

# 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!*

**And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars;  
and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and  
the waves roaring; ...And when these things begin to come to pass,  
then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth  
nigh— Luke 21:25, 28 .**

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**...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**

# **Behold, Our Great High Priest**

**By bro. Robert Roberts**

In accordance with the words we have been singing, we have just now to behold our High Priest by faith. It would be a very great stimulus to our profession if we could for one moment enjoy the privilege which many of the disciples in the first century enjoyed; if we could but for a moment **see** our High Priest. This privilege we are denied, and so far, we are at a disadvantage; but our very disadvantage may work glorious things for us in the future. We draw consolation from the words of Jesus to Thomas, "*blessed are those who have not seen me, and yet have believed*" (John 20:29). We look forward with consolation to the prospect of seeing him, after believing. We shall see him, then, as the disciples saw him not. They saw him in his humiliation; they companied with him in the flesh for three and a half years; and there is no doubt he was great company even then: for the testimony of his enemies was that he spake as never man spake.

We can quite understand the strong feelings of affection that would be developed in the breasts of the disciples, by keeping the company of such a man for such a period. But they did not understand him as we understand him, and as we shall understand him when we see him; for they did not comprehend the full bearing of his mission, nor the full richness of his nature. They did not understand fully who he was; they believed that he was the Lamb of God, appointed to take away the sin of the world; but as to the way in which that was to be done, they evidently had no conception; for we find that when Jesus apprised them of the then imminent event by which the work was to be accomplished, they remonstrated against it. They did not understand him when he said he was to be taken away from them, and when he spoke about being delivered into the hands of the Scribes, Pharisees and Gentiles; and being mocked and spat upon, and despitefully entreated, and put to death, and that he would rise again the third day. It is said that they understood none of these things.

Their attitude on several occasions would show that they had not risen to the full appreciation of the master whom they loved and served: nor the position which they themselves occupied in relation to him. You will remember that on one occasion when Jesus sent two of his disciples to a certain village, to prepare the way for his advance journey, the people in the village would not allow him to pass through; and the disciples, James and John, whom Jesus surnamed Boanerges, or Sons of Thunder—which

suggests that they were fiery men, of zealous mind and prompt action—asked him if he would allow them to do as Elijah once did, call fire down from heaven to destroy the rebellious. Jesus said “*Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of:*” that is, the spirit to which they were related—the calling to which they had been called. They knew what their individual spirits were; but Jesus meant to say that they did not comprehend the spirit of their calling; for he said, the Son of Man had not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them. The disciples, however, were right to a certain extent. The destruction of the rebellious is a divine purpose. Christ came to save men’s lives, but it is also true that he is coming to destroy them. The disciples were wrong in the sense of being premature, and, perhaps, wrong in the particular motive that actuated them.

Christ did not come to destroy men then, but he is coming to destroy them; for it is one of the most emphatic testimonies concerning him, and one that occurs very often, in a variety of forms, that he is the instrument by which God’s vengeance is to be inflicted on the world. He is to tread the winepress of God’s anger, to plead with all flesh, and give them that are wicked to the sword. He is coming to destroy men’s lives, and there will be such a time of destruction, both of life and property, as the world has never known. When God enters upon the scene, to work upon the area of the whole world, as he will, you may depend upon it that something, of which we have no conception will mark such a great interposition. We have only to look for confirmation of this to what he did on a small scale, whilst bringing his people from Egypt. This will give us some notion of what he will do when he takes them out of every nation under heaven.

The Egyptians were subjected to continual and all manner of suffering. At one time, swarms of flies afflicted them; at another, loathsome frogs corrupted the land by their abundance; at another, the forces of heaven would contend visibly against the people, killing their cattle in the field, destroying their crops and killing all those persons who did not, on the intimation of Moses, withdraw to the protection of their houses; and, to wind up the dreadful tragedy, we find that a whole army was buried in the Red Sea. That is a small illustration of what God does when He interferes. It was not a matter of favoritism towards the children of Israel, and partiality against the Egyptians, for we find that the Israelites themselves, whilst wandering in the wilderness, were the objects of repeated acts of divine anger.

The Israelites were, of course, a mere rabble of slaves when they came out of Egypt, untutored idolaters. We learn from subsequent prophets that in

Egypt they worshipped idols, and that they brought the institutions of Egypt into the wilderness, and for forty years carried their idolatrous gods with them. Well, we find that a whole generation of them perished in the wilderness; but before that generation died out, what repeated manifestations of God's displeasure took place. The people were incessant in their rebellion against Moses and had not Moses been kept up by divine power, it would have been impossible for him to have maintained the leadership of so intractable a people, or to have consummated the object of the exodus. The people would have destroyed Moses and Aaron, and all connected with them, and would have straggled back to the land of the flesh-pots; but God repeatedly interfered just at the critical moment, and destroyed great numbers of them; and on one occasion a great company was swallowed up by the earth, with their wives and children and all that they had.

So that we can form some conception from what God has done, of what He will do in the greater time to come, when a greater work is to be done; for it is a far greater work to break the power of all nations than to break the power of one; to teach all the world than to teach one people. God's object, in the Egyptian tragedy, was to teach Israel and all nations that there was a God: and that work was achieved and effectually achieved.

The Jews at the present day are standing witnesses of the effectiveness of what God did, for it is simply a moral impossibility to eradicate from the Jewish mind the belief in their God. Three thousand years have passed away, and still, we find this faith in full and tenacious possession of every Jewish mind. The work was done most effectively, and the work in the age to come will also be done most effectively; but it is a more important work, and will involve more potent machinery; for God is to coerce the power of all men, and He has to write for Himself a name in the minds of untutored millions, and not the least difficult to manage of those untutored millions will be the civilized millions. These have in them a sort of intellectual insubordination that will constitute a greater obstacle than the ignorance of barbaric races, who will readily give way before what will irresistibly be done.

So, the disciples were quite right in thinking that it was part and parcel of God's dispensation in Christ, that his power should be made manifest; only, they were before the time. Everything is right in its place; out of its place, everything is wrong, and it was wrong that they should attempt any acts of judgment at that stage of affairs; and it is quite wrong for us to perform acts of judgment in **our** state of affairs. It is part of our calling at

the present time that we are not to resent, that we are to suffer, that we are to be passive like Christ. We are not to vindicate ourselves, but to suffer wrong, take it patiently, put our trust in God. Some people think it strange that God's will should be that we should suffer wrong. If they would think a little, the difficulty would disappear.

It is God's will that we should suffer wrong, not because it is right that wrong should be inflicted, but because it is good for us to endure. God is very angry at wrong being done, but for our sakes, He permits it at present. It is part of the trial by which He is preparing a people who shall be capable of wielding power judiciously when the time comes for Him to transfer the power of the whole world to the hands of Christ's people. We know that nobody is fit to rule except those who have suffered. Put authority into the hands of a novice, or one who has not learnt wisdom and mercy by suffering; and the result is caprice and tyranny. Those who have been at the bottom, as it were—those who have learnt by adversity the varied needs, the varied rights, and let us add, the varied wrongs connected with existence; those who have been disciplined to endurance, and patience, and self-denial by suffering—those only are fitted to rule; not those who impatiently pull the shoulder from the burden, who impatiently speak fiery words and do fiery deeds.

We can have this principle exemplified on a small scale as well as upon a large one. It has effect upon our little affairs now. God will judge us in reference to the things belonging to us, and within our power, whether large or small. If we are, in a small scale and in trifling matters, short-tempered and speak impatiently and do obstinate things, we are not fit to be entrusted with the rule of others. So that the object of the discipline to which we are subjected at present is in great part, that we may be tried, prepared, and educated to patience and submission by the evils of the present in order that we may be fit to undertake the merciful and judicious work of ruling men for their own benefit when the time comes. Jesus had not come to destroy men's lives at that time but to save them.

That exactly expresses our present relation to mankind. Our position at present is altogether one of benefaction to others; we are not at liberty to do any harm to anyone, even in self-defense; we are prohibited from doing harm. We must be like Christ: he was not only holy, but harmless. Now this means much that is above the ordinary practices of men. There are many ways of doing harm, of letting out your pique, of venting your spleen upon the object of your dislike. You leave him in the lurch in some matter and rejoice secretly at his misfortune. This must not be. You must help

your enemy when he needs it. We must do good: it is not sufficient that we refrain from doing harm. It is good to refrain from doing harm, and it is incumbent that we should. If we do not, we shall not be children of the Highest. How could we be children of the Highest, who only doeth good, and who when He performs acts of severity, does them for good—if we say and do malicious things, which, if ever so small in their way, are spiteful and hurtful? We must not only refrain from doing harm: we must do good; and this is a very different thing from the negative sort of virtue that is applauded in the world.

There is a far greater number of persons who refrain from doing harm, than those who do good. That is only saying that there is a far greater number who will not be saved, than there is of those who will be saved; for you may take it as a rule to which there will be no exception, that everyone who will be saved will be one who does good. You may see many persons that don't do any harm: they do not steal, they do not tell lies, they do not do anything very much out of the way; but no one ever heard of them doing good. No one ever knew of their doing a noble deed or planning a disinterested enterprise. They are all the time taken up with themselves. They think only of themselves and serve only themselves. It never occurs to them to think about other people or do a thing that is only intended to promote the benefit of other people. If they do anything that has the semblance of a good deed about it, it is that they may receive a benefit in return. They are like the Pharisees, ancient and modern, who ape the forms of goodness, but take care to practice them under circumstances where they are profitable. They do good to those who do good unto them. Their very acts of charity are besmeared with selfishness. Such people are not the children of the Highest: they are not fit to enter into the kingdom of God, for the kingdom of God is an institution, the very object of which is to do good in the highest form, and the administration of which is to be entrusted to the hands of those who learn to do good, under circumstances of trial and evil, and who will, therefore, be qualified to do good, and to do it effectively when circumstances are prosperous.

Jesus gives us the principle in the words:

*“He that is faithful in little will be faithful also in much.”*

On the other hand, he says—

*“If ye are unfaithful in that which is least, who will trust you with greater things; if ye are unfaithful in unrighteous mammon, who will put you in trust with the true riches?”*

The true riches are a life never-ending, a body that will never decay, riches that will never take flight, joy unspeakable and full of glory. The management of our own little affairs is, by Jesus, made the rule by which our position in relation to the kingdom of God will be determined.

It is most important that we should remember this, instead of deceiving ourselves amidst present faithlessness, with a sort of blind confidence that all will be right when Christ comes. All will not be right when Christ comes, unless all is right before he comes. Those who are wrong now will be wrong then. Those that are selfish now will be selfish then. Those who are unfaithful now will be unfaithful still; those who are unjust will be unjust still; and he who is holy will be holy still. Everything depends on the present; our own little circle is the sphere in which we make or mar our future destiny; and, therefore, let every man and every woman, to the extent of their means, however little, and their opportunities, however few, see to it, that they do good, that they be faithful stewards, so that at the return of the master, to whom they hold a stewardship, they may be able to render a satisfactory account.

Let us hope that the time is not far distant when we shall cease to have to call our “humble faith” into exercise, in order to “behold our great High Priest above.” May the time soon come when we shall see him *as he is*. The arrival of that time will, doubtless, produce different effects upon different persons. There are some whom it will throw into a shrieking fit, who will simply become frantic, because they are utterly unprepared for such an event. They have deceived themselves with the idea that they are Christ’s, because they have professed the truth, and passed current amongst its friends, although in quiet moments, they do not feel so. They have been hoping in a dim and fatuitous way that when Christ comes, it will be all right with them. They have not allowed themselves to realise the coming of Christ. They do not reserve a sufficient surplus of the strength God has given them to realise what Christ is. Their little strength is eaten up in purely “temporal” matters. All their energy is expended upon the flesh, so that the mind never has any chance of getting into the spiritual channel. They do find time for the imperative things of the flesh, but none for the imperative things of the spirit. Indeed, the things of the spirit are not imperative with them. Being after the flesh, they mind the things of the flesh, leaving the things of the spirit to be attended to by other people, in the delusive hope that some day, things will alter. When they hear that Christ has arrived, it will go through them like a cannon ball. It will take away all presence of mind. They will be petrified with affright, because

they have not the answer of a good conscience; but of a very bad one. Shame and confusion will be their portion.

There are others who will feel differently. While struck with awe, their fear will be mixed with an inconceivable sense of relief and joy. The knowledge that Christ has come at last, will bring consolation unspeakable. To think that the right hands have now taken hold of the work—that Christ himself is now at the helm will be a joy the world knows not of. There are others, and perhaps these will be the largest class, who will not know how to be affected, in whose breasts hope and fear will struggle with uncertain conflict. They are conscious of having done something, and they fear not having done enough. They feel that to some extent, the flesh does not rule them; yet they are afraid that the spirit has not been powerful enough with them; and so, in a state of agonising uncertainty, they await THE MEETING that will decide their fate. That meeting will no doubt be a much more straightforward transaction than some of us are in the habit of thinking. Orthodoxy has given us the idea, (and we have a difficulty in throwing it off) that it will be a sort of flash-of-lightning affair, in which miracle will blaze about in all directions, working instantaneous transformation on no intelligible principle whatever. Now this fallacy arises from the predominant sentiment of orthodoxy, under which we have all, more or less, been in bondage, that the established rules are not God's rules, but the devil's—that all God's rules are up in heaven, and apply only to immortal souls; and that with regard to earth and material life, the Prince of the power of the air has it all his own way. But casting such Pagan trash to the moles and to the bats and recognising the fact that all established rules are God's, we see things in a different light.

We shall simply hear that Jesus has come and shall be invited and compelled to go to him. To those who have at all realised the great calling to which they are called, it will be a relief and a joy to go. When a friend whom we love arrives from a distance, what a thrill of delight we feel when we are informed of his arrival, and if that friend—besides the pleasure of friendship—brings good news of substantial advantage—say that you have become heir to a fortune; how greatly would the pleasure of his arrival be enhanced. In the case of Christ, it is precisely so. He is the best friend we can have. He is interested, and deeply so in those who are his true friends. He is jealous, just as a man betrothed to a woman is jealous; he is exacting just as friends are exacting and will view with displeasure any inordinate love of other objects than himself and visit treachery and coldness with severity. But if as wayfarers and as pilgrims, we engage in

this world's business merely as a matter of necessity, and with reference to the higher objects presented in the gospel, then Christ is the best friend we can possibly have.

Christ's kindness passes knowledge. It is something beyond all the love that can ever flow in the bosom of the dearest mortal friend. It is something infinitely above our sin-smitten minds. It is something that will dissolve us in tears of everlasting joy. If we have our heart right towards him, what a joyful intimation it will be that he has come. But to be right then, we must be wrong now, in one respect, that is, to be rich then, we must be poor now; to be honoured then, we must be despised now; to be mirthful then, we must, to some extent, be sorrowful now. Jesus has said:

*“Woe unto you that are full now and laugh now; but blessed are ye that hunger now and weep now; blessed are ye when men shall persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake: for so persecuted they the prophets who were before you. Blessed are ye that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for ye shall be filled; blessed are ye poor in spirit, for yours is the kingdom of God.”*

Paul says,

*“If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him, but if we deny him, he also will deny us.”*

## **Why Cain's Sacrifice was Unacceptable; The Meaning of Sacrifice**

In our lecture for last month, we saw that though the man had become a body of death, God had provided for him animal skins to cover his sin. As we pointed out in that lecture, the animal skins we learn later were lamb skins, representing Jesus' great sacrifice as Jesus is referred to this way in Revelations:

Rev. 13:8 “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him [the enemy of the saints], whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”

We see as we continue through Genesis, that Adam and Eve go on and have children, the first two of which the Scriptures focuses on. Concerning this, we read in chapter four:

Gen. 4:1 “And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.”

Why do we suppose that God had respect for Abel’s animal sacrifice, but did not have respect for the sacrifices of crops brought by Cain? We get the answer in the Mosaic Law.

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

The apostle Paul explains this same point in his letter to the Hebrews:

Heb. 9:19-22 “For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, Saying, This *is* the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.”

This is the reason. In offering the fruit of the ground, there is no shedding of blood. And Deity had determined that bloodshedding would be required for the remission of sins. Now why was this the case? The answer is not hard to figure out, and is to be found in Leviticus 17:11, which we have already seen. If Deity determined that the life of the flesh was in the blood, then blood poured out would symbolize death. And the statement Deity required for atonement from sin was that death was the consequence of sin.

In Leviticus 16, we see Aaron the High Priest performing his duties on the Day of Atonement, which the Jews call Yom Kippur. This is one of the two great Holy Days in Israel. There is the Passover on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month, and the Day of Atonement on the tenth day of the seventh month. These Holy Days are almost exactly six months apart. On the day of atonement, it is explained to us what the symbolism all means.

Lev. 16:21 “And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send *him* away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness:”

In the ritual of sacrifice, Aaron places both hands on the goat and confesses the sins of Israel, putting them (the sins—not the person, not Israel) upon the head of the goat. In this particular case, the goat is then led off to the wilderness. But in most cases, when making atonement the animal is slain or slaughtered. Through this ritual, we see that sin is required by God to be destroyed. Our sins are placed on the head of the animal, and the animal is slain or slaughtered or sacrificed, showing what God has ordained must happen to sin. It must be destroyed.

The word sacrifice is a badly misunderstood word. It is translated from the Hebrew word “zawbach” and it simply means “to slaughter.” Today, in modern English, it carries more of a meaning of “to give up something.” This is the result of Christianity misunderstanding the Biblical meaning of sacrifice, and what is being accomplished in sacrifice. Christianity imagines that a perfectly sinless Jesus gave up his life as a substitute for our lives, that we may go free. Thus, the idea of sacrifice came to be understood as voluntarily giving up something of value, for another. But there is nothing in the original word that carries this meaning.

It just takes a little reflection on the matter to realize how wrong Christianity is on this point. The penalty for sin is death. If Jesus died as a substitute for us, if he died instead of us—then we should not die. If he “paid the price of sin for us,” then we shouldn’t owe the price anymore, and be sinless, and not die. No one speaks of still owing a debt, once the debt is paid. And if the penalty for sin is death, and Jesus paid that penalty, then he should not have been raised to life. If he was, then the penalty was not paid. These are just the logical impossibilities in Christian logic.

Never mind the fact that the Bible never speaks in these terms. The closest the Bible comes to this idea is in the word “redeemed.” Redeem is from the word Greek word “Luo,” and it means to be loosed, or set free, not to pay a price. It is the same word used by Cleopas and Peter on the road to Emmaus when they told the resurrected Jesus what they had hoped Jesus would have done:

Luke 24:21 “But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.”

Did they expect Jesus to pay a ransom price to the Romans so that Israel could go free? No. They simply expected him to deliver them from Roman occupation and set Israel free.

To get a better understanding of sacrifice, we read of how the animal to be sacrificed was to be selected (and I'll use the NASB translation):

Lev. 6:6-7 “And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD, a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest: And the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD: and it shall be forgiven him for any thing of all that he hath done in trespassing therein.’

For a trespass offering, and indeed for most of the offerings, the man was to take an animal without blemish, often a male, and often one in the first year. This would be a very valuable animal, so it got people into the idea that sacrifice was giving something extremely valuable to the offerer, to God. It got them into the idea that they were paying for the forgiveness of their sins. The notion was that man was in debt to God, and they had to buy their way out. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The real meaning behind the symbolism was that the animal brought was to be from the flock or herd. This showed that the true sacrifice was going to be one of us. It would be someone born into the same sin-constitution of things as the rest of us and taken out of our flock. The need for it to be spotless, perfect in structure, and without blemish, showed that the true sacrifice would be outwardly sinless. While he would be from the flock or herd, and therefore of our death-defiled constitution, he would be morally, or outwardly a perfected representative of the flock or herd.

Putting our hands upon the animal, confessing our sins over the animal and then slaying the animal showed that the true sacrifice would be that perfected one of us, who would bear our sins, and die to declare the righteousness of God as a basis for atonement, or for the covering or forgiving of our sins, while being morally perfect.

What we were to see in the sacrifice was not that we were paying for our sins by giving up an animal of value to us, but that Jesus—the true lamb without spot—would die to make a specific statement about God and

ourselves, which, if we agreed with it, would become the basis for the forgiveness of our sins, and this would heal the breach between God and man that had begun in the garden of Eden, redeeming us, or setting us free from sin.

And the statement is made very clearly in the ritual of sacrifice. The statement is that all men are sinners, and that sin is only worthy of death. God alone is righteous. We will now consider all that is included in this great statement made in the sacrifice of Christ.

Now we have so far established that man has fallen out of harmony with God because of sin, (and not necessarily his own sins, though these too are a cause of separation but Adam's sin from the very beginning). The result of this sin was to change man's nature from a "very good" nature to the defiled nature we now all inherit and bear, which inevitably ends in death. To be restored to harmony with God, and consequently to be granted eternal life, a plan was needed which would allow God to be merciful and forgive man his sins, while at the same time maintaining that God is righteous and just in all His doings.

As we have seen from the pen of the Apostle Paul, "By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin, and so death hath passed upon all men in whom all have sinned." How was this state of things to be remedied? How was sin to be destroyed?

There were at least three ways of mending this problem. One way would have been to exterminate the whole human species because it had fallen into sin. But this would have been a poor solution. It would have been to confess failure: that God has set going an arrangement on this planet for His glory and could not make it work. This was impossible for—

God has said that He has not made the earth in vain: that He formed it to be inhabited by the righteous; and that as truly as He lives, it will yet be filled with His glory!

The second way would have been what might be called the toleration of sin method—the universal and indiscriminating pity method, by which the wickedness of disobedience of man should have been ignored and mankind allowed to occupy the earth immorally for their own pleasure. But this also was impossible. It would have meant God's abdication, and the handing over of men to eternal misery.

There was a third way—a middle way, and that is the way which has been adopted; namely, to enforce the law against sin, and at the same time leave the door open for mercy to repentant and obedient sinners.

We find that God's method for the return of sinful man to favor required and appointed the putting to death of man's condemned, evil, and sinful nature in a representative man of spotless character (whom God should provide) to declare and uphold His righteousness. This was to be the first condition of restoration. In so doing, God would be exhibited as Just in justifying the unjust, who should believingly approach Him in humility, confession, and through the all-important reformation of one's own character to the teachings of the Spirit. And just how such a thing was to be accomplished has been exhibited to us in the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus. In summary, it is the purpose of Christ at his first advent.

The overview of the work of Jesus may be seen in Rom. 3:25-26:

Rom. 3:25-26 "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."

The work of Christ, therefore, was to declare the righteousness of God. The word "declare" is a word which means "to exhibit." Christ's life and death and resurrection was an exhibition of the righteousness of God. The things that were accomplished in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, were not in violation of God's righteousness, but a perfect exhibition of God's righteousness.

The word propitiation there, means the Mercy Seat. The Mercy Seat was the gold covering of the ark inside the Holy of Holies in the Temple. This is where the High Priest would sprinkle the blood of the offerings on the great Day of Atonement. Paul is telling us that God has made Jesus our Mercy Seat, the place where the blood of our sacrifice was sprinkled. And that we had to have faith in that blood, that the sprinkling of the blood on the Jesus-Mercy Seat on the cross was the declaration of the righteousness of God.

But the question immediately comes, how can this be? How can Jesus, who lived a spotless, perfect life be commanded to die: and have that demonstrate the righteousness of God? Wouldn't this rather demonstrate

or exhibit unrighteousness? The wages of sin is death. If Jesus didn't sin, why did he have to die? Isn't this unfair? Isn't this wrong?

Well, it would be *wrong* if the nature of Christ as explained by virtually the entire Christian world (and sadly, many Christadelphians) were correct. It would be *wrong* if the nature of Christ was immaculate, or without sin—a body identical to Deity's, or even a body like Adam before he sinned. It would be *wrong* if Christ suffered a real, actual death because of some symbolical, shadowy, imaginary sin. God would be demanding Christ to die a death he had no relationship to, and in no need of. Certainly, it would be a loving act on the part of Jesus to do this for us, but it would have been wrong for God to have required it of him. And since the purpose of sacrifice, and the purpose of the death of Christ was to exhibit the righteousness and justness of God, that that should be the basis for the forgiveness of our sins that are past; it is impossible that what God required Jesus to do could in any way be considered wrong.

What made the sacrifice of Christ a right and just thing, on the part of God who required it of him, was that Jesus himself was born with the same nature, the same sinful flesh, the same body of death which was common to all men. Paul wrote:

Rom. 8:3 "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:"

God sent Jesus in the likeness of sinful flesh. And that word "likeness" actually means "identicalness". Jesus was sent with the same flesh we all have. And for sin (or on account of sin) God condemned sin in the flesh.

Now it must be apparent to all that sin could not have been condemned in the flesh of Jesus, had it not existed there. Oh, it could have been symbolically condemned. It could have been another empty ritual like those under the Mosaic law. But the symbols of the Mosaic law had no power to take away sin for the very reason that they were only symbols and shadows. It would be the reality of what Jesus did which would finally take away the sins of the redeemed. And what he really did was bear sin in the flesh, that sin might actually be condemned in his flesh; and taken away through the righteousness and justness of God. It could not actually have been taken away, if it did not actually exist there.

Consider what is wrong with making Christ's sacrifice another symbol in a long line of symbols, in the removing of sin. If sin wasn't actually in the

flesh of Jesus, then Christ's sacrifice can be nothing more than another symbol, and in actuality, a travesty of justice.

Consider that the State of Texas condemns murder by sentencing murderers to death. Now suppose that the state took you, (who had never murdered anyone) and they published a statement that they were going to put you to death to exhibit what is right and just to murderers. Then, after you were dead, the state would demand that all citizens look on your death and say, yes, this is what is right and justly due to murderers. What would you say when you learned of the State's plan? Let us suggest that you wouldn't say that the state was right and just, because they wouldn't be. It would be wrong to put such an one to death, because you hadn't murdered anyone.

But if the State took a murderer and put him to death as an exhibition of what is right and just for murderers, then we could agree that such a treatment of murder is right and just.

Such is the case with Jesus. If Jesus was completely without sin but died to exhibit what was right and just for THE sinner, then it was a loving act on the part of Jesus, but an unjust requirement on the part of God. But as we have already seen, the nature of man is sinful, or full of sin. Jesus, being the seed of Adam, bore this same sinful nature which is common to all mankind. When he died on the cross, the great exhibition that he made is: "here is how sinful flesh deserves and needs to be treated. It is fit only for destruction." And since he had committed no sin, but always did those things which pleased the Father, there is no confusion in this statement. The focus is totally on the nature of man as needing to be destroyed. When we look on this great sacrifice and recognize the rightness and justness of God in destroying this flesh we all bear (when we acknowledge that it is only fit for destruction) then, on that basis and on that basis alone God is willing to forgive us our trespasses.

This, then, is the purpose of Christ at his first advent. It was to destroy sin in himself, to destroy sin in the flesh. And again, sin could not have been condemned in the flesh of Jesus, had it not existed there.

Going back to Rom. 8:3, we see that in the death of Christ, God was doing something that the law could not do. What was it that the Law could not do? Some have said that the Law could not condemn sin. But the Law condemned sins of weakness in the trespass offering, sins of ignorance in the sin offering, sinful flesh in the burnt offering, and sins of presumption

through the death of the guilty one. The Law condemned sin in every way imaginable. It condemned sin so thoroughly that Paul called the Law, "the administration of condemnation" or the Law that condemns.

We notice that what the law could not do, was not due to its own imperfection, but because of the weakness of the flesh. What the law could not do, because of the weakness of the flesh, was to give life. The law could not give life because man, born of sinful flesh could not keep it perfectly. This, Paul says, God remedied by specially preparing and sending Jesus in sinful flesh.

We find among the various false views on the sacrifice of Christ, a complete revulsion at the concept that there was sin in any form in Christ. They often will agree that sin was symbolized by the flesh of Jesus. But they cannot accept that there was actually any sin in Christ. But as we have shown, this idea is unquestionably a necessary condition for sin to have been condemned in his flesh. And beyond that, it is the uniform teaching of the New Testament, Psalms, the Law and the Prophets. We will glean from the vast testimony of Scriptures to show that this is in fact a Scriptural principle.

From the New Testament:

2 Cor. 5:21 "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Heb. 9:28 "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (THE FIRST TIME HE APPEARED WITH SIN, THE SECOND TIME, WITHOUT SIN.)

David, in the Psalms (which Jesus says were written concerning him) speaks this way of Christ. Now there is a tendency by some to apply some Psalms to David and some to Christ, so we will only use those Psalms which the Apostles by the Holy Spirit applies to Jesus.

Psa. 69:5 "O God, Thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee."

This Psalm is applied to Jesus in John 2, as Jesus enters the Temple for the first time following his baptism, and clears out the money changers. John applies the following to Jesus:

Psa. 69:9 "For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me."

It should be noted that God's house had not been built when David wrote this. Both Matthew and John show that the following verse from the Psalm is about Jesus. And the same speaker in that Psalm who said "my sins are not hid from thee" also said:

Psa. 69:21 "They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

We would also look at Psalm 40, another Psalm that is quoted of Jesus by the apostle Paul in three different places in Hebrews. The same speaker in this Psalm who said:

Psa. 40:12 "For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me." (Applied to Jesus in Heb. 1)

The same speaker also said:

Psa. 40:7 "Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book *it is* written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* within my heart."

Psa. 40:6 "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required."

So, these Psalms are clearly written about Jesus. What was the sin and iniquity that he was lamenting? He was lamenting his sinful nature which attacked him relentlessly, just as it does us.

And concerning the prophets, John wrote in the twelfth chapter of his gospel, that Isaiah spoke of Jesus in his 6th chapter when he saw the Messiah's glory and spoke of him. But who does Isaiah see? He sees a man purged from his sin and cleansed from his iniquity.

The way in which Jesus was "cleansed from his iniquity," is indicated in this prophecy:

Isa. 6: 6-7 "One of the seraphim" having a live coal in his hand taken from off the altar, laid it upon his mouth, and said: "Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged."

These Seraphim are not single individuals, but communities of the redeemed. Now, we are told that the law was a "schoolmaster unto Christ"

(Gal. 3:24). Jesus appeared during the Mosaic epoch and was “made under the law” (Gal. 4:4), for the specific purpose of fulfilling the law, and then taking it out of the way, nailing it to the tree.

So, what is meant by the burning coal touching his lips? In the sixteenth chapter of Proverbs (verses 27–28) “words” are described as a *scorching fire*. The prophet Jeremiah also said that the word of God in his heart was as it were a *burning fire* “shut up in his bones.” This is the effect of the Spirit-word when it works in those who receive the *word* of God and who love it. Their conscience is stirred until the heart becomes hot within them.

The Psalmist says:

Psa. 39:3 “My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: *then* spake I with my tongue,” LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it *is*; *that* I may know how frail I *am*.

This fire, then, represents the burning desire of the Messiah to comply with Yahweh’s commands, in spite of our physical weaknesses. The fire consumes those impulses contrary to the word of God and yearningly burns for obedience to the law. This result was perfected in the operation of the Spirit-word—the live coal—on Christ Jesus.

The live coal touching his mouth is the testimony that Jesus was on fire to fulfill the whole law (which no other man did or could do) the whole of the law which was comprehended in *two* basic precepts, *first*, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, all thy mind, and all thy strength,” and, *secondly*, “thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” To carry out these precepts involved a voluntary complete offering of self—to always perfectly obey all divine precepts. For after all obedience is the proof of true love—Jesus said:

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

And secondly, to further accomplish all that the law and prophets had testified of Jesus, he was to die for us to open the pathway for the forgiveness of sins. This was a necessary condition of his love for others, that Jesus bore all his life.

And we must not fail to understand, that it is the seraphim which placed the live coal on his lips. The seraphim, a symbol of the redeemed, placed the live coal on his lips. This is a recognition by the redeemed that all that Jesus was doing, his perfect obedience to his Father, his resistance of sin

at all events, and his torturous death which his entire pouring out of his life unto death, was being done for them—potentially for us. Jesus said:

John 15:13 “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

This hot, burning coal—the living fiery spirit of instruction under the law—touched his lips. Jesus magnified the law and made it honourable. And beyond that, he did through the law, that which the law could not do. He gave life to us who have sinned.

The apostle Paul tells us of what Jesus did. Paul wrote:

Rom 8:3-4 “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

What the Law of Moses could not do was give life. This was not because it didn’t have the power to do so of itself, but rather because no man could keep it. As no man could keep it, the law condemned all men. This was the great lesson of the law. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

But Jesus did keep the law his entire life. It was only in his death that he came under the condemnation of the law in the mode of his death, as the law had said:

Deut. 21:23 “His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged *is* accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance.”

The apostle Paul shows us that this is how Jesus came under the curse of the Law, when Paul wrote:

Gal. 3:13 “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:”

Thus Jesus, in submitting to this particular mode of death came under the curse of the law. In so doing, Jesus also was saved by faith, by that declaration of God’s righteousness which he made in his death, and not by the works of the law.

As we said, Paul testified that God condemned sin in the flesh of Jesus. As we pointed out before, it is a simple and obvious fact that sin could not have been condemned in the flesh of Jesus, had it not existed there. We have seen how sin existed there. It was in human nature. The sinful nature—this sin-filled nature we all share—was condemned on the tree, in the morally sinless, and spotless character in the person of Jesus Christ.

To recognise this aspect of him is very different from entertaining the idea that there was in Jesus Christ any dwelling on any thought offensive to God, or that his character was tainted in the least degree by the corruption to which he was related. Had he passed over the line of injunction there would have been sin in the sense of transgression, but he did not err even in conceiving thoughts. The point of the parable in Isaiah is that he who came to do the will of the Father manifested a perfect character in defiled human nature, from which he was ultimately cleansed.

## The Tabernacle in the Wilderness

By bro. G. V. Growcott

### PART SIX

We now ask special attention to God's testimony through the prophet Ezekiel concerning Israel's deliverance from Egypt and sojourn in the wilderness, and its typical connection with and bearing upon their *second exodus and wilderness sojourn* under the prophet like unto Moses—testimony which involves the *preservation through all the ages* of the same nation and people, and the ultimate realization of the promises to Abraham, which constitute the Gospel.

Now let the reader realize that God Himself is the speaker in the case, and the survivors of the nation which He brought out of Egypt are the people addressed by Him. Certain of the elders of Israel had approached Ezekiel in the 7th year of Jehoiachin's captivity, to enquire of the Lord. Whereupon the Lord said—

"Speak unto the elders of Israel, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: Are ye come to enquire of Me? As I live, saith the Lord God, I will not be enquired of by you . . .

"Cause them to know the **abominations of their fathers**; and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord; in the day when I chose Israel, and lifted up Mine hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, and made Myself known unto them in the land of Egypt,

"To bring them forth into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is **THE GLORY OF ALL LANDS**: Then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt, I am the Lord your God."

"But they **rebelled against Me**, and would not hearken unto Me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of his eyes, **neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt**: then I said, I will pour out My fury upon them, to accomplish My anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.

"But I wrought for My Name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they were, in whose sight I made Myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt.

"Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness. And I gave them statutes, and showed them My judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them."

"Moreover, also, I gave them My sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctifieth them. But the house of Israel **rebelled against Me** in the wilderness; they walked not in My statutes and they **despised My judgments**, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and My sabbaths they greatly polluted; then I said, I would pour out My fury upon them in the wilderness.

"But I wrought for My Name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, in whose sight I brought them out. Yet I lifted up My hand unto them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them . . . because they despised My judgments and walked not in My statutes, but polluted My sabbaths; for **their heart went after their idols**."

"Nevertheless Mine eye spared them from destroying them, neither did I make an end of them in the wilderness" Eze. 20:1-17

The reader will observe that this Divine testimony brings us down to the events referred to at the commencement of this writing and

the chasm in Israel's history which extends from hence to the 40th year of their sojourn in the wilderness. Their moral delinquencies during this period are of frequent allusion by Moses in his stirring addresses and recapitulations just before his death (Deut. 31:27; 9:7-24)—

"I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold while I am yet alive with you, ye have been rebellious against the Lord."

"Remember, and forget not, how thou provokedst the Lord thy God to wrath in the wilderness: **from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the Lord.**"

"Ye have been rebellious from the day that I knew you."

Whilst, however, these allusions are of a general character, they enable us to discern that the children had followed in the footsteps of their fathers of the "evil generation" which God had assigned to destruction. But we shall gather more definite ideas of the nature of their rebelliousness during this hidden period from the Divine record of Ezekiel from which we are quoting: —

"But I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols; I am the Lord your God; walk in My statutes and keep My judgments, and do them; and hallow My sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know (experimentally) that I am the Lord your God.

"Notwithstanding, the children rebelled against Me; they walked not in My statutes, neither kept My judgments to do them . . . they polluted My sabbaths; then I said, I would pour My fury upon them to accomplish My anger against them in the wilderness.

"Nevertheless, I withdrew Mine hand, and wrought for My Name's sake . . . I lifted up Mine hand also in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them through the countries; because their eyes were after their idols.

"Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live; and I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they caused to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb, that I might make them desolate, to the

end that they might know that I am the Lord.

"Therefore son of man, speak unto the house of Israel, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; yet in this your fathers have blasphemed Me, in that they have committed a trespass against Me.

"For when I had brought them into the land for the which I lifted up Mine hand to give it to them, then they saw every high hill, and all the thick trees, and they offered their sacrifices, and presented the provocation of their offering . . .

"Wherefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God, Are ye polluted after the manner of your fathers? And commit ye whoredom after their abominations? For when ye offer your gifts, when ye make your sons to pass through the fire, ye pollute yourselves with your idols even unto this day; and shall I be enquired of by you, O house of Israel?"

"As I live, saith the Lord God, I will not be enquired of by you. And that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all, that ye say, We will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone."

What a dark picture is here Divinely sketched of the Chosen People of God from their deliverance from Egypt unto the 7th year of Jehoiachin's captivity! From this we learn that the "children," or "little ones"—whom their fathers said should be a prey, but of whom Jehovah said to their wicked parents—

"Them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised"—

—even this Divinely-preserved remnant proved their utter unworthiness of such favor, incurring again and again the threatened fury of God's anger for their rebellion against Him; and but for the pity He had for His Holy Name which they had profaned, they must have perished as God's nation from the earth.

But this precious testimony presents us with another picture, also Divinely drawn, concerning the same nation and people, the contemplation of which gladdens the heart when we remember its connection with the promised blessing of all nations in Abraham and his seed at the Divinely appointed time for the realization of the

hopes and aspirations of the true Israel of God (in the *individual* sense of that term) which has been slowly developing during the ages on whose behalf and for whose sake are all things.

Mark, now, the connection between what follows and the preceding Divine resume of Israel's history as GOD'S NATION, and let it be written in indelible characters upon the heart of every reader, that he may know assuredly that *the purpose of God formed in the beginning has not failed*, and cannot fail; and that Jehovah did not choose Israel for any virtues which they possessed above others, but with *Divine aims and objects* in which they were ever faithless to believe, and out of all sympathy with.

It is impossible otherwise to solve the problem of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, and the exercise of such merciful forbearance towards them under the circumstances which have passed under review. The rebellious nation has been Divinely preserved, though severely punished, and it exists before our eyes in these latter days in circumstances of bitterness and distress under their Divinely imposed chastisement, which must continue until—

"... they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they have trespassed against Me, and that also they have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies . . .

"If, then, their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: then will I remember My covenant with Jacob, and also My covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I WILL REMEMBER THE LAND" (Lev. 26:40-42; with Deut. 30:19).

*Are not these latter days upon us?* See we not in the Zionist movement the evidences of returning (national) life; and hear we not in Israel's bitter wailings the confessions of iniquity, and expression of their desire that God in His mercy should remember His holy covenants, and the land of His promise, that they may be reinstated therein, and their wanderings in the Gentile wilderness of nations come to an end?

One of the leading mouth-pieces in the early days of the current national rebirth—Max Nordau—in giving expression to the national movement which took possession of the scattered outcasts at the end of the 1290 years of "the abomination that maketh desolate," thus describes the revolution

which manifested itself in Israel's midst—

"It seems as if we are witnessing a miracle which affects ourselves and all around us. We feel ourselves part and parcel of a fairy tale in which we see our brethren, thousands of years buried, AGAIN BECOME FLESH AND BLOOD.

"We want, in the joy of this reunion, to rehearse the sad history of the hundreds of years in which we have been DEAD IN OUR TOMB, IN A GRAVE WHICH LACKED THE PEACE OF A GRAVE."

Is not this representative voice of the nation one of many premonitions that the "miracle" of the living again of Israel's dry bones is about to be realized, and the consequent return of him whose mission it is to perform before the eyes of a godless world the wonder which only omnipotence can perform of giving to the downtrodden nation of many ages that position of preeminence and glory among the nations assigned to it in the Scriptures of truth, in the day when it shall have been made the willing instrument in the hand of God for the accomplishment of His oath in connection with it to "fill the earth with His glory."

With these thoughts in view, we return to the testimony of God through the prophet Ezekiel (ch. 20), which presents us with another side of the picture to that which we have been contemplating—even the glorious sequel to these latter-day evidences of returning favor when the "fury poured out" upon them shall have run its course (Eze. 20:33-44)—

"As I live, saith the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched-out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you (among the nations): and I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries where-in ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched-out arm, and with fury poured out (upon the nations who refuse to let them go).

"And I will bring you into THE WILDERNESS OF THE PEOPLE, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you saith the Lord God."

"And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against Me: I

will bring them forth out of the country wherein they sojourn, and THEY SHALL NOT ENTER INTO THE LAND OF ISRAEL: and ye shall know that I am the Lord . . .

"For in My holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord God, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve Me: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the firstfruits of your oblations, with all your holy things.

"I will accept you with your sweet savor, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered and **I will be sanctified in you before all the heathen.**

"And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled; and ye shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed."

\* \* \*

We now return to the narrative of Israel's first sojourn, as we may now term it, in the wilderness, and we behold the shrouded nation emerge into full view. The historian (Moses himself) tells us that, having compassed Mount Seir many days he was instructed of the Lord to turn "*northward*" in the direction of the coast of their brethren the children of Esau, who dwelt in Seir; and with whom they were not to meddle in passing through their coast, because God had given Mount Seir unto Esau for a possession—*O, The faithfulness of God, even to His enemies!*

Accordingly, Israel proceeded through the way of the plain from Elath, and from Ezion-gaber to Kadesh-barnea, from which they were lost to view for the 38 years—

"Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation into the desert of Zin in the first month (of the fortieth year); and the people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there.

"And there was no water for the congregation; and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. And the people chode with Moses, and spake, saying,

"Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the Lord: and why have ye brought up the congregation of the Lord into

this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die?

"And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us into this place? It is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water."

This is a sad picture to gaze upon, but from what we have already seen, it was no new experience for Moses. The lapse of time and their *miraculous environment of holiness* had not changed them into obedient children. They were *powerfully exercised by worldly considerations to the exclusion of God from their thoughts*; and thought, felt, or hoped, for nothing beyond the gratification of their carnal minds, their great problem being:

"What shall we eat, what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?"

In addition to the grief of mind which Moses must have experienced by the loss of his sister, the companion of his childhood, we behold him once more, with his brother Aaron, making his way towards the door of the Tabernacle, and there falling upon their faces in the distress of the situation, when—

"THE GLORY OF THE LORD APPEARED UNTO THEM . . .

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall bring forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock; so thou shalt give them and their beasts drink."

Here, then, at Kadesh (which means "*sanctified*"), we have before us a similar incident to that of Rephidim on Israel's approach to Mount Sinai. At Rephidim, Moses was commanded to *smite* the rock with his rod, in order that it might give forth water for the people to drink, whereas, at Kadesh, he was commanded to *speak* to the rock for the like purpose.

Now there must have been a reason for the difference between smiting in the one case and speaking in the other; and we think that reason may be discerned in the different aspects of the smitten rock—"that Rock was Christ"—which was representative of him in his being smitten and with whose stripes we are healed, and the same rock subsequently to the *budding of the rod* of Aaron which typified the risen Christ, and the consequent *outflow of the healing stream*

of which all are invited to freely partake; and so needed not to be *smitten*, just *spoken to*, as Moses was told. But, besides this, the incident of the second smiting of the rock finds its equivalent in those who "fall away," as Israel had, and—

"... crucify to themselves the son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Heb. 6:6).

Thus viewed, the lesson is of paramount importance, and emphasized by Jesus' words (John 6:49)—

"Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead."

It is also the lesson of the Spirit in David (Psa. 95:11; Heb. 3:11),

"So I swear in My wrath they shall not enter into My rest."

We will now briefly glance at the consequences of this outburst of rebellion on the part of Israel, as affecting their Divinely appointed leader. We read that—

"Moses took the rod from before the Lord as He commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels, must we (Moses and Aaron) fetch you water out of this rock?

"And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed Me not to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore **ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them**" (Num. 20:6-12).

The Spirit in David comes to our aid in the true understanding of the indictment against Moses and Aaron on this occasion. We are told that—

"They (the people) angered him (Moses) also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes: because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips" (Psa. 106:32-33).

The words of God's indictment, as given by Moses himself, are—  
"Ye believed Me not to sanctify Me."

Putting the two statements together, we may conclude that the nonsanctification of Jehovah consisted (1) in smiting instead of speaking to the rock; and (2) in the association of himself and his brother with the power which brought forth the water for the people, as expressed in the word "we."

But now let us note that *this also was written for our learning*; and that therefore we may be placed in similar circumstances in the discharge of our duties to God. We are not commanded, as was Moses, to speak to the literal rock; but we are commanded to speak to the (metaphorically) rocky hearts of the people in the name of Jehovah, in the presentation to them of the Gospel, which is God's power unto salvation, and its accompanying invitation to drink of the water of life which has resulted from the smiting of the rock, Christ Jesus.

*It is possible to do this in an angered spirit created by the attitude of those rocky hearts to whom the message is delivered and thus hide from view the love and mercy which that Gospel reveals.*

**(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH, IF THE LORD WILL)**

## **IS THE RESTORATION OF SACRIFICE COMPATIBLE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST?**

**By bro. John Thomas  
Part Three**

### **THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE KINGDOM UNDER THE NEW COVENANT.**

We demur to our beloved sister's declaration, that "Paul distinctly states that the Levitical service was imposed until the time of *reformation*, thereby intimating its discontinuance then." The sectarian idea of "the time of reformation" in this text is, until John, and Jesus proclaimed repentance, after which there would be no temple service performed by Levites that God would accept.

But this is contrary to the sure word of prophecy, which testifies that "the Messenger of the Covenant shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and

he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto Yahweh an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, *as in the days of old, and as in former years.*"<sup>1</sup> And again the prophet records Yahweh's declaration, that "David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel: neither shall the priests, the Levites, want a man before him to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually."

"Thus saith the Lord, if ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, that there should not be day and night in their season; (then and not before) may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests my ministers."

From this it is manifest, that the perpetuity of David's throne, and the perpetuity of the Levitical ministrations, are parallel. Some say that David's throne is now occupied in heaven; will these same visionaries affirm that the Levites are offering sacrifices there, for the testimony says, "they shall do sacrifice continually?!"

The truth is that this testimony has regard to the time when the kingdom shall be restored again to Israel. At the time the prophecy was delivered there were unbelievers who, like the Millerites of our day, declared that the Lord had cast off the house of Israel and the house of Judah. Therefore said Yahweh to the prophet, "Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, the two families which the Lord hath chosen he hath even cast them off? Thus they have despised my people, that they should be no more a nation before them.

But, if my covenant be not with the day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth : then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David my servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: *for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them.*"<sup>2</sup>

It is from the time of this return, then, that the perpetuity begins in relation to David's son, and the Levites. Both houses of Israel are still in captivity; therefore the return is yet future. When that return is accomplished, then

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 3:3-4

<sup>2</sup> Jer. 33:17-26

henceforth even to “the end” appointed, shall these gracious promises obtain as notable realities in the land of Israel.

It is therefore a principle of the kingdom of God that the Levites shall be priests in that kingdom under the New Covenant, or constitution, as well as under the Old. As it is written, “Thus saith the Lord, They shall be ministers in my temple, having charge of the gates of the house, and ministering to the house; they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister unto them. They shall not come near unto me, to do the office of a priest unto me, nor to come near to any of my holy things in the most holy place. But I will make them keepers of the charge of the house, for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done therein.”

The reason given why they shall not do the office of a priest before God, but shall act as menial in the service, and in relation only to the people, is because under the Mosaic Covenant “they ministered to the people before their idols, and caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity.”<sup>3</sup> This is the ground of their future degradation from their former rank, to that of the lowest class of the priesthood under the New Covenant.

The next class of priests above them is to consist of the Levites, the sons of Zadok.<sup>4</sup> These will have no immediate communication with the people in performing the service, but will officiate intermediately between the people's priests and “the Prince,” who is then high priest, and Yahweh's anointed forever.

It is probable that “the sons of Zadok,” are the sons of the Just One, Zadok signifying *just* or *justified*. Zadok, who was contemporary with David and Solomon, is their representative father in the priesthood, as David is their representative father in the royalty, and Abraham their representative father in the faith. Hence in the priesthood, the saints are “the sons of Zadok,” in the royalty, “the sons of the Prince”<sup>5</sup> and in the faith, “the seed or sons of Abraham.”

Eli and his sons were rejected as representative sacerdotal men, because the sons were wicked, and Eli honored them above Yahweh. Therefore Yahweh said to him, “I will raise me up a faithful priest, who shall do

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<sup>3</sup> Ezek. 44:9-14

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 15

<sup>5</sup> ibid. 16

according to that which is in my heart and in my mind; and I will build him a sure house; and *he shall walk before mine ANOINTED forever.*"<sup>6</sup> He must therefore become immortal.

Now under the Mosaic Covenant this "faithful priest" was Zadok, who walked before David and Solomon. When Absalom and Israel rebelled against the Lord's anointed, Zadok and Abiathar remained faithful with Yahweh and His king. But when David was about to die, Abiathar, who was descended from Eli, conspired to make Adonijah king instead of Solomon, while Zadok continued faithful to David. Solomon, however, being established on the throne, "he threw out Abiathar from being priest unto the Lord; that he might fulfil the word of the Lord, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh." He told him he was worthy of death, but he would spare his life for his father's sake, because he suffered with him in Absalom's rebellion: he therefore exiled him to Anathoth and promoted Zadok to the high priesthood in his room.<sup>7</sup>

Now these were representative events. Yahweh will raise up the faithful of the house of Levi, even Zadok and his sons, and they shall walk before His Anointed for ever—even before the "greater than Solomon" when, in "the city of the Great King," he sits and rules upon his throne as a priest, bearing the glory,<sup>8</sup> as Prince of Israel forever. This superior class of Levites "shall come near to me," saith the Lord, "to minister unto me, and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and the blood: they shall enter into my holy place, and they shall come near to my table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge." From the seventeenth verse to the end of this chapter are the ordinances for the lowest class of Levitical priests.

#### **AMENDMENT OF THE OLD COVENANT OF THE KINGDOM.**

Here then is a change in the Levitical arrangements, and not an abolition of them. The "service" will be amended, not abolished. In the service under the Mosaic Covenant there were "divers washings;" but in the service under the New Covenant of the kingdom "washings" are omitted; for in the Ezekiel Temple there is no Laver, or brazen sea provided.

But sacrifices remain; for eight tables are appointed to be set up in the entry of the north gate on which the lowest class of the priests are to slay

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<sup>6</sup> 1 Sam. 2:29-35

<sup>7</sup> 1 Kings 1:7, 39; 2:22,26,27,35

<sup>8</sup> Zec. 6:12,13

them for the people. Paul therefore did not mean that the Levitical service was absolutely and finally discontinued—that it should be revived no more; but that it should be amended to adapt it to the new circumstances created by the sacrifice and high priesthood of Jesus, which was to supersede the priesthood of Aaron.

If we be asked the reason for the conclusion, that Paul meant amendment, and not final discontinuance of the Levitical service, we reply, that it is found in the phrase “until the time of reformation” used by him. His words are *mechri kairou diorthoseos*. The Levitical service continued unchanged for forty years after the proclamation of “reformation” by Jesus; so that the *kairos* or definite time for discontinuance was not at his preaching, or even the rending of the temple vail. The Mosaic service was not imposed until the time of “*metanoia*,” which is the word signifying the “reformation” preached. *Metanoieiti* “repent ye,” said Jesus. No, it was “imposed until the time of *diorthosis*” which is not “repentance,” but *emendation, amendment*; from *diorthoo* to correct or make right. The subject of the *diorthosis* is the Mosaic Covenant, not the disposition of men.

The Mosaic Constitution must be amended to make way for a new order of priesthood, and a service which shall show forth the perfection of its character. The work of amendment in regard to its foundation was laid in the death and resurrection of Jesus. It then became necessary to gather out of Judah, sons for Zadok and the Prince. “Behold I and the children whom God has given me are signs and wonders in Israel.”<sup>9</sup> These children being separated to Jesus from the tribe of Levi and the nation for the purposes to be accomplished through them at “the restitution of all things,” nothing remained for that epoch, but to give the Mosaic constitution a thorough shaking. This is called *shaking the heaven* and was the fulfilment of the prophecy by Haggai<sup>10</sup> reproduced by Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews.<sup>11</sup>

“Yet once, *it is a little while*, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will shake the heavens and the earth.” The “little while” was 587 years from the delivery of the prediction; and about ten years from the date of the epistle. It was the last time the nation of Israel and the constitution of their kingdom were to be shaken. Their commonwealth was to be shaken that “the things made,” or constituted, by the Mosaic Covenant, which were incompatible

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<sup>9</sup> Isa. 8:18; Heb 2:13

<sup>10</sup> Hag. 2:6

<sup>11</sup> Heb. 12:26,27

with the rights of the Lord Jesus founded upon "*the word of the Oath*"<sup>12</sup> might be "removed;" and that "those things which" were in harmony with that word, and which "cannot be shaken might remain." This then was the first stage of the "emendation," or as the Gentiles would say, of "the amendment of the constitution."

The next work in the carrying out the purpose of emendation is thus expressed in Haggai—"I will shake the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts." When this was spoken the temple was in ruins, the foundation only being laid. The people then returned from Babylon said, "The time has not come that the Lord's house should be built;"<sup>13</sup> that is, the 70 years that it was to lie waste from the time of its destruction are not yet accomplished, 66 years only having elapsed. But Haggai was sent to them to stir them up to the work, and in four years after, even in the sixth year of the reign of Darius, it was finished.<sup>14</sup> When therefore Haggai said, "this house shall be filled with glory" he did not refer to the temple which Jesus frequented, but to the temple to stand upon the same site which is described by Ezekiel, into which "the glory of the God of Israel," even the Son of Man in the glory of the Father, "shall come from the way of the east," and cause the neighbouring earth itself to shine.<sup>15</sup>

This is the only interpretation the prophecy will admit of; for when Jesus came, he was neither "the desire of all nations," nor was he in glory. The glory of the God of Israel left the temple when the Chaldees were about to destroy it; and it will not return until Jesus shall sit upon his throne and bear the glory in the era of "the regeneration."

The shaking of the heavens and the earth, as we have said, refers to "*the end of all things*"<sup>16</sup> constituted by the old covenant; but the shaking of the sea and dry land, to the kingdoms of the Gentiles, and is thus explained: "I will overthrow the Throne of Kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen, &c. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, and will make thee as a signet; for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of hosts."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Heb. 7:21,28

<sup>13</sup> Hag. 1:2,4,9

<sup>14</sup> Ezra 6:15

<sup>15</sup> Ezek. 43:1

<sup>16</sup> 1 Pet. 4:7

<sup>17</sup> Hag. 2:22

This period of overthrow is “the time of trouble such as there never was since there was a nation to that same time,” when Michael shall stand up, the Great Prince who standeth for the Israelites, and who at that time shall be delivered, even all that shall be found written among the living in Jerusalem.<sup>18</sup> This is the era of the resurrection of “the heirs” of ‘the kingdom which cannot be moved.’ Michael (*Mi* who *cha* like, *El* God) the great power of God, even Jesus, the great Prince of Israel, appears at this crisis “to subdue all things to himself,” and to complete the work of emendation.

He smites the image of Nebuchadnezzar upon its feet,<sup>19</sup> and grinds its fragments to powder.<sup>20</sup> He brings the king of the north, who is head over an extensive region, (*rosh al-eret ravbah*) to his end.<sup>21</sup> He causes Gog to fall upon the mountains of Israel; and expels the Gentiles out of his land,<sup>22</sup> that they may tread his holy city under foot no more. Having made the nations lick the dust like a serpent,<sup>23</sup> and bound their power as with a mighty chain,<sup>24</sup> he proceeds in the building again of the tabernacle of David, and in the setting up of its ruin<sup>25</sup>—that is, in the restoring again of the kingdom of God to Israel, or in “the restitution of all things” belonging to the Mosaic law, compatible with his exercise of the functions of high priest in Israel. When this work is accomplished the *diorthosis* or emendation will be complete.

If the Mosaic Covenant of the kingdom had been found faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.<sup>26</sup> The priesthood of the Mosaic was *changeable*, passing from father to son. This was deemed by the Lord a very important defect, which must therefore be amended. He determined therefore that the priesthood should be changed—that it should no longer “be left to other people;” but should be unchangeable in the hands of Messiah and the saints, or Zadok and his sons. But this purpose could not be carried into effect so long as the Mosaic constitution of the

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<sup>18</sup> Dan. 12:1; Isa. 4:3

<sup>19</sup> Dan. 2:34

<sup>20</sup> Matt. 21:44

<sup>21</sup> Dan. 9:45; Psa. 110:6

<sup>22</sup> Ezek. 39:4

<sup>23</sup> Psa. 10:16

<sup>24</sup> Micah 7:16,17

<sup>25</sup> Rev. 20:1-3

<sup>26</sup> Heb. 8:7

kingdom continued in force; for this restricted the priesthood to the tribe of Levi and made no provision for a priest of the tribe of Judah.

Now Yahweh purposed that the high priesthood of the nation should be changed from the tribe of Levi and the family of Aaron to the tribe of Judah and the family of David. Hence this change of the priesthood being determined, there was decreed of necessity a change also of the law.<sup>27</sup> As Christ's priesthood was not authorized by the Mosaic Covenant, something was necessary on which to found it.

This necessity was provided for in the Word of the Oath which runs thus—"I have sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the Order of Melchizedec." This oath was uttered by Yahweh upwards of 500 years after the Law was given from Sinai; and constitutes the right of David's son to the priesthood of the kingdom as the oath sworn to David also entitles his son to its throne forever.

The grand peculiarity, then, of the New Constitution of the kingdom over the Old is, *the union of the High priesthood and kingly office in one person of the tribe of Judah and family of David unchangeably, or forever.* Under the Mosaic, the priesthood and royalty of the kingdom were separate, and restricted to two distinct families and tribes—the priesthood, to Levi and Aaron: the royalty, to Judah and David. But this will be amended, and the Lord Jesus, in whose veins once flowed the blood of Levi,<sup>28</sup> Aaron, Judah and David, will unite in himself the kingly and priestly offices, when he sits and rules upon his throne and bears the glory.

Well, Jesus of Nazareth was manifested to Israel as son of God at his baptism. It was clearly proved that he was the Christ and therefore entitled to the things defined in the word of the oaths to himself and his father David. But "he was made under the law,"<sup>29</sup> to which he yielded a perfect obedience in all things.

He never entered the Court of the Priests, nor the Holy Place; nor attempted to do service at the altar. Being of the tribe of Judah, the Law forbid him to advance beyond the Court of the Israelites, or to minister in holy things. So long as the Mosaic law continued in practical operation,

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<sup>27</sup> Heb. 7:12

<sup>28</sup> Luke 1:5,36 Elizabeth and Mary were cousins; and Elizabeth a daughter of Aaron; their mothers were sisters. Hence Mary's blood was Aaronic from her mother, and Davidic from her father Heli. Jesus therefor partook of both maternally.

<sup>29</sup> Gal. 4:4

and he inhabited the land, he must have remained among the people. Had Israel continued in their country under the law to this day, and Jesus had remained with them until now, and they had been willing to acknowledge him, and submit to his government, he would not have ascended the throne until the constitution was dedicated and amended: “for,” says Paul, in view of this condition of affairs, “If he were on earth, he should not be a Priest, seeing that there are Priests that offer gifts according to the law.”

The emendation of the covenant must have been preceded by its dedication. This could only be accomplished by the death of the mediatorial testator; for no testament or covenant is of force while the testator liveth.<sup>30</sup>

Yahweh is the testator, but being incapable of death, His will, or covenant, was ordained in the hand of a mediator, who became Yahweh's substitutionary testator. As Jesus, the heir of God, was to inherit under the new, or amended, covenant having root in the promises, his death was necessitated; for the covenant in which his rights were vested was of no force till he died and rose again.

His death was therefore the dedication of the covenant in his blood; as he himself said, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins<sup>31</sup>—and to show the connexion between the covenant and the kingdom, said, “I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come.”

But when he came to life again after this dedication, he could not even then inherit the kingdom. The Mosaic Covenant must have been changed; an emendation, however, to which the party in power would by no means consent, as the amendment would have put them all out of the government. Pilate, and Herod, Caiaphas and the Council must have surrendered their offices into the hands of Jesus, who would have promoted in their place his own disciples and friends. But they would not hear of such a thing; therefore it remained only for Jesus to absent himself, and to abolish the kingdom until the time appointed in the wisdom of the Father for its restitution to Israel under a better, more permanent, and perfect order of things.

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<sup>30</sup> Heb. 8:4

<sup>31</sup> Matt. 24:26

# Hints for Bible Markers

## Psalm 25: 4

*“Shew me Thy ways, O LORD; teach me Thy paths.”*

As we continue with this prayer this month, it can easily be seen that the next few verses are on the mind of Moses, David, and Christ. It is the thoughts and prayer of righteous men. *“And Moses said unto the LORD, See, Thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and Thou hast not let me know whom Thou wilt send with me. Yet Thou hast said, I know thee by name, and Thou hast also found grace in my sight. Now therefore, I pray Thee, if I have found grace in Thy sight, shew me now Thy way, that I may know Thee, that I may find grace in Thy sight: and consider that this nation is Thy people.”* (Exodus 33:12-13). Here is a request that our minds be opened to the word of God. That we might learn the way of righteousness and be able to navigate the way that narrow path that leads to life eternal.

## Psalm 25: 5

*“Lead me in Thy truth, and teach me: for Thou art the God of my salvation; on Thee do I wait all the day.”*

If we are to be led of God, we must put our total trust in Him to do what's best for us in the long run. Putting our faith in our Heavenly Father requires that it will be done His way, not necessarily the way we would like. *“Not my will but Thine, be done”* (Luke 22:42). We most certainly will not like the process. For if we look at the lives of Moses, David, and Jesus it will become readily apparent that it will be painful. We may get discouraged and become weary from the endless days of sorrow and conflict; there are many examples in the Scriptures, most notably in Jeremiah. But if we truly want Yahweh to lead us, to teach us, and to show us His paths, then we must be prepared to allow him to finish the work. That we might be shaped to reflect and manifest His image.

## Psalm 25: 6 – 7

*“Remember, O LORD, Thy tender mercies and Thy lovingkindnesses; for they have been ever of old. Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to Thy mercy remember Thou me for Thy goodness' sake, O LORD.”*

Here we read of the asking of God not to remember our sins. How else can we feel but unworthy of this great manifestation of mercy, through Christ, for we all fall short. However, we are told our forgiveness is conditional. For this great mercy we hope to receive, we must be prepared to give mercy. If we wish to receive mercy we must be prepared to be merciful and forgive those who trespass against us. *“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain*

*mercy.*” (Matthew 5:7). Through sorrow, conflict, and strife we are brought eye to eye with our consciences. Up close and personal with our perceptions and our thought processes, our character, so to speak. Though wounded, we cannot seek revenge or reparations. It is our duty, and the requirement for our salvation, that we must be forgiving and merciful. There will always be offenses. For it must be so, for how can we develop a spirit of forgiveness without offenses? How can one's character be tested without offenses? We cannot let the malignancy of offense grow in our hearts and minds. A man who desires the kingdom of God will put aside offenses with a spirit of loving kindness to the offender.

The quality of mercy is sorely lacking from the world today. Although there are individual acts of kindness, the majority of the world reacts with the concept that it must be “done my way or I'm going to cause you harm” whether physical, mental, legal, or financial. There is very little of the attribute of mercy shown in the world today. In the coming age, part of the work of the saints is to teach righteousness, the way of the Lord, the fruit of the spirit, to the world. *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”* (Galatians 5:22-23).

### **Psalm 25: 8 – 9**

*“Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will He instruct sinners in the way. The meek will He guide in judgment: and the meek will He teach His way.”*

There is much written in the Scriptures about meekness, showing it is a critical part of Divine prerequisites. It often appears while doing the readings, if it is looked for. One of the main attributes of scriptural meekness is teachableness, a willingness to hear. A person must know what true scriptural teachings are. If we have incorrect beliefs, especially due to corruption by the philosophical dogmas of the world, how can this produce correct actions?

Meekness opens the doorway to a closeness with God, for we are told in this verse that one must have that disposition approved by God for guidance. *“Thus saith the LORD; The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool: what manner of house will ye build unto Me? and what place shall be My rest? For all these things hath Mine hand made, and so all these things came to be, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at My word.”* (Isaiah 66:1-2).

*“For the perverse is an abomination to the LORD: but His secret is with the upright.”* (Proverbs 3:32).

Continued next month should the Lord will

bro. Beryl Snyder