple which shall be built at Jerusalem when Jesus sets up the Kingdom for which he instructed us to pray—

"Thy Kingdom COME: Thy will be done on *earth* as it is done in heaven."

That our Savior knew of this House of Prayer to be erected for sacrifice as stated in Isa. 56:7 we know, for he quoted that very passage when he overthrew the tables of the moneychangers and cleansed the Temple. This we see from Mat. 21:12-13.

There have been other temples erected by the Jews at various times, having no connection with God's purpose. Josephus tells of one built in Egypt (like the one at Jerusalem, but poorer and smaller) by Onias, after requesting permission from King Ptolemy and Queen Cleopatra. He supposed he could thus fulfil the prophecy in Isa. 19:19, and he quoted this prophecy to justify and support his act.

We often quote Rev. 5:10 ("Thou hast made us kings and priests, and we shall reign upon the earth") mainly to prove that the saints will be kings and will reign on the earth. Yet *it* also proves that the priesthood (though changed Heb. 7:12) was not abolished, as some suppose.

MEMORIAL SACRIFICES

The fact that our "great High Priest" has come and made the anti-typical offering for sins is not in conflict with testimonies which assert that offerings will be made again, for such offerings point back to Christ's offering, just as those of Aaron pointed forward to it (Eze. 40:39). Is not our present Breaking of Bread a MEMORIAL that "Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us"?

Significantly, we note that Ezekiel closes his prophecy with "And the name of the city from that day shall be Yahweh-shammah—"The Lord is There."

Surely, we can perceive that this Temple shall be built by Christ and his righteous saints (with the nation of Israel regathered, as prophesied—Jer. 30:37-44; 33:15-26).

That the righteous are described as a "living Temple" in which God dwells by His Spirit, or Living Word of Truth, does not in any wise dispose of all the many testimonies of restoration of sacrifices, when the great Temple which Ezekiel saw in prophetic vision will be erected. This is also borne out by Zechariah's prophecy (14:16 to end). Note v. 21 speaks of sacrifices in that day—

"Every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein."

When we realize that the Temple of Solomon was a world marvel for grandeur and beauty and we consider how it was only for mortal priests to minister in for one small nation; then we may well believe that this great Temple for immortal, as well as mortal, priests to minister in for the whole world, will far surpass any Temple the world has ever seen.

The measuring reed of the angel Ezekiel saw was 6 cubits (of a cubit and a handbreadth—that is, of the larger cubit) which would be about 11 feet (see Eze. 40:5). The outer measurement of this vast structure was 500 reeds each way (Eze. 42:16-20). Surely, we are awed by the vastness of this colossal Temple—over a mile long and a mile wide!

"I looked, and behold, the Glory of the Lord filled the House"

Chap. 45 tells us the Temple, or sanctuary, will be placed in the Holy Portion of the land, when the land is divided for Israel's tribes to inherit: also that the Prince and the Priests will dwell in this Holy Portion.

THE LIVING WATERS

Chap. 47 furnishes the description of the environs of the Temple, with a picture of waters issuing "from under the House." V. 5 describes it as a "river that could not be passed over." These waters purify the Dead Sea and are so healing that they abound in fish of many kinds (v. 9). Here again is a wonderful type of the Waters of Life that will go forth in the Kingdom to heal the Dead Sea of the nations of the world—the sea that today is lashing and tossing in its fury, a "troubled sea that cannot rest—casting up

mire and dirt." We call to mind the prophecy of Isa. 33:21—

"But there the glorious Lord (Yahweh) will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby."

The waters of Shiloah, the "many waters" of the great multitude of the redeemed, the glorious company of the incorporate Yahweh-Name, will be free from the domination and merchandising of the present great ships of traffic and war, ecclesiastical and political, that bear rule over the waters of the earth today—"the kings and merchants of the earth, every shipmaster, and as many as trade by the sea" (Rev. 18:3,17), who traffic in the waters of great Babylon.

May we keep these things in remembrance, and be among those found faithful, that we may be with our Lord when—as "Prince of the Kings of the Earth"—he will rule and minister in this Great Temple which Ezekiel saw in vision. —H. A. Sommerville

Millennial Pilgrimage of the Nations

By brother John Thomas

The Kingdom of Christ having been established upon earth by force of arms, it will afterward be confirmed and conducted with judgment and mercy. In the present dispensation, or "times of the Gentiles" the character assumed by the Lord Jesus Christ is that of "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

He is now solely employed as High-Priest to the House of God, but when he shall appear in the clouds of heaven, he will come as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" laying aside for a period all his attributes of peace, and assuming that terrible power—that ineffable majesty—belonging to him as King of kings.

Again, after he has asserted and established his claim to universal dominion, he will assume a third character—combining the two that went before. He will at once be the Lion and the Lamb—full of grace toward all his faithful subjects, but full of terror toward the disobedient and disloyal. His kingdom will be at once the most beneficent and the most despotic that the world has seen; allowing no opposition, exercising no arbitrary oppression.

During the whole period of the Millennial Reign, it is scripturally evident that Jerusalem will be the capital of Israel, as *in* the time of David; and it is equally certain from Isaiah 40 that Israel will be the foremost people of the earth. But in addition to this it must be remembered that, as the Lord shall be King of all the world, it will become necessary to establish some center of union, some *universal metropolis* which shall serve to bind all nations into one, and be regarded as the capital of the world.

Every great empire of history has possessed its central point, and its capital city. From the days of Nimrod and Babel, from the stupendous sepulchres of Nineveh down to the present age, we find traces of the capitals of departed empires. Babylon, Susa, Seleucia, Rome, Constantinople, Paris—have each in turn been the central points of imperial power, and of discordant nations. Tribes and races, hostile in temper, and in complexion and habits, have met together in peace within their walls.

In order, therefore, to form a grand center of union, the Lord will erect Jerusalem into the CAPITAL OF THE WORLD, and make it the seat of the first and last universal empire. And he will institute a *center of attraction* within the center of empire. The experience of ancient times pointed out long ago the wisdom of this method. The Olympic games of Greece, the games of the circus celebrated at Rome, the Golden Idols of Jeroboam, were all designed as centers of attraction within the centers of union. The three great festivals of the Jewish law were evidently appointed with reference to national *unity* as well as religion.

The whole civilized world flocked to the Olympic and Roman Games; and the nations of Greece or of the Roman empire were taught a lesson of fraternity. But the garb of peace was stained with the violence of war. The fierce encounters of the Olympic competitors suggested ideas of personal violence, and physical rivalry. The Roman games, the most atrocious scenes in the history of man, covered the amphitheatre with blood.

But the kingdom of Christ will admit of no deeds of blood; its political and social combinations will be effected by a system of attraction equally original and divine. "And it shall come to pass that every one that is left of all the nations that come 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."

This prophecy of Zechariah describes in a few words the great religious and political engine by which the empire of the Son of man shall be

consolidated into one. The Feast of Tabernacles will form the attraction through which all nations shall be brought together in perpetual fraternity.

And Jerusalem—as the place appointed for the Feasts—will become the center of attraction, and the gathering point of all nations of the earth. It will thus be made the capital of the world, and supersede those capitals of commerce or fashion which have been so long the centers of attraction alike to frivolous and wise.

The introduction of the Feast of Tabernacles during the whole continuance of the reign of Christ is, in every point of view, one of the most remarkable and interesting subjects which is to be met with in Scripture. It offers itself alike to the consideration of the politician, the philosopher, and the spiritually-minded. There is nothing that takes in so wide a field of view, and presents such a variety of objects. It may not inaptly be called the *main hinge* of the Millennial Kingdom.

A politician when he first hears of the Millennial Reign will naturally ask by what means, without a succession of miracles, can all the world be peaceably united under some emperor? The political economist will call for statistical reports, and ask—what will be the condition of the people during the Millennial period? The Feast of Tabernacles affords an answer to both inquiries at once.

It gives us the political machinery and the statistical report at the same time. If we consider it statistically, it gives us the exact measure of the state and the prosperity of the world. It is a common question, indeed, with all prophetic inquirers—what will be the condition of the people at large during the Millennial Reign?

And in what way are we to measure the material prosperity of that period? The Feast of Tabernacles furnishes the measure "All nations shall come up from year to year to Jerusalem." But Jerusalem is situated in the center of the world, at an immense distance from the greater part of the nations. But it is not only said that all nations shall come up, but that *every one that is left* shall come up. Here is, then, a universal pilgrimage of mankind, rich and poor, from the furthest extremities of the earth to Jerusalem. Such a pilgrimage as was never conceived before.

Man boasts now of the increased prosperity of the world—of the means of conveyance, which exceed all the conceptions of former times—of our miraculous advance in the power of locomotion; and yet, what after all is the result? A voyage to Jerusalem is an undertaking which no poor man

ever dreams of, except through absolute necessity; which even many rich men consider as too costly.

The idea of *whole nations* going up to Jerusalem would be considered as the dream of a lunatic; it would indeed be physically impossible, since there are not sufficient means of conveyance, nor resources for defraying so vast an expense, nor are there supplies in the Holy Land, or coast, to enable such an assemblage of mankind to hold together for a month.

What would be thought of the conveyance of the working men of England to the shores of Palestine? And of the working population of France, or Germany, or Holland, at the same time? Such a thing would be impossible in the present state of the world. All our improvements in travel would be unequal to the task.

The pilgrimage of the Eastern nations to Mecca and Medina is perhaps the greatest movement of mankind in modern times. The first crusade was also an immense movement which carried forward the population of Europe upon Asia. But these vast emigrations were attended with hardship and loss of life, which can never be imagined during the reign of peace. The pilgrims of Mecca perished in the desert. Half the first crusade was extinguished before *it* reached the confines of Asia.

But it will not be so in the Millennial Reign. There will be no destruction by the way; nor can we have any faith in the Millennial Reign, or the goodness of God, if we imagine that the pilgrims of the Feast of Tabernacles will be allowed to perish by the way like the Mussulmans or Crusaders.

Let us reflect upon the subject in a statistical point of view. In the first place, we are struck by the evidence which it affords of the immense progress of mankind in the arts of locomotion, so as to render so long a journey secure, convenient, or even possible.

In the next place, it is proof of the wealthy and prosperous condition of all classes of the people. What working man would now be able to take a journey to Palestine? How much less could he bring his family along with him, or provide for their support during his absence.

Again, what would be the effect of a general emigration in suspending the agricultural and manufacturing industry of nations? The world could not go on—the course of society would come to a stop—public and private misery would ensue—and the human race would sink into universal

insolvency. The present state of things is so artificial, so complicated, and so liable to mutation, that it could not endure, year after year, the attacks of these vast interruptions. The whole fabric would be shaken to pieces by this annual movement of its supporting columns.

But not so during the reign of Christ. What is impossible or dangerous now, will then become practicable and safe. The stability of the divine government will prevent all mutation—the presence of the Great King will shed fertility and wealth upon all the earth—whatever is done shall prosper, and none shall make them afraid. When the Lord shall be King over all the earth, he will fulfil the long delayed promise of Psa. 72—

"In his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth."

Thus every man shall prosper in the work of his hands, and possess both the means and the courage to undertake the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Whole families will unite together, whole neighborhoods vie with each other, with holy emulation in contributing either to the numbers or to the expenses of the pilgrims.

For the first time since the creation, mankind shall be aroused to universal movement without the scent of blood! The vile thirst for gold, which now agitates the world, shall be changed for a nobler passion—the desire to behold **THE KING IN ALL HIS GLORY**. And every man who lingers at home, will be reproached as insensible to his highest privilege, and be shamed into compliance with the world-wide impulse.

This universal pilgrimage is also an evidence of the peace and security of those times. At present, it would be equally unsafe for large bodies of men to quit their own country, and leave it open to the enemy; or to permit the passage of whole nations through intervening kingdoms. Pillage, violence, and bloodshed, have invariably accompanied great movements of mankind, however peaceable their original intentions.

The consciousness of numbers has encouraged the wandering hordes to indulge their love of spoil; and the apprehension of the nations whom approached, have called forth every feeling of hostility. But, under the reign of Christ there will be no more hostility—nothing to interrupt the intercourse of nations, or to deter the most timid from venturing upon the longest journey.

Thus the very existence of so vast a movement as that foretold by Zechariah is a certain indication of the general tranquility of the world. It

is also an indication of the general diffusion of wealth and prosperity, which will enable men of every rank to undertake so remote a pilgrimage.

The Feast of Tabernacles serves, therefore, for a standard of measurement by which the political economist may estimate the social condition and the material progress of mankind during the Millennial Reign; and as such it is one of the most remarkable prophecies in Scripture, full of meaning in every point of view: expressive of a complete renovation of society, and of an entire revolution in all the conditions of human life. Diffusion of wealth, universal prosperity, unbroken peace, and mutual good will, are all implied, as they are involved in this one prediction:

"All the nations that are left shall go up from year to year to Jerusalem."

What Sets the Heart on Fire

By BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

"Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them (Cleopas and his companion) in all the Scripture the things concerning himself"—Luke 24:27

This exposition of the Old Testament must have been of stirring and absorbing interest to these disciples, or they would not have said,

"Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

An exposition of Moses and the Prophets set their heart on fire—a fire which continues to burn so long as the believing mind retains, or "keeps in memory," and *dwells upon* the things of the Spirit revealed to them. This is the cause of the spiritual frigidity and deaths so all-pervading in this dark and cloudy day—Moses and the prophets are NOT expounded.

They have fallen into neglect as the annals of "an old Jewish almanac," of interest only to the student of Hebrew antiquities, all of whose attempted expositions evaporate in curious remarks upon Israelitish customs, and the fulfilment of a few types and predictions in the sufferings of Jesus.

Such archeological dissertations would have inflamed the heart of Cleopas as little as they enkindle those of our contemporaries. Setting the heart on fire by a narrative of facts unconnected with the scriptural exhibition of the *"glory that shall follow,"* is impossible, being contrary to the nature of the human mind as God has constituted it.

Cleopas was well acquainted with all the sufferings of Jesus, for he had witnessed them; yet did his Lord address him as a "Fool, and slow of heart to believe ALL that the prophets have spoken."

He "trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel." The baptism of Jesus in suffering produced no glowing of his heart so long as he perceived no prospect of redemption for the nation through Jesus. His heart was perplexed. The disciples of Jesus looked to him as Jehovah's representative, by whom "He would put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalt them of low degree," when he would "fill the hungry with good things, and send the rich empty away;" and "help His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy; as He spake to their fathers, to Abraham and his seed for ever."

The father of John the Baptist expressed their hope in Christ when he said, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel . . . for He hath raised up a horn of Salvation for us (Israel) in the house of his servant David . . . that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand (power) of all that hate us; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant; the oath which He sware to our father Abraham, that He would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life" (Luke 1:68:75).

But when Cleopas and the rest saw only the triumph of the Serpent-power over the Woman's *seed*, there was no burning of the heart, no "joy unspeakable and full of glory" through the crucified Nazarene. He had cast down no thrones of the mighty; he had failed to help Israel, who was still in the hand of the enemy; he had not accomplished the things promised to Abraham and his Seed; those of low degree were still in degradation, hungering after the good things denied by the rich; and he himself was to all appearance overcome.

He had "drunk of the brook by the way," and had not as yet "lifted up the head," or been exalted. Could he be the king "of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write?"

To set the heart on fire we must have a *comprehensive* view of "ALL that the prophets have spoken" concerning Christ. The want of this was the weakness of Cleopas, and the cause of ours. Jesus strengthened him by showing that Moses and the prophets taught that the Christ's path to glory

was *through suffering*. The connection between suffering and glory was the point illustrated in the conversation.

Had the Christ not suffered, Yahweh's holy covenant confirmed to Abraham would have remained without force; and so no right to blessings, spiritual or political, by individuals or nations, could have been obtained. "No exaltation without trial" is a principle of the divine economy which cannot be evaded by those who would attain to glory.

The disciples were slow of heart to perceive this until it was so strikingly illustrated in the sufferings of Christ. These were great, but greater still is the glory which absorbs the less.

Paul thought nothing of them, esteeming them as mere "light afflictions that were but for a moment;" because they worked out for him a "far more exceeding and ETERNAL weight of glory." In this, he followed Jesus; and exhorts us to do the same in imitating him. But, if we would be exalted to this indomitability of mind, we *must familiarize ourselves* with "the glory to be revealed."

This will make us invincible. The darts of the enemy will fall ineffective from our shield; and though "a spectacle by reproaches," we shall be strengthened by the might of truth, which is God's power, in the inner man, to obtain the crown of righteousness at last.

Jesus "opened to them the Scriptures," that they might obtain a view of the glory to which they had been called. How inestimable a blessing is the Bible open to the understanding! Gold and silver cannot purchase it; therefore the world is destitute of it; to the wise and learned it is sealed.

Money cannot repay our debt of obligation to him who opens to us the book. Cleopas and his companion could not have recompensed Jesus for setting their hearts on fire; for the understanding of "the Word of the kingdom" is life, and honor, and glory for evermore.

"Thus Saith Cyrus, King of Persia"

"Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia: The Lord God of Heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He hath charged me to build Him a house at Jerusalem, Who is there among you of all His people? Let him go up to Jerusalem and build the house of the Lord God of Israel. And let the men of his place help him with goods"

Why would a Gentile—an idol worshipper—make such a decree? And ON TIME! It came exactly at the end of the 70 years captivity that Jeremiah prophesied of, beginning in 606 B. C. . . . The word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah. This whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon 70 years."

How did this happen? We do not have to wonder, for Daniel records that "The Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men, giving them to whomsoever He will."

It is probable that the decree made by Cyrus was prompted by Daniel, who was his Prime Minister. Daniel constantly petitioned God for the return of the Jews to Jerusalem and it is only natural that he would make known his desires to Cyrus. Daniel may also have pointed out to Cyrus where he (Cyrus) was mentioned by name 150 years before he was born by Isaiah (44:28)—

"Cyrus, he is My shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built, and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid."

It would seem from Ezra 1:2 that Cyrus had seen these prophecies, for he says,

"God hath CHARGED ME to build Him *an* house at Jerusalem."

Many years before, God had given His people the commandments. If they obeyed these laws, they would be rewarded; but if they were disobedient, they would be punished. They chose the latter.

Haggai (who prophesied during this partial restoration) told them the evils they were enduring were fulfilling some of the curses that Moses said would come upon them for their disobedience. Very few received the lesson that was intended by the captivity. Very few returned to Jerusalem when given the opportunity. And troubling hinderances caused those that did return to cease the work. They consoled themselves with the thought

that: "The time has not come; we can do nothing because the time is not fulfilled that the temple should be built" (Hag. 1:2).

THE "GENTILE TIMES" BEGIN

When Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, he took captive many nobles. Among these we find Daniel. This period marks the beginning of the 70 years captivity, and also marks the beginning of the period known as "the times of the Gentiles." This latter period continues to the time of the end. Jerusalem is to be down-trodden "until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" (Luke 21:24).

When these few exiles returned to their own land to rebuild the House of the Lord it did not mark the end of Gentile rule; but only served to place a remnant back in their own land until Jesus came. Haggai and Zechariah witnessed the restoration of Israel on a small scale at the end of the 70 years of Gentile captivity. Do we not witness a restoration as the times of the Gentiles draw to a close?

God said that this destruction was done to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate, she kept sabbath, to fulfill three score and ten years (Jer. 25).

The 70 years captivity period came to an end with the victory of Cyrus over Babylon. From him came the decree to the Jews that they should return to their own land. At first glance it might seem that EZRA answered this proclamation; but we will find that it was ZERUBBABEL and JESHUA who led the people back to Jerusalem.

Ezra comes into the story 80 years later and is just recording these early events. His first 6 chapters deal with the return of the FIRST company of exiles (under Zerubbabel) who went back to Jerusalem in the reign of Cyrus, about 538 B. C. The next 3 chapters deal with the events of Ezra's own leadership of the SECOND company of returning exiles, about 457 B. C.

WHY WAS THE WALL SO IMPORTANT?

The writings of the prophets are most profitable to us when we can take their circumstances and apply them to ourselves. When we study Ezra, we should also read Nehemiah in conjunction. Not long after the arrival of Ezra in Jerusalem, Nehemiah heard of the conditions prevailing there. The Jews were being afflicted on every side and the walls were broken down.

We may wonder why the wall would have such great significance in Nehemiah's mind. This wall helped them obtain the SEPARATENESS that God desired in them (and in US). Is our wall broken to rubble? Do we walk in and out of the city at will? Do strangers come in and out? If this be the case, brethren and sisters, then let us, like the exiles who were reprimanded by Nehemiah, say, "LET US RISE UP AND BUILD!"

We need not build a literal wall that one may scale with a ladder. It would do us no good in this day and age. We must build a wall of complete separateness within ourselves. Let CHRIST be the protecting wall around us which can neither be scaled nor broken down.

When Nehemiah heard this sad news, he was very troubled. What reason did HE have to be troubled? He was safe in the position of cupbearer to the King of Persia. Why bother to even THINK about the evil conditions that prevailed in Jerusalem? Nehemiah, like other worthies of old, could not rest while God's people drifted further and further from God.

Nehemiah did visit his brethren in Jerusalem. How many of us would leave the luxurious comfort of the king's favor to go on a long perilous journey to help our brethren? Nehemiah put his life in the hands of God and trusted that he would be safe . . . and he was watched over. How many of us would find the time—or even putting it stronger—how many of us would WANT to find the time to go on a long dangerous journey to help our brethren?

"I PRAY THEE HAVE ME EXCUSED"

As in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, there are those who would think of nothing else but to go and help. But there are others of us who would find excuses like those in the parable by Jesus who were invited to the great supper. How selfishly temporal were their excuses.

One said,

"I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused."

Another said,

"I have bought 5 yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused."

We can all fill in common excuses of today that we use from time to time that keep us from doing the things we should. We do not have to mention them here. We can each think of our own personal excuses that we have used contrary to our better judgment.

Nehemiah, like Ezra, was a man of God. His devotion was not to the things of this world nor to his life of apparent ease (which, by the way, he must have fulfilled well to be in such high favor with the king). Nehemiah's devotion was to his God and then to the welfare of his brethren. Nehemiah considered his brethren more than his own welfare.

Many of us would do well to take heed and arise by night (as he did) and survey our building for the following weeks. We find Nehemiah in prayer and supplication to his God. He desired a good work, and it was granted unto him. His prayer was answered and not only was he granted leave by the king; but also material for the building and an escort was granted.

A WORKER, NOT A TALKER

When God chooses a man to do His work, He chooses a man with strong character. Nehemiah was a man of courageous severity—an ideal man for such a job. When sin abounds, a weak person is of no avail. But certain work needs certain workmen, and this work needed a man of determination tempered with love. We have often heard the expression— "He is a WORKER and not a TALKER." How aptly this fits Nehemiah!

When he was confronted with Sanballat and his scheming ways of trying to stop the building, Nehemiah's answer was always the same:

"I am doing a great work so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease whilst I leave it and come down to you?"

There was no need to talk. Nehemiah knew that Sanballat was only trying to hinder the work. Nehemiah had a task to do, and he was determined to do it. He did not waste time talking.

Have we hearkened to those Sanballats who try to talk us out of doing our job and doing it well, or do we, like Nehemiah, get down to business, disregarding all slander or talking . . . only looking to the end of the building . . . the time when it will be inspected by the Chief Inspector? Are we like those who, when some exceptionally hard building work is needed to fill a breach or repair a crack, can only find time to criticize and say,

"See! I told you! Fill it here and another hole breaks over there.

You are getting nowhere. No sooner do you repair one than another comes!"

Let us remember, brethren and sisters, it is **THEY** who are slipping backwards. Let us earnestly work—filling even the breaches that we have made ourselves. If we do this, then we will find no time for **TALKING**

about it. We will be **DOING** it instead. Not only must we rebuild that which is fallen down, but we must also guard it, watching for holes and cracks, ready to fill them with the love of God.

CORRUPTION

One of the worst destroyers that can attack our wall of separateness is the state that had overtaken the first company of returned captives:

"The people of Israel, and the **PRIESTS** and **LEVITES** have not separated themselves from the people of the lands. For they have taken of their daughters for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands. Yea, the **PRINCES** and **RULERS** have been chief in this trespass."

Ezra was confounded when he thought of the greatness of the sins of the people. He could not understand how a people who had seen the divine vengeance on their forefathers—which was still in evidence in their own day—could do such a thing. God had begun to show favor to a few of His people, and instead of responding with zeal to perform His laws, they soon drifted in the state in which Ezra found them.

The children of Israel suffered severely for their disobedience. And yet when God did see fit to return them to their own land, they soon forgot Him and lapsed into the same sins for which they had been punished—intermarriage with the nations around them.

A little beauty or wealth or earthly honor had been chosen rather than their own people. It has happened ever since God gave the commandment . . .

"When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hast cast out many nations before thee, thou shalt **NOT MAKE MARRIAGES WITH THEM!**" (Deut. 7:1-3).

Why? "For they will turn away thy sons from following Me, that they may serve other gods. For did not Solomon, king of Israel, sin by these things?" (Neh. 13:26). Brethren and sisters, if one so endowed with wisdom as Solomon was led astray by outlandish women, what chance had the children of Israel, or have **WE**, to stay separate? These marriages with idolatrous women were strictly against the law—both for them and us.

The original reason for this law against mixed marriage was the tendency it created to draw the people away from God.

SOLOMON FAILED

Let us remember, brethren and sisters, we are no different. We are human, not nearly so wise as Solomon—and he tried it and could not control it.

"And they made an end with all the men that had taken strange wives" (Ezra 10:17).

That is, they had investigated each case. We are reminded of another time when the children of Israel will stand before the great Prophet, Priest and King, to give account of past deeds. You and I will be there . . . but we will not be given a chance then to rectify our deeds. The time will then have come for us to be judged by our works whether they be good or evil. We will not be able to start anew for then we will be at the end. The race will have been run and each participant will stand before the Judge of all the earth.

Too late then to participate in the work of either building or re-building. Too late to mend or even to criticize. Today there is still time. For while we live, we have hope of improving. Today "let us rise up and build!" — Berean Christadelphian, January 1952

Hints For Bible Markers

Before continuing on with Psalm 18, we wish to clarify a statement which may lead to some confusion, "When Jerusalem was taken in AD 70, it was done in secret to all who did not believe the gospel". To do this, let us take a look at the opening salvos of AD 70. Most of the history proffered comes from *The Works of Josephus* by William Whiston under the section "The Wars Of The Jews Or The History Of The Destruction Of Jerusalem" which was written by Flavius Josephus. Also, we will use the old fashion style of citation rather the more modern citation using Latin, e.g. Wars of the Jews, Book 2, Chapter 17, Section 2 as opposed to *B. J. 2.17.2*. (*B. J.* standing for Bellium Judaicum, Latin for Jewish War.) Two more caveats, (1) we intend to paraphrase and condense some of the history for expediency's sake, and (2) direct quotes will be followed by citations in parentheses.

In AD 66 certain of the Jewish rulers and priests were thinking of rebelling against the Romans. "And at this time it was that some of those that principally excited the people to go to war made an assault upon a certain fortress called Masada. They took it by treachery, and slew the Romans that were there...Ananias the high priest, a very bold youth, who was at that time governor of the temple, persuaded those that officiated in the

Divine service to receive no gift or sacrifice for any foreigner. And this was the true beginning of our war with the Romans; for they rejected the sacrifice of Caesar” (Wars of the Jews, Book 2, Chapter 17, Section 2).

The Jews then began fighting among themselves, those for war with the Romans and those against, see Wars of the Jews, Book 2, Chapter 17, Sections 2, 3. “As a result of the unrest in Judaea, Cestius Gallus the legate of Syria, assembled the Syrian legion XII Fulminata, reinforced with units of III Callica, IV Scythica and VI Ferrata, plus auxiliaries and allies, a total of approximately 30,000–36,000 troops...The Syrian legion then invested Jerusalem, but for uncertain reasons and despite initial gains withdrew...(Wikipedia, First Jewish-Roman War, under section Timeline. 10/21/2022, 11:51 AM).

“And on the fourth day, which was the thirtieth of the month Hyperbereteus, [Tisri,] {Tisri = First month of the civil year and seventh month of the ecclesiastical year. Conforming to September/October. – BVS} when he had put his army in array, he brought it into the city. Now for the people, they were kept under by the seditious; but the seditious themselves were greatly affrighted at the good order of the Romans, and retired from the suburbs, and retreated into the inner part of the city, and into the temple. But when Cestius was come into the city, he set the part called Bezetha, which is called Cenopolis, [or the new city,] on fire; as he did also to the timber market;... Tyrannius Priseus, the muster-master of the army, and a great number of the officers of the horse, had been corrupted by Florus, and diverted him from his attempt; and that was the occasion that this war lasted so very long, and thereby the Jews were involved in such incurable calamities.” (Wars of the Jews, Book 2, Chapter 19, Section 4) The “incurable calamities” were the many deaths and the destruction until the fall of Jerusalem and Judea.

“It then happened that Cestius was not conscious either how the besieged despaired of success, nor how courageous the people were for him; and so he recalled his soldiers from the place, and by despairing of any expectation of taking it, without having received any disgrace, he retired from the city, without any reason in the world.” (Wars of the Jews, Book 2, Chapter 19, Section 7)

At this point in time the city had been surrounded by the Romans (Daniel 8:11, 12, 24; 9:26, 27; 12:11; Matthew 24:28; Mark 13:14; Luke 21:20) and to those whose eyes were open to understand and believed the prophecies of Jesus and Daniel, the opportunity to flee was provided when

Cestius withdrew the Roman legions. To the blind the words of Jesus and Daniel meant nothing, they were secret or hidden, so the withdrawal was counted as a victory. Therefore they stayed to fight on, blindly thinking they were going to win their freedom from Roman dominance.

We will close this clarification discussion of the history of the beginning of the Great Jewish Revolt with a quote of a footnote (number 30 in Wars of the Jews, Book 2, Chapter 19, Section 6) written by William Whiston where he says, “There may another very important, and very providential, reason be here assigned for this strange and foolish retreat of Cestius; which, if Josephus had been now a Christian, he might probably have taken notice of also; and that is, the affording the Jewish Christians in the city an opportunity of calling to mind the prediction and caution given them by Christ about thirty-three years and a half before, that “when they should see the abomination of desolation” [the idolatrous Roman armies, with the images of their idols in their ensigns, ready to lay Jerusalem desolate] “stand where it ought not;” or, “in the holy place;” or, “when they should see Jerusalem any one instance of a more unpolitic, but more providential, compassed with armies;” they should then “flee to the mound conduct than this retreat of Cestius visible during this whole rains.” By complying with which those Jewish Christians fled the siege of Jerusalem; which yet was providentially such a “great to the mountains of Perea, and escaped this destruction.”

Lord willing next month we shall continue on with Psalm 18

bro. Beryl Snyder