

**THE
CHRISTADELPHIAN
WATCHMAN**

“Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.”

(Acts 20:31)

Dedicated wholly to

“THE HOPE OF ISRAEL”

with a view to making ready

A PEOPLE PREPARED FOR THE LORD

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The Christadelphian

Watchman

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A New Man

The principle laid down in the Scripture is that MAN HONOURS GOD IN BELIEVING HIS WORD AND OBEYING HIS LAWS. There is no other way in which men can honour their Creator. This honour, however, consists not in a mechanical obedience without intelligence and volition, such as matter yields to the natural laws; but in an enlightened, hearty, and voluntary obedience, while the individual possesses the power not to obey if he think best. J.T.

WORDS TO THE WISE

Don't Let Patience Degenerate to Indifference

The absence of sensationalism and unexpected lapses have had the effect of winnowing believers, and leaving those only whose adhesion is based upon sound principles of the Truth independently of the mere transient phases of things involved in the signs of the times. We have seen this even in our own day, and it is in our own day perhaps that we are more particularly interested. Some of us can look back to the interest created by the signs of the times twenty-five years ago, and as we look around upon the present circle, we can think of one and another who have wearied in the attitude of waiting for the salvation of God, and surrendered to the secular influences that bear upon everyone. Their lamps have gone out. They have been overcome of the world.

Even those who have withstood the trying effects of apparent delay experience some of the quietude that comes with hope deferred. They are not so easily elated with the signs of the times. They rejoice in the general drift of things but they are prepared to wait. There is a danger of this mood going too far. Patience may degenerate to indifference. A middle ground is the ground pointed out by reason - looking for the Lord, watching the signs, and preparing for His coming by acting the part of his servants. Jesus said:

“In such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man, cometh”

R.R.

Who Shall Be Able to Separate Us?

(Romans 8:35)

With the wonderfully intimate word “*us*” the apostle gathers together in one all God’s faithful servants - including himself - wherever they might be and in whatever generation they may live. No wonder this great apostle had said earlier, with conviction: “I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord...” (Rom. 7:25).

The love of Christ cannot be destroyed by: ****Death. *The weakness of the flesh. *False leaders in the ecclesia. *Governments or Rulers. *Any forces which would persuade us from serving Christ. *The frustrations and pressures of life. *Trials which may await us in the future. *Successes or failures. *Any created being on the face of the earth.***

“In” Christ, the means are always available whereby we might rise above every contingency which could arise in our lives, which would work against us inheriting the Kingdom. There can be no greater encouragement to continue steadfastly in the warfare of faith than this knowledge.

J.U.

EDITORIAL

The Whole Counsel of God

The Christadelphian Community since its inception has recognized that the Bible is a book to be read as a whole. The division of the Bible into two parts - the Old and New Testaments - is man-made and artificial. Unlike many of the churches about us, we are not a New Testament based community, but a Bible based community which regards the sixty-six books of the Bible as the complete revelation of God which He has caused to be preserved for the edification and salvation of mankind. Indeed, it is impossible to rightly understand the New Testament without a thorough grasp of the Old. For example, the three great Covenants of Promise (Edenic, Abrahamic, and Davidic) to which reference is made in the New Testament, are recorded in the Old Testament, and understanding these Old Testament covenants is fundamental to understanding the New Testament. Again, how difficult would be understanding the Lord's last message to his servants in the Book of Revelation, without a prior understanding of the symbology employed in the Book of Daniel. We need to understand both Old and New Testaments to fully appreciate the purpose of Yahweh.

While the aim of this editorial is to show the unity of the Bible as a whole, and its importance in revealing the whole counsel of God, it is also intended to warn against neglecting the Old Testament in reaching a proper understanding of the great doctrinal truths which the Bible reveals. We should never forget that outstanding faith was developed in humans before the New Testament existed; Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Deborah, Naomi, Ruth, David, Ezra, and Nehemiah being but a few of the many examples which could be cited. It also needs to be recognised that the early Christadelphians in the first century A.D. only had the Old Testament, and when Paul said in 2 Timothy 3:16 that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine...", the "Scripture" to which he primarily refers is the Old Testament. The Scripture which the Bereans also so assiduously studied to ascertain the truth, was the Old Testament (Acts 17:11). Again the Lord was clearly able to explain to those on the road to Emmaus from all the Old Testament Scriptures, including Moses and all the prophets, the things concerning himself (Luke 24:27). On one occasion he told his listeners to "search the Scriptures" (John 5:39) by which he meant the Old Testament. Let us never disregard the Old Testament because it is an important part of the whole counsel of God.

In our Community, the doctrine of the Atonement is regarded as being of very great importance. It may not be generally recognised that the word "atonement" does not even occur in the New Testament. Yes, the A.V. translation of Romans 5:11 does have the word "atonement" in it, but this is

the only place where it occurs in the A.V. New Testament, and is commonly recognized as a mistranslation of the Greek *katallage*, and almost without exception other translations have “reconciliation” in this place. On the other hand the word “atonement” occurs more than 70 times in the Old Testament. To neglect this source of information on this important topic inevitably will end in an unbalanced or even wrong view of the subject.

Now as with all Bible topics, care needs to be exercised in reaching conclusions as to what the Bible is teaching. This is true in relation to the subject of the Atonement because in the Bible the word “atonement” is used in both a moral and a physical sense. In this regard it is like the word “sin” which is also used in a moral and physical sense as Bro Thomas explains so well in *Elpis Israel* pages 126-127. The word “atonement” (Heb. *kaphar*) basically means “covering”. Difficulty in understanding usually does not arise when atonement is used in a moral context, but can do so when used in a physical sense because of a failure to rightly divide (i.e. expound) the Word (2 Tim. 2:15) and make a distinct difference between the two usages. Let us explain.

We require atonement in a moral sense because we commit transgressions and are therefore guilty and need the forgiveness and covering which is available in Christ (Gal. 3:27). But the word atonement is also used in a physical sense where no transgression has been committed and consequently no guilt attaches. For example the altar in the outer court of the Tabernacle required an atonement to be made for it (Exod. 29:37). Had this inanimate object sinned? No! Was it somehow guilty? No! But it needed atonement - Why? Well this altar pointed forward to the Lord Jesus Christ (Heb. 13:10). He was totally free of any moral blemish whatsoever. He was in no sense guilty. He needed absolutely no forgiveness. He was mentally and morally at one with his Father (John 10:30). But being flesh and blood he could not enter the immortal state (1Cor. 15:50). He needed a physical atonement or “covering” as we also do. Paul explains this covering in the New Testament. He says: “For this corruptible must **put on** incorruption, this mortal must **put on** immortality” (1 Cor. 15:53). He says: “For in this (earthly house) we groan, earnestly desiring to be **clothed upon** with our house from heaven” (2 Cor. 5:2). Here is physical atonement or “covering” where no transgression or guilt or forgiveness is involved. Paul describes this atonement where we put on immortality in another form of words when he says that the Lord obtained “eternal redemption” for himself (Heb. 9:12); and that we wait for “the redemption of our body” (Rom. 8:23). Here is the whole counsel of God and is seen when Old and New Testaments dovetail perfectly together.

Now let us see the same lesson where a person required physical atonement when no transgression had been committed. A case in point is the atonement required under the Law of Moses by a woman who had given birth to a child (Lev. 12:7). Had this woman sinned in giving birth? No!

Was she guilty in bringing a new being into the world? No! Not at all. But what she had produced was a being of flesh and blood with an innate bias to evil. In the course of time this child would, like all with two human parents, inevitably transgress. The sin offering by which the mother's atonement was procured together with the circumcision of a male child taught that flesh has to be crucified. Ultimately, it needs to be changed so that "when this corruptible shall have **put on** incorruption, and this mortal shall have **put on** immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:54).

The same principle applies to the uses of the word "sin" in Scripture. As noted above it is used in both an (im)moral and a physical sense in the Word. When the Word says that Christ put away "sin" by the sacrifice of himself (Heb. 9:26), and that Christ was made "sin" (2 Cor. 5:21), and that he shall appear the second time without "sin" (Heb. 9:28), in these instances "sin" is being used in a physical sense for the innate bias in human nature which in all except the Lord has led to transgression. A denial that "sin" is used in this way would be to deny the whole counsel of God.

The whole counsel of God also requires that we have a place in our understanding for the fact that in the Age to Come the Prince (i.e. The Lord Jesus Christ) will prepare **for himself** and the people "a sin offering" (Ezek 45:22). So far as the Lord is concerned, this surely will point back to the fact that in the days of his flesh the Lord partook of sin-nature, and had a body which was redeemed by sacrifice, i.e. "by his own blood" (Heb 9:12).

On the basis of the Word it has long been the practice in our community to speak of our nature ultimately being "cleansed" through the Lord's shed blood i.e. through his sacrifice. This terminology comes for example from the need for the brazen altar which pointed forward to our Lord, having to be cleansed. But what is the meaning? Bro. H. P. Mansfield says inter alia in the Expositor on Exodus 29:36: "Therefore, though [the Lord] never sinned, he was related to that which is the cause of sin in all others who possess human nature (see Mark 7:18-23). **From this he needed cleansing by a change of nature** as do we all. And this was effected through his own blood (Heb. 13:20)..."(emphasis added).

Put succinctly, physical atonement or "covering", the putting away of "sin" used in the secondary physical sense of the word, and the cleansing of the body from mortality and its inseparable sin-proneness, are all **descriptions of "the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23)** which is achieved by **putting on immortality through a change of nature** on the basis of Christ's sacrifice.

This is the counsel of God as revealed in both the Old and New Testaments. Without this appreciation of the subject, the whole counsel of God is diminished and the writings of our Pioneers are seriously deprecated because this was their understanding of the subject - an understanding which often finds expression in their written works.

G.F.H.

EXHORTATION

We Must All Appear Before the Judgement Seat of Christ (2)

In the last issue of the Magazine we left our considerations of the judgment seat with Paul's comments in 1Cor. 3:13-15, where he says, speaking of the redeemed, *"he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.* We now want to look at other Scriptural quotations which are relevant to the judgment and perhaps make us feel the heat of the fire. When we are gathered to be made manifest, or laid bare, before the Judge we will be brought into the full blaze of the light of Divine Truth. This will reveal, on the one hand, our faithfulness, patient continuance in well doing and the loving loyalty we have shown to Christ, and on the other hand it will expose any unacknowledged and unconfessed sins, transgressions, evil thoughts, failings, shortcomings and so forth.

The secrets of men judged according to truth.

Paul tells us *"But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things,"* (Rom. 2:2). The words *"against them"* refer to those who judge others and yet do the same things themselves (v. 1). All such matters will be judged according to truth, that is by taking into account the true circumstances surrounding every situation and the real record of one's thoughts, words and actions in the light of the revealed will of Yahweh. We need to take careful stock of ourselves. Truth is a devastating principle, it cannot be changed, twisted or got around. The truth of any event is immovable and unbending. Today it is so easy to hide our true motives or justify wrong actions or words; this is a common weakness of human nature. When summoned to the judgment seat to be scrutinized by the piercing eye of an infallible judge, we will be judged 'according to truth! None will be able to deceive! Only a record of a true confession and repentance will obtain forgiveness in that day.

Again in Romans 2:6 Paul writes *"Who will render to every man according to his deeds."* The Greek word rendered deeds is 'ergon' which means: work, something done, a deed, an act or action. It will not be what we thought about doing, or the things we knew we should have done but didn't get to do, but the things we have actually done, whether good or evil that will be the basis of our destiny. See also 2Cor. 5:10. In Romans 2:11 Paul states *"For there is no respect of persons with God."* It will make no difference who we are, or who our parents were, or what positions we may have held, we will be judged according to truth, without respect of persons, on the basis of what we have done. The High Priest of Israel, although bearing a greater degree of responsibility, will gain no special privileges because of his position, he will have to give account of himself and bear the

consequences of both the rights and the wrongs he has done the same as every other responsible member of the nation, nobody will be able to get away with anything, because, of who they are, or because of the position they have held.

In Romans 2:16 Paul speaks of *"the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."* The Greek word translated secrets is *kruptos* which means 'hidden, concealed, therefore secret'. This applies to thoughts or actions, good or bad, that others know nothing about, but, at the judgment seat these will be exposed, the good will be vindicated the bad condemned. Again Paul wrote in 1Corinthians 4:5 *"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."* Pride can lead us to hide things we are ashamed of, but to do so now will, of course, bring humiliation at the judgment seat. But if we confess and repudiate wrong doing now, we will have confidence to approach the judge. Humility will lead us to pray and do good works in secret (Matt 6:1-6), in this case at the judgment seat these things will be revealed and rewarded openly, in this way the hidden things of darkness will be brought to light.

Paul also says that the Lord will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, the Greek word for counsels is *boule* which means 'plan, purpose, design or determination.' It occurs 12 times in the New Testament, 7 times referring to the counsel or will of God, and 5 times of the plans and determinations of men. In the context of 1Corinthians 4:5 it refers to the purpose or motivation that lies behind the things that we do. We see the works and the actions that others do, and they see ours, but the reason or motivation behind the actions are not openly seen. At the judgment seat this will all be uncovered and laid bare. The prophet Jeremiah states *"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"* (17:9). Human nature is very good at concealing its real motives: it can make things look right when in reality they are totally wrong. Hence the need for each of us to engage in regular self examination. Are the things we are doing being done for the pure motive of giving honour and glory to Yahweh? Or is self promotion that we might appear as good people in the eyes of others, the true motivation of our hearts? The vital question must be 'Is the Word of God the driving force in our lives'? At the judgment seat it will be the answer to this question that will determine our destiny. The thought of coming judgment is a very daunting prospect in many ways, but, it can also be encouraging because not only will flesh be humbled and exposed for what it is, but that which the Word has wrought in us will be revealed and vindicated.

In Jeremiah 17:10 the prophet wrote *"I Yahweh search the heart, I try the reins, even to give to every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings."* The heart and the reins are used figuratively of the

mind and the emotions. We either manifest a carnal mind, a habit of thought stimulated by the flesh, or a spiritual mind which only the Word of God can develop in us (Rom. 8:5-8). The emotions are those qualities such as love, joy, fear, anger, sorrow, which play such an important part in our lives and the development of our characters. Yahweh wants to see His Truth at the centre of our emotions, He wants our love; His truth should be the joy of our lives; we must fear Him and not man; we should sorrow because sin reigns on every hand; we should be angry when Yahweh, His son and His Truth are treated with contempt. Jeremiah says that Yahweh will reward 'every man according to his ways'. Our ways are determined by our heart and reins. If we have a spiritual mind and the Truth is at the centre of our emotions, our ways will be pleasing to God. But if our mind and emotions are governed by the flesh, our ways will be unacceptable to Him. We need to examine ourselves to see if our heart and reins are right with God. Yahweh is also going to give to every man according to the fruit of his doings, or in other words, that which is produced from the things he has done. The development of fruit is a work of time and can have very far reaching effects: the serpent's lie is still bearing fruit today! Judah went into captivity in Babylon because of 'what king Manasseh did in Jerusalem' many years before (Jer. 15:4)! The work of the apostles is still bearing fruit today, as are the labours of Brother Thomas and Brother Roberts! We need to exercise care as to the seeds we are sowing and the example we are leaving for our children and our contemporaries.

By thy words thou shalt be justified

The Lord Jesus Christ made some comments in relation to the judgment seat in the book of Matthew. Firstly in chapter 7:21-23, he says, *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."* The tragedy in the lives of these people was that although they were involved in much activity it was not in accordance with the 'will of the Father in heaven'. They had only built wood, hay and stubble into their lives. Their activities were really only related to the present and were springing from the flesh. When tested by the fire of the Spirit they were revealed as incompatible with it. Again in Matthew 12:34-37 Christ said *"O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."* These words show us the extent to which the

judge will scrutinize our lives if we are to be called upon to give account for every idle (Gk. *Argos* inactive, unemployed) word we have spoken, it indicates that nothing will be overlooked. The Lord was referring to those words which spontaneously flow from the heart without any particular purpose and not having been given a lot of careful thought. Christ was speaking to the Pharisees who had spoken blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Because of the hatred and evil in their hearts they were unable to speak good things. The warning comes down to us: no word we speak is too insignificant to pass unnoticed, for our words reveal the true condition of our heart. We must fill our hearts with Yahweh's word, so that our speech may reveal the good treasure we have stored up through a consistent application to the things of God.

The need for a wedding garment

Again in Matthew 22:1-14 the Lord spoke the parable of the king who arranged a marriage feast for his son. When finally "the wedding was furnished with guests," and the king came in to see the guests, "he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment." He said unto him, "*Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.*" The man had not prepared his mind to seek out what would be expected of him, nor how he should present himself at the royal wedding. In this parable what does the wedding garment represent? It is very well defined in 'Logos' Vol. 27, No.2, p.33 where we read: "But what is the garment? Not a suit of clothes, or few would be lacking it! The attire that will pass muster, and the only attire, is a scripturally-enlightened mind accompanied by a record of good deeds performed in the service of the Truth - *'fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints'* (Rev. 19:8 R.V)". The apostle Peter tells us that through the Word of Truth we are given every thing necessary for us to adequately prepare ourselves for the Lord's coming (2 Pet.1:3-9). Let us make good use of this priceless gift lest we be found like the man in the parable! When he was confronted with the question "*how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment*" he was "*speechless*" for what could he say? He had treated his invitation with contempt, and wasted his day of opportunity to prepare! Confronted with the majesty of the king he was dumb with shame and remorse! The lesson is a powerful one for us. We have received an invitation to a royal wedding, not to be guests, but to be part of the most beautiful bride that has ever stood on the earth! To be married to the most glorious bridegroom ever to be seen among the sons of Adam! As a preparation to become part of that bride we must first be made manifest at the judgment seat of the Lord Jesus Christ. There it will be revealed just how much we valued that invitation! There is no greater invitation that we could possibly receive! There is nothing in mortal life to compare with the destiny to which we have been called. But do we value it as we should? Are we treating as vitally important our preparation to stand beside the King of all the Earth?

Sentence Passed

The judgment will separate the assembled multitude into two groups, one on the right hand and the other on the left of the Lord Jesus Christ. To those on the right he will say *“Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”* (Matt. 25:34.). In one mighty gift of grace all their sins and shortcomings will be wiped away for ever and never be mentioned again. They will experience the physical change from the weakness of being flesh and blood under the dominion of sin and death to the glory of flesh cleansed, strengthened and energized by Spirit. To those on his left hand he will say *“Depart from me, ye cursed...”* (Matt. 25:41). They are cursed because their sins remain. With sorrow and remorse they will be driven from the Lord’s presence to be beaten with few or many stripes and be swallowed up of the second death from which there can be no deliverance.

As we will be laid bare before the piercing eye of the infallible judge we will surely be overwhelmed with the consciousness of our shortcomings, but this is necessary for as we are told in 1Corinthians 1:29, *“no flesh will glory in His presence.”* The judgment will reveal our utter weakness and perversity as earthborn creatures under the dominion of sin and death. There will be none who will be able to claim a right to eternal life, for that is the gift of God (Rom. 6:23). All will be brought to recognize that the gift they receive is from the grace and mercy of Yahweh through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. Man will be utterly humbled, Yahweh’s supremacy and righteousness established beyond dispute, and a community of humble yet glorified people will be ready to judge this world in righteousness and inherit the kingdom of God.

The glories of the future

In another parable the Lord said to his ‘good and faithful servants’: *“I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”* The redeemed will “sit with Christ in his throne” (Rev. 3:21). Not only will they be given positions of authority in the kingdom but will also share his joy. In Psalm 16:11, a psalm prophetic of Christ, it is written: *“Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”* When the Lord returns he will bring joy and pleasures with him to share with his bride. What a glorious time that will be. In Revelation 3:4-5 we find some interesting words in relation to the saints in the future. Firstly the Lord says concerning those who had not defiled their garments: *“they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.”* This must surely be the crowning glory of all we hope for, to see and walk and talk with the Lord Jesus Christ in the strength and beauty of spirit nature. There could be but few, if any, experiences greater than that. In verse 5 the Lord promises those that overcome: *“I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.”* The book spoken of here is ‘the book of the life.’ In other words

they will be enrolled in the immortal family of Almighty God, and their new name confessed before Him and the angels, as they themselves will be inducted into that glorious family. Could there be any greater honour that any could have bestowed upon them? What greater achievement could any seek?

From the visions of the redeemed through the book of the Apocalypse we can, in part, construct a picture of that immortal family. They are a community who take no credit, praise or glory to themselves. There is not a self-centred being among them. They manifest a beautiful pure humility, not from a feeling of inferiority or of guilt, nor from a sense of failure, but from the pure knowledge that Yahweh and His son are supreme and they owe their existence to them. Thankfulness will be an eternal characteristic of the immortal saints for it will be indelibly impressed upon them that they owe all to the love, compassion, goodness and mercy of their Creator. Through the prophet Isaiah Yahweh promised 'perfect peace' to them that trust in Him (Isa. 26:3). In the fullest sense this can only be experienced in the immortal state when the whole family in heaven and earth will be united in absolute oneness with Yahweh. With every hindrance removed and nothing to disrupt relationships, the saints will enjoy pure fellowship and in true companionship be united in a beautiful edifying work giving glory to God (Psa. 103:19-22).

As we contemplate this brief vision of the family of God in the future there is one thing that becomes apparent, such a glorious community could never come into existence if there were no judgment seat of Christ. Such a purified company of people could never be produced out of the Adamic race apart from the purifying fire of that day. The prospect of coming judgment can be daunting, it will doubtless bring humiliation and loss, but, if our hearts have been affected and changed by the Word believed, then the losses we experience will be the things about ourselves that we hate, while the things that we love will be perfected and immortalized. What greater incentive could there be than the judgment seat of Christ to spur us on to prepare for his coming. May the first objective of our lives be to do all we can to make sure that when he comes we will be found clothed with a 'wedding garment'.

A.H.

Be not of the World

The things of God and human sympathies are not in accord. The man who is faithful to the former must expect to alienate the latter to a great extent. Mankind as regards the bulk of them are not sufficiently intellectual or spiritual to harmonise with the high and exalted things of the spirit. They love the things that are in harmony with their feelings and appetites, and those who minister to these. A man must belong to them to be popular with them. As Jesus says, "The world loveth its own."

R.R.

•HISTORY

The Nations in Relation to the Time of the End
Future History of the Earth's Greatest Nations Briefly Outlined

A Brief Consideration of Britain

PART TWO

The Lion power is represented also as a merchant power in the words, "The Merchants of Tarshish shall say unto Gogue etc.". Having ascertained the geography of Tarshish, it is easy to answer the question, who are the Merchants? This enquiry will admit but one answer, namely, "The British East India Company," which is both the merchants and rulers of the Elephants' tooth country of the East. But the association of "the young lions of Tarshish" makes this still more obvious; for it represents the peculiar constitution of the Anglo Indian Government.

J.T.

We note that the Scripture speaks of "all the young lions thereof" (Ezek. 38:13) and this involves far more than just India, and would at least include those nations which made up the British Empire.

The Committee of The Christadelphian Watchman.

Rome and the Protestants

In analysing their doctrines, we find little or no difference between those termed Protestants and the Church of Rome, termed "The Mother Church" from whom those "daughters" (Protestantism) sprang. (Rev. 17:5). Such an analysis, however, reveals a vast difference existing between their teaching and God's Word. The latter is very easy to understand, and there is no need for great learning to comprehend its meaning. No one need be mystified with Latin or cumbersome ritual, for its whole teaching or "Gospel" (Good News) evolves upon certain simple and easily understood promises which God has given to two men, Abraham and David. The first was: "In thee Abraham and in thy Seed, all families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen. 12:3; 22:18). To David there was promised that, he should have a son who should re-establish his throne in Jerusalem, and of his kingdom there should be no end (Luke 1:32-33; 2Sam. 7:16). Such promises permeate the whole of God's Word and are easily understood. A belief of them is essential if we (Gentiles) wish to be of the seed of Abraham and David (Gal 3:29; Eph. 2:12). It was these promises which caused the wise men to enquire: "Where is he born King of the Jews?"

At the birth of this king, the angels sang, "Peace on earth, and goodwill toward men." Such simplicity is hidden from both Roman and Protestant Clergy. Thus, sad to relate, the people continue untaught, or as the prophet foresaw, "Gross darkness covers the people" (Isa. 60:2). They

believe and teach the lie of the serpent, 'Eternal life a present possession,' and the abode of heaven at death. They are thus termed, "blind leaders of the blind." Upon such a belief has Rome in particular and Protestantism in general, lived deliciously (Rev.18:7). The former has shed the blood of saints that her cause may be strengthened, causing God, through his Prophet to write: "I saw the woman drunken with the blood of saints" (Rev. 17:6), and this system is termed in the same chapter the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the earth" (Rev.17:5). Why such strong terms? Because by her sorceries all emanating from her are adulterers of God's Word, and by such language searchers after truth are awakened to "Come out of her" (Rev. 18:4).

Protestantism in England

Such searchers have never at any period become extinct, God always retaining certain witnesses for the Truth who have suffered death sooner than yield. Thus, under the reign of Queen Mary an effort was made to bring Britain back to the ethics of Rome, during which period (A.D. 1570) the total number of martyrs who shed their blood in opposition numbered approx. 200.

From the time of Henry 8th (A.D. 1539) to Elizabeth 1st (A.D. 1600), a bitter struggle began between Romanism and Protestantism, and the destruction of the Armada placed the latter upon a very firm footing in Britain. About this time, William Shakespeare came into prominence, and helped to improve the English language. Britain was now master of the seas. Her ships sailed where and how they desired throughout the New and Old Worlds, finally annexing America. Trade between the Lion and her Cub flourished when later the Hudson Bay Company [formed in 1670] began its trading operations. It still exists today.

The Authorised Bible

During the reign of King James in 1607, Parliament authorised a complete translation of the Bible into English. Prior to this, many learned men in Britain and elsewhere had translated certain portions of the Bible, the first to give a complete translation of the Scriptures into English being Wycliffe (A.D. 1360). The introduction of Protestantism has caused this particular version to flourish, and for its circulation to increase. In Germany there was also the Lutheran Bible. All versions extant however, were the work of earnest men who practically single-handed performed their work. Under King James, however, Cabinet resolved that Bible translation should have the attention and assistance of the whole of British research, and that the most learned scholars of the Empire be chosen that this version termed "the authorised" should be as near perfection as possible.

An Excellent Production

Over fifty scholars were chosen with power to consult professors from all parts of the world. Neither was time to be spared that a perfect translation

might result. These scholars were divided into six companies to whom specified positions were allotted, enabling these revisers to check and recheck each word thoroughly. In the process, all versions then extant were carefully examined for any help they may afford that an exact and true interpretation may result. After an agreement was reached in regard to correct interpretation even then no pains were spared to place the same in the clearest of English. Neither (says the record) did these eminent scholars disdain to revise that already completed, but from time to time these documents were replaced on the anvil of Greek and Hebrew and continually re-examined in order that as correct a translation as possible might result.

Thus a production unsurpassed in literature even in these very times has resulted. This version is considered far superior to all versions, before or since that period, and one of which Britain is justly proud. But where, during all that period, were those who held the truth of God's Word, i.e., a belief in the Covenants to David and Abraham? History traces them from the first century through the Donatists (see *The Christadelphian Watchman Magazine* 17, page 99), and so right through the ages.

In the days of King James, they were known as the Baptists. At that period the study of the Bible was one of religious fervour, and at that period persecution throughout Europe became rife. Many French families known as the Huguenots, emigrated to Britain. They were of the ablest and most industrious body of people throughout Europe. In this Britain gained and France lost. Jewry too were undergoing fierce and cruel persecution particularly in Spain, who used the cruellest devices in order that they would cause them to renounce their religion.

Another Young Lion

Under the reign of Charles 1, trade flourished and the merchants of Britain (Tarshish), set their eyes upon India, establishing in Bengal and Madras a powerful commercial enterprise, called the East India Company (A.D. 1630)... . This company rapidly progressed and became the supreme power in India. [It lasted until 1873].

J.M. (Snr.)

(To be continued, God willing)

“Avenge Not Yourselves”

Few, very few, of mankind have the moral courage to face authority and refuse to fight, because God for a time forbids it, either for the avenging of ourselves, or for the defence of property, or against the public enemy.

J.T.

THE LAW OF MOSES

Epitome of Chapter 16 of "The Law of Moses" by Bro. Roberts

The Court of the Tabernacle

ERRATUM: An error occurred in the production of the last issue of the Magazine in that under the heading "The Court of the Tabernacle" material which related to Chapter 15 rather than Chapter 16 of 'The Law of Moses' appeared. We apologize for this error. Set out below is the appropriate epitome of Chapter 16.

The Tabernacle was fenced off by a wall from 2.1 to 2.4 metres (7 to 8 feet) high, forming a court 45.7 metres (150 feet) long and 22.8 metres (75 feet) across. The wall was a curtain wall of linen suspended on wooden pillars, which stood in brass sockets let into the ground. Each pillar was ornamented with a silver capital, and a fillet of silver with a hook inserted to receive the suspending rings of the curtain.

The curtain speaks of righteousness, for "fine linen" is the symbol of righteousness (Rev. 19:8). It shut off the Tabernacle, or the Divine means of redemption, from the world of the ungodly. God's system requires that "there shall not enter therein anything that defileth, or that worketh abomination, or maketh a lie" (Rev. 21:27). This truth was exhibited by the wall of linen enclosing the Tabernacle. It proclaimed the lesson most difficult for man to receive, namely, "they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:8). To be acceptable to God means submitting to His means for redemption.

The Tabernacle was entered by the gate at the east side, which was a "hanging of blue and purple and scarlet and fine-twined linen" suspended on four pillars (Exod. 27:16). As we have previously seen, this represented Christ who proclaimed himself the "way" and the "door." It was hung upon four pillars which may be taken to represent the four Gospel writers who have exhibited Christ to the world. The sockets of brass speak of their standing in the flesh; the shittim wood - the failing nature in which the service was rendered; the silver mountings - the spiritual garnishings which qualified them for Divine employment; the hooks and so forth - the various helpers who assisted them in the work.

Only eligible persons could enter. The uncircumcised were not invited, and the presumptuous sinner was forbidden the altar (Num. 15:30). Circumcision was the token of the covenant (Gen. 17:10), the outward token of submission to the Divine will (Rom. 2:29). Man, as a rule, neglects the will of God, and considers what he thinks is right is necessarily correct.

The lesson of the Tabernacle taught that God's will is the required thing. It exhibited the duty of the individual to search out the will of God and perform it. Men think they should be saved because they are "good" - they forget they are sinners in a state of alienation from Him which will end in death.

They forget that God made man for His own purpose, and that He will save them for no other.

The Need for Sacrifice

Inside the gate was the great altar of sacrifice - hollow with a temporary structure covered with brass, and measuring about 2.4 metres (8 feet) long and broad, and nearly 1.5 metres (5 feet) high, with horns at the four corners on which to bind the heaped-up sacrifices with cords; four rings for the insertion of staves to carry it when on travel; a brazen network underneath to give free action to its consuming fire; and accessory utensils - such as pots, shovels, basins, flesh hooks, fire pans - all made of brass (Exod. 38:1-7).

The arrangement of this altar just inside the entrance of the tabernacle is eloquent. It teaches that circumcision was not enough. The Israelite had also to offer a sacrifice as well. It tells that sinful man, even with the utmost docility of spiritual circumcision and desiring to come within the walls of righteousness, cannot approach God acceptably except by sacrifice. In the type, it was an animal, whose life-blood was poured out as a confession that God is just in requiring death as the visitation for sin; that He Who is so great in the underived and deathless nature and vastness of His being; Who is so unsearchable in the greatness of His power and the perfection of His wisdom - is righteous in making disobedience and slight a capital offence not to be passed over even by mercy, except when His dreadful sovereign supremacy has been asserted, recognised and vindicated.

God's law stated that disobedience would result in death. Man sinned and death came upon the human race. If God were to overlook the penalty, it would show Him unrighteous and capricious, and open the way for violence and evil far surpassing the experience of the antediluvians. The Divine means of reconciliation required the "righteousness of God" (Rom. 3:25) being declared. This is only seen in shadow in the Mosaic ordinances. It had to be established in fact before the way was made open for eternal fellowship between God and man could be possible.

He proposed this enforcement in the actual blood-shedding of an actual representative man. This man, to be acceptable, had to be flawless as regards the principle that had been set at naught - the principle of absolute submission: though a sufferer from the evil effects springing from its subversion in the first Adam, and its continuing subversion in all his sinful descendants. Such a man could not be found in the ordinary propagation of flesh and blood. Therefore He had to provide him, which He did in the way recorded in Luke 1:35. It was all the work of His own favour (or grace) in subserviency to the indispensable assertion of His own supremacy and holiness.

"It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins" (Heb. 10:4). Animals were not sinners: their death was no meeting of the case. It was a mere prophecy in figure of what was coming. God purposed

the death of one representing all who should be one with that one; who should thus die for them and by whose stripes they should be healed, and with whose blood by a figure they should be washed. Not, however, upon the principle of substitution, for God's righteousness is not violated in the death of Christ, but "declared." It would be violated in a man dying who ought not to die. The provided representative became related to death by derivation from a mother who was a descendant of the man by whom death entered into the world. He could, therefore, stand for all who come unto God by him. They are reckoned as dying in him - which would be unnecessary if he died instead of them. And his death does not release them from death at once, as it would do if his death had been a substitutionary death; it merely opens the way for a gradual deliverance from death on a principle which maintains the supremacy of God.

Personal Righteousness Also required

After the Altar, there was a laver, or large vessel, filled with water at which the priests had to wash before entering into the Tabernacle to perform its services. The laver thus spake of spiritual cleansing (Isa. 1:16), which in the case of the priests of the coming Kingdom (1 Pet. 2:9) is performed through the power of the Word (John 15:3; Psa. 119:9; Eph. 5:26). Something more than the sacrifice of Christ is needed for salvation, even personal righteousness without which saints will not be justified unto eternal life (John 15:2, 10; Mat. 25:30; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:1). Life after introduction to Christ is a probation. This is the lesson of the laver. We must conform to the exhortation, "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings." Literally this is done by subjecting the mind to the influence of the Word of God.

The Tabernacle, as a whole, spake of the Gospel as "the power of God unto salvation." The process of drawing man from alienation to glorification is clearly discernible in all its appointments. Humility of mind - circumcision of heart - enters the Christ-gateway, on receiving the gospel; offers the Christ-sacrifice, in being baptised into the death of Christ; washes in the Christ-laver in coming under the purifying power of his commandments; enters the preliminary "holy" place of the Divine Tabernacle, in becoming a member of the body of Christ; to radiate the lamp-stand light of the truth, and offer the incense-sacrifice of praise continually, and eat of the bread of Israel's hope, and wait for the manifestation of the glory of God in the great day of atonement, when all things reconciled will be gathered together in the "holiest" under one head - even Christ; and the true tabernacle of God will be with men, and there shall be no more curse and no more pain and no more death.

H.P.M.

ENCOURAGEMENT

Under Christ's Guidance

It is the preparation of the body of fellow kings and priests that explains the present "delay" as we inaccurately call it, in the consummation of the Divine purpose. But for this, the kingdom of God might have been set up [1900] years ago. "My wedding must be furnished with guests," is the parabolic announcement by which the Lord taught the necessity for sending an invitation to the Gentiles after the Jews had rejected it. But not only had the invitation to go forth; the people responding to the invitation had to be trained and fitted for the position to which they were called.

This is Christ's present work; he is "priest over his own house" - bringing his house to God. It was this that made his departure necessary, as he told his disciples: "I go to prepare a place for you." His present absence and his present work are necessary to the glorious consummation of "his appearing and his kingdom." He is not idle or passive, though unseen. He is at work in the preparation of his people. His messages to the seven ecclesias in Asia represent him as watchful and vigilant in the superintendence of the affairs of his house. His priesthood involves this: for mediation between God and men requires that he should know the affairs of men.

Paul tells us that having suffered being tempted, Christ is able to succour them that are tempted. This indicates the active superintendence referred to. He is still the shepherd of his sheep. From behind the veil he tends them invisibly, but not the less really. "As many as I love," he says, "I rebuke and chasten " (Rev. 3:19). This is also what Paul says: "When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world " (1 Cor. 11:32). It follows that, even now, we are under his guidance if we sincerely aim at the doing of his will, and that in the affairs of our common experience, his hand intervenes for that direction of our steps which will be to our profit. What if those affairs are chequered and trying? What if trouble harass and evil afflict? Shall we say he regards us not? This would be a very illogical as well as a very unhappy conclusion. He himself has come through a time of trouble; he was, in the days of his flesh, a man of afflicted experience. Shall we say that God did not guide him because he suffered? Yea, rather, his suffering was an evidence of his being guided. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." It is God's method of perfecting character and laying the foundation of lasting joy. We may be quite sure there is no mistake in it. We may be quite sure that God's way is the best. We may be quite sure that goodness will be all the sweeter, and salvation all the more precious, and glory to God all the more fervent, for the prelude of suffering and weariness and waiting that goes before.

R.R.

PROPHECY

Obadiah (3)

The Punishment of Edom and its Significance

Edom was not only to experience utter destruction, but the initial blow was to come from an unexpected source. One whom she looked upon as an ally, with whom she had a pact of mutual assistance, would deceive and destroy her. That was the message that the prophet of Yahweh thundered against the ancient enemy of his people. **"All the men of thy confederacy have brought thee (or "driven thee" R.V. margin) to the border: the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, and prevailed against thee; they that eat thy bread have laid a wound under thee: though none understand it (R.V. margin). Shall I not in that day, saith Yahweh, even destroy wisdom out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau? And thy mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter"** (Obad. 7-9).

The drama of the times brought Babylon to the pinnacle of world power, and laid the foundation for the fulfilment of this prophecy. When Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, he found a ready ally in the Idumeans who eagerly acted the part of jackals to the lion of Babylon (Jer. 51: 38). Blind hatred for Judah dominated them to the exclusion of all else. They helped forward the destruction of Jerusalem, little realising that in so doing they were helping to encompass their own defeat. But when Jerusalem fell, the way was open for the conqueror from Babylon to move further south against the countries of Moab, Ammon and Edom. Their subjugation became imminent.

Meanwhile, Edom rejoiced at the calamity of Jerusalem. They urged on the Babylonians in the work of conquest and destruction. "Rase it! rase it! even to the foundations thereof!" was their cry (Psalm 137:7; see also Ezek. 25:12-14; 35:5; Lam. 4:21-22). But they soon found that Yahweh's sword (i.e., Nebuchadnezzar - Ezek. 30:24) was a twoedged weapon. It was not only wielded to punish Israel, but destined to "come down upon Idumea" [i.e. Edom] with devastating force (Isa. 34:5).

As Zedekiah of Jerusalem had been deluded by promises of assistance from Egypt, to follow a course of action that spelled doom for Judah, so were Edom and Moab. Edom, with that cunning duplicity for which the nation was noted, apparently had treaties of friendship with both Babylon and Egypt, and in the clash of interests between those two great powers, she was overthrown. In order to invade Egypt, Babylon occupied Moab, Ammon and Edom. The fighting qualities of the Idumeans were no match against the clever general-ship of the Babylonians; the difficult mountainous

country was not sufficient protection against the "sword of Yahweh," and Edom was overthrown (Jer. 27:3-6).

Destroyed by her Confederates

It satisfies the principles of justness, that the very nation (Babylon) which the Idumeans had urged on to raise the foundations of Jerusalem, should, in turn, be used by Yahweh to punish Edom. The leaders of Babylon were her confederates, the "men of her peace," which had "eaten bread" with her. This latter term is a Hebraism signifying a state of friendship, as when nations enter into obligations of mutual assistance (Psa. 41:9 mg.). Edom, doubtless, looked upon her duplicity with Babylon, Egypt and the other countries of the Middle East, as a clever piece of diplomacy, designed to protect her in the midst of a crisis that was bringing kingdoms to the dust, and had divided the world between the antagonistic claims of Babylon and Egypt.

However much men might propose, and bring to bear all their cunning to establish their schemes of national aggrandisement, it is Yahweh Who disposes. He caused Nebuchadnezzar to shed the mantle of friendship as far as Edom was concerned, and exhibit the mailed fist of war. Thus **"wisdom was destroyed from out of Edom and understanding from Mt. Esau"** (v. 8.) Her folly was manifest unto all. The blow she received proved fatal, for though the nation lingered on for some hundreds of years, it never regained sufficient strength to throw off its enemies. It was subsequently ejected from its country by Arab invaders, and finally absorbed into Judah, where it was completely assimilated, and ultimately faded from history.

Anti-semitism the cause of Punishment

"For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever" (v. 10). Esau and Jacob were twins, so that Edom and Israel were brother nations. The Law of Moses recognised the responsibility that this involved towards Edom (Deut. 23:7), but Edom never acknowledged the reciprocal responsibility towards Israel. Edom acted the part of a stranger (e.g., Num. 20:18), and because of this was to be completely destroyed. Edom cursed Israel, had always cursed Israel, and received the curse of Yahweh in return (Isa. 34:5).

In the verses before us, the prophet proclaimed the indictment against Edom as a solicitor might argue a case. He declared that when Babylon marched against Jerusalem, and the city was breached, Edom also attacked as an enemy and a stranger (v. 11). In this Edom had rejected the ties of brotherhood with Jacob, and therefore had no claim on Yahweh's mercy.

When Jacob was taken captive into foreign parts, and as a stranger entered a strange land, Edom rejoiced, opening the mouth loudly and contemptuously against God's people (v. 12). Now Yahweh would mock at Edom. When Jerusalem fell and the enemy entered in triumph to desecrate the holy things of Yahweh, Edom helped in the calamity that overtook

Judah (v. 13). Now Yahweh would bring calamity on Edom. When the refugees of Jacob fled from the face of the invader, and sought to find an avenue of escape, Edom assisted to hunt the afflicted, cutting down those who fled (v. 14).

Edom's attitude was a mistake of the greatest magnitude. Because of it, punishment condign and complete would be brought upon the nation. There would be no escaping the retribution. It would engulf all to the utter destruction of the nation. The threatening indictment of Obadiah against Edom constitutes a warning to humanity as a whole. It shows that nobody can curse Israel with impunity, even though the nation might be temporarily estranged from Yahweh. Israel is His holy nation, His special possession; and therefore, He alone has the right to condemn and discipline it. All recognise this principle when it is applied to their own affairs. For example, a parent will punish his child in an attempt to discipline and train it, but will hesitate to surrender that right to others. In fact, he will take serious exception to others doing this, particularly when their own children are themselves walking in disobedience.

That was the case with the Gentiles and Israel. They opposed Israel because they hated the Jew, and hating the Jew, they hated likewise Yahweh, Who is the Strength of Israel. Though Yahweh used this hatred to discipline His people, He by no means condoned it. He punished the Assyrian whom He used to discipline Israel, because the motives of the Assyrian were not to perform the work of Yahweh, but merely to extend his own power and influence. "Therefore," declared Isaiah (10:12-13), "it shall come to pass, that when Yahweh hath performed His whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, He will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. For he hath said, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent . . ."

The Scriptures reveal that it is unwise to curse Israel, whatever the state of the people may be. Some justify their attitude in so doing on those grounds. As Jeremiah declared: "Their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against Yahweh, the habitation of justice, even Yahweh, the hope of their fathers" (Jer. 50:7). But the answer of Yahweh to this is: "Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of Yahweh Sabaoth, though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel" (Jer. 51: 5).

It is significant, that the nations of old were punished because they opposed Israel even at times when the nation had departed from the ways of righteousness. The fact that Israel had "sinned against Yahweh" was no justification for anti-semitism. Thus Tyre was destroyed, because it spoke against Jerusalem at a time when Israel was being punished (Ezek 26:2). Judgment came upon Moab, because the Moabites slightly declared that Israel was no different than any Gentile power. This was evil in the sight of Yahweh, even though His people were then apostate (Ezek. 25:8). Ammon

was brought to desolation, because the people rejoiced at the calamities of Israel, even though those calamities were brought about by Divine manipulation (Ezek. 25:3, 6).

In these national judgments, Yahweh demonstrated that He put a difference between Israel and the nations, treating His people on an entirely different basis to the Gentiles at large (Exod. 11:7). The disasters that befall Israel should be viewed from that aspect. They testify not only to the wickedness of the nation in rejecting the way of Yahweh, but also to the fact that as a nation they are set apart from all others. "You only have I known of all families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (Amos 3:2).

A day of Israel's calamity is a day of mourning for all true lovers of Israel, and, therefore, lovers of Israel's God. They will view with sympathy and concern the difficulties into which the nation is brought, recognising their close affinity with the people, and their complete identity with the hope of Israel. If their attitude be otherwise, if the Gentile principle of anti-semitism find any part in their outlook to things Jewish, it is because they fail to grasp a true understanding of Yahweh's purpose: "They know not the thoughts of Yahweh, neither understand they His counsel" (Micah 4:12).

True lovers of God will be lovers of Israel, for they will respond to the attitude of Yahweh Who declared: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love" (Jer. 31: 3). We can appreciate the pleasure it must give Him to see His spiritual sons manifesting an attitude of sympathy and understanding towards the natural seed of Abraham, and remembering that they, themselves, are subject to inconsistencies and weaknesses. Our attitude should be that of a man who, finding the reprobate son of a dear friend destitute and lonely in a strange land, helps him for his father's sake. We love Israel, not for the characteristics that any individual Jew might manifest, but because of the associations of the nation: they are "beloved for the fathers' sakes" (Rom. 11:28).

And it is part of the discipline to which each individual must submit, that if he wishes to come to Yahweh, and enjoy the privileges and the hope that the Truth presents, he must do it through Israel, for apart from this despised commonwealth, a man is without hope and without God in the world (Eph. 2: 12). That is the lesson Edom failed to learn. H.P.M.

Loving Righteousness

None will enter the Kingdom of God but those who carry about with them a thorough love of righteousness, and put their love so far into practice that they will not allow themselves to be drawn into wrong-doing, even if it is to save their lives. Many people do right so long as there is no detriment from that course; but the moment it works against their interests, they do not scruple to do wrong. That is fatal to spiritual prospects. R.R.

QUESTIONS CONSIDERED

Micah 5:4-6

Question: Could you please explain Micah 5:4-6?

Answer: Verse 5 of this chapter can rank among the most difficult of Scripture passages to explain: **"And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land; and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds and eight principal men."**

The prophecy concerns the one spoken of in V.2, "He shall come forth that is to be ruler of Israel." This, of course, refers to Jesus Christ; the time of the fulfilment of vv 4-6 being when "he shall be great unto the ends of the earth." (V.4)

"This man shall be the peace." Through the long ages of history, Israel has vainly sought for peace. Micah, himself, lived at a time when iniquity was apparent in both the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Samaria's wound was pronounced "incurable" (Ch. 1:9) whilst despite the temporary reformation of Hezekiah, it was proclaimed that Judah would not go unpunished. Threatening the very existence of both kingdoms was the might of Assyria. The hearts of the men of Judah were troubled, whilst the people looked in vain for any leadership on the part of the "shepherds and principal men" who were, for the main part, absolutely devoid of faith or courage, and who, therefore, were incapable of guiding the nation in the only direction from whence could come lasting relief.

But although the present was shrouded in gloom, the future was bright with hope. Thus Micah directed his readers to the only source of true and lasting peace - to the coming Messiah who manifesting His might in the latter days, when the latter-day Assyria (i.e. Gogue, or the King of the North) should descend upon Israel, would destroy this enemy of Israel, and restore peace to the nation by establishing the Divine rule of God once more.

Isaiah supplements the words of Micah in his 14th chapter, vv24-27: **"Yahweh Sabaoth hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For Yahweh Sabaoth hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?"**

"We shall raise against him" (V.5). This is, against the Assyrian - not the Messiah. The Jews will assist in the establishment of the Kingdom of God, for after Gogue's army is destroyed, and Jesus is recognised by Jewry as the Christ, Judah will become his battle-axe to wreak vengeance upon the heathen. (Zech. 9:13-17). Under the jurisdiction of their generals - the Saints - they shall "waste the land of Assyria with the sword. . . . and deliver

from the Assyrian when he comes into our land." (V.6). Vanquishing the enemies of God is to be among the honours bestowed upon the Saints in that day (Ps. 149:5-8)

"Seven Shepherds and Eight Principal Men." The shepherds and principal men of Israel were notably deficient in faith and reverence for God's Name. Instead of assisting they hindered Israel; instead of leading the nation to God - the only source of true strength - they encouraged infraction of His law; instead of using their influence to venerate God's Word, they used it to magnify their own importance. Thus the nation was led to the brink of disaster; Jeremiah recorded: "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?" (Jer. 5:30-31). The answer was that God would destroy the nation and disperse it to the four winds of heaven.

But Micah looked forward to the time when the nation would be restored into its land once more; when godly shepherds and rulers would arise, and being wholeheartedly accepted by the nation, assist in its regeneration. Brother Sulley in "Temple of Ezekiel's Prophecy" suggests that the 15 shepherds and principal men will be the twelve apostles and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Apostles were definitely promised rulership over the twelve tribes, whilst the jurisdiction of the land was also implied in the covenants made with the three patriarchs. Another explanation is that "seven" is often used in Scripture in a symbolical sense to indicate the perfect number. Thus we find "7 ecclesias, 7 spirits of God, 7 eyes" are referred to, indicating not the number, but the completeness of the symbolised object. In Micah 5:5 the word "seven" is said to be used in the mystical sense having relation to the sufficiency of the shepherds in the future rather than to their number which will far exceed the seven indicated.

Concerning the eight principal men, it is said that this being one more than the perfect number seven, indicates that there will be more than sufficient principal men to cope with the crisis of the latter days. Some authorities maintain that the text can be read: "Seven shepherds even eight principal men" and declare that the idea of a total of 15 is not implied. The statement would then be used similarly to Amos 1:6: "For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof." Amos is not referring to seven specific transgressions, but is using the figures in a mystical sense to indicate the degree of Gaza's wickedness, which was so great that ultimate punishment would be swift and certain. It is considered that the numbers seven and eight shepherds and principal men can be used in a similar sense, and points to the fact that the future will reveal not only ample, but more than sufficient leaders in Israel to meet the emergencies of the last days. These shepherds and principal men of the future will be the immortalised saints, who will be accepted by Israel as their Divinely appointed leaders.

H.P.M.

WATCHMAN! WHAT OF THE NIGHT?

“And Libya with them” (Ezek. 38:5)

Ezekiel Chapter 38 requires that there be a close alignment between Russia and Libya at the time of Armageddon. It is therefore of considerable interest that after many years of estrangement, relations between Russia and Libya are on the mend. For the first time since 1985, Colonel Gaddafi together with the Libyan Foreign Minister (Abdel-Rahmen Shalqam) visited Moscow on the last weekend in October, 2008, for discussions on matters of mutual interest.

Early in October a Russian warship docked in Tripoli as part of a global show of force by Russia, and prior to Col. Gaddafi's visit to Moscow, the Kommersant (Russia's online Newspaper) reported that Libya would offer to host a Russian Naval Base probably at the port of Benghazi. This would project Russian naval power much farther west beyond the limits of the Black Sea and a possible Russian naval base in Syria.

The 'Diplomatic Courier' reported: "The view of Russia as a world power has been in steady decline since the fall of the Soviet Union, and on this basis the Putin/Medvedev governments have been trying to stem this tide as best they can. Having another strong port for its Navy would be advantageous strategically in the Mediterranean Sea, and Libya, while talking to the West more positively as of late, is not known for tightly walking in step behind the foreign policies of the United States."

During Col. Gaddafi's visit to Moscow, a cooperative agreement was signed in the area of the peaceful use of civilian nuclear energy. Under the deal Russia would design, supply, and construct the necessary reactors, supply the nuclear fuel, and treat nuclear waste. The agreement was signed by the head of Russia's atomic energy agency, Rostrom, and Libya's head of nuclear energy management.

When (then) President Putin visited Tripoli last April, Moscow agreed to cancel billions of Libyan Soviet-era debt in exchange for major contracts with Russian companies. That agreement included a promise by Tripoli to buy Russian arms. This is a return to the Cold War situation when Libya bought many of its arms from Moscow. In addition, in April, Russia's rail monopoly signed a 2.2 billion-euro contract to build a railway line in Libya.

Libya has extensive oil and gas reserves, and Russia has been keen to conclude an OPEC type agreement with Libya and other non-aligned oil and gas-producing countries. It is reported that such an agreement was signed with Libya during Col. Gaddafi's visit to Moscow, and that a direct air link was to be opened between Moscow and Tripoli.

On many fronts things are pointing to the possibility of the early return of our Lord. Let us "look up, and lift up our heads, as we see our redemption drawing nigh" (Lk. 21:28).

G.F.H.

NOTES FROM A STUDENT'S BIBLE

The Apocalypse

During December our New Testament daily readings will take us through the Book of Revelation. This is an important section of the Word because it comprises the last message of the Lord Jesus Christ to "his servants" (Rev. 1:1). No one pretends that it is an easy book to understand, and those from the world who come to it without having a good and right understanding of Bible symbology found earlier in the Bible must certainly misunderstand its message. Seeing that this is the last message of the Lord to his bride of which we hope to be part, it is worth making an extra effort to understand this message from our bridegroom.

Indeed, the proclamation of seven blessings throughout the book emphasises the importance of such an undertaking. Those blessings are: (1) A blessing pronounced upon the accurate study of its message (Rev. 1:3). (2) A blessing pronounced upon those who will be resurrected to help fulfil it (Rev. 14:13). (3) A blessing upon those who watch and walk in the light of its teaching (Rev. 16:15). (4) A blessing upon those who partake of the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9). (5) A blessing upon those who attain unto life eternal (Rev. 20:6). (6) A blessing upon those who keep the sayings of the book (Rev. 22:7). (7) A blessing upon those who keep the Lord's Commandments (Rev. 22:14).

The Apocalypse is a continuous unfolding prophecy of what would and will become the history of Europe and the Middle East from the time of the Apostle John's banishment to the Isle of Patmos circa AD 96 (Rev. 1:9) until the end of the Millennium and beyond. The section of the Apocalypse that has been fulfilled from AD 96 to our day stands as a most remarkable testimony to the fact that Yahweh lives, and our resurrected Lord will return in due time.

Unless you have (or perhaps, even if you have) a keen appreciation of the Apocalypse, could we suggest that in addition to your daily readings of the Apocalypse, that you add to your readings Bro. Robert Roberts excellent work '*Thirteen Lectures on the Apocalypse*'. The lectures were delivered in 1880, and the preface to the fourth edition printed in 1921 says: "[The Lectures] were addressed, in almost a private way, to the believers of the Truth in Birmingham (known as the Christadelphians) with the object... to make known, in a simple and colloquial manner (for the benefit particularly of believers of the Truth), the meaning of the symbols exhibited to John.... in their bearing on the events of history and those mightier events in the near future to which they have been leading."

Bro. Roberts acknowledged his great indebtedness to the work of Bro. Thomas in Eureka, and hoped that his "Thirteen lectures" would draw

attention to that work, and prove to be a stepping stone to Eureka. With these sentiments we entirely concur.

As an aid to understanding we have set out below a brief summary (based on Bro. Roberts' Thirteen Lectures) of the 7 Seals, the 7 Trumpets, and the 7 Vials. We suggest that these could form a good Bible marking project.
G.F.H.

THE SEVEN SEALS
The first 6 Seals are prophecies concerning the Roman Empire from the time of John (AD 96) to Emperor Constantine (AD 324)
1. White Horse (Peace) The Truth preached throughout the Roman World in a period of relative peace. Revelation 6:1-2 (AD 96-183)
2. Red Horse (Bloodshed) Assassination, violence, bloodshed, terror, and internal warfare racks the Roman World. Revelation 6:3-4 (AD 183-212)
3. Black Horse (Distress) Heavy Taxation and reckless extravagance by Emperors Caracalla and Elagebalas brought distress and want on the Roman people. Severus attempts to reform the situation but fails. Revelation 6:5-6 (AD 212-235)
4. Pale Horse (Death) 68 years of death. In this period there were 39 emperors most of whom died by assassination. Lack of stable government led to food shortages. Scanty and unwholesome food led to pestilence and death. Revelation 6:7-8 (AD 235-303)
5. Souls Under Altar (Persecution) Diocletian terminated the calamities of the 4 th seal but was a great persecutor of "Christians" who he blamed for the calamities of the 4 th seal. "Christian" assemblies were banned; Bibles burnt; those failing to renounce "Christianity" were tortured and killed. Revelation 6:9-11 (AD 303-311)
6. Great Earthquake (Paganism Eclipsed) Emperor Constantine was brought up with a bias favouring "Christianity". War erupted between Constantine in the East and Pagan Rome in the West, with Constantine being successful. Through this political earthquake the pagan heaven was eclipsed and "Christianity" gained the ascendancy in the Roman Empire. Revelation 6:12-17 (AD 311-324)
7. Sealing the Servants of God (Prayers Ascend) With paganism eclipsed there was greater opportunity for the Truth to be preached and converts gained by having the Word of God "sealed" in their mind. The prayers of these saints ascends to the Father as incense. Revelation 8:1-5 (AD 324 to the Coming of Christ)

THE SEVEN TRUMPETS (Rev. 8:6)

The first 4 Trumpets are prophecies concerning the BARBARIAN attacks on the Roman Empire

Trumpet 1: The Goths

After Constantine's death the Roman Empire was divided between his three sons with the principal third being Italy. The barbarian Goths invaded northern Italy and then marched on Rome. Jerusalem's awful experience at the hands of the Romans in AD 70 was to become Rome's experience at the hands of the Goths. **Revelation 8:7 (AD 396 - 410)**

Trumpet 2: The Vandals

The Barbarian Vandals of Spain crossed the Strait of Gibraltar & conquered Roman Territory situated on the Mediterranean Coast of Northern Africa **Revelation 8:8-9 (AD 429 - 477)**

Trumpet 3: The Huns

Attila the Hun (the Star) attacked the lake district in Northern Italy and then other parts of the western third of the Empire. His victories brought depopulation, slaughter, slavery, and despair. The Roman Empire was commencing to disintegrate. **Revelation 8:10-11 (AD 433 - 453)**

Trumpet 4: The Kingdom of the Goths

The Roman sun, moon, and stars in the western third was extinguished and its place occupied by the Kingdom of the Goths. **Revel. 8:12 (AD 476 - 536)**

Trumpets 5 and 6 are "woe" prophecies (Rev. 8:13) concerning the MOSLEM and TURKISH attacks on the Roman Empire

Trumpet 5: The Moslems

The Moslems (like locusts) under Mahomet (their Star) and his successors came from the Arabian Peninsular up through the Jordan Valley (the Abyss) to scourge the Papal idolaters of Europe with scorpion like torment but without destroying Rome's political life. **Revelation 9:1-12 (AD 622 - 932)**

Trumpet 6: The Turks

When the Moslem power declined, there arose from regions east of the Euphrates desolating Turkish (i.e. Ottoman) hordes that poured into the eastern third of the Roman Empire, captured Constantinople, and extinguished the Roman political life of this third. The Turks remain in Constantinople (Istanbul) to this day. **Revelation 9:13-21 (AD 997 - 1453)**

Trumpet 7: The Apocalypse of Christ

The third "woe" trumpet (Rev. 8:13), while it brings "woe" to mankind, its woes are of a healing nature. The Rainbow Angel (the Lord Jesus Christ) and the cloud about his head (the immortalised saints) intervene in the affairs of the world to demolish the Kingdom of Men and establish the Kingdom of God. **Revelation 10:1-3**

The Seven Vials of Divine Wrath (Revelation 16)

The first 5 of the Vials are mainly prophecies concerning NAPOLEON and the FRENCH REVOLUTION and its aftermath (1793 - 1870)

Vial 1: The French Revolution (Napoleon I Revolutionises France)

Under Napoleon the people came into power for the first time in French history. They murdered their king; beheaded his sympathisers; chased the aristocracy out of the country; abolished priestly orders; abolished all titles, pulled down monasteries, sold and divided the lands of the clergy and nobles, melted down church bells to make cannon balls, revolutionised the laws and institutions of the country, and generally, made war against “the church” and its friends. Thus under Napoleon a “noisome and grievous sore” fell on papal worshippers in France. **Revelation 16:2**

Vial 2: “Britannia Rules the Waves”

While Napoleon was very successful on land he was unable to control the seas. After many bloody naval engagements England cleared the seas of all rival fleets. **Revelation 16:3**

Vial 3: Napoleon’s Campaigns Against Northern Italy and Switzerland

The next phase of the turmoil springing out of the French Revolution has Napoleon in this area conducting several campaigns against supporters of the Papacy. **Revelation 16:4-7**

Vial 4: Napoleon’s Campaigns Against Austria and Germany

The emperor of Austria was also emperor of Germany and here lay the seat of military power of the “Holy Roman Empire”. Napoleon attacked this area with the result that a war of great severity spread over the principal regions of middle Europe, by which the population was subjected to the scorching heat of affliction. Austria was overthrown; peace ensued for a time; and the way was prepared for the 5th Vial. **Revelation 16:8-9**

Vial 5: Napoleon’s Campaign Against Rome and the Pope

The religious seat of the Roman Beast was to be found in the Pope and Rome itself. After his successful campaigns of the fourth vial, Napoleon raised an army which he hurried into Italy. Darkness immediately ensued on the seat of the beast. The Pope was taken prisoner and brought to France; the Papal Kingdom was stripped of its assets, and Rome was degraded to a second class city in the **French** Empire. Consequently the Pope, his cardinals, and priests etc. “gnawed their tongues for pain”. **Revel. 16:10-11**

Vial 6: The Decline of the Turkish Empire (The Drying Up of the Euphrates)

In preparation for the coming of Christ the decline of the Turkish Empire took place as outlying territories revolted and became independent, or were annexed by others. Russia will yet take it. **Revelation 16:12-16 (1820 - ?)**

Vial 7: The Defeat of Russia & Rome (A Great Earthquake & a Mighty Storm)

The Divine judgements of earthquake & storm (symbolic and literal) will defeat Russia & Rome and clear the way for the glories of Christ’s reign on earth. **Revelation 16:17-21**

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POETRY

The Demonstration Way

I'd rather see a lesson, than hear
one any day,
I'd rather you would walk with me,
than merely show the way.
The eye is a better teacher, and
more willing than the ear,
And counsel is confusing, but
example is always clear.

I can soon learn to do it, if you can
let me see it done,
I can watch your hands in action,
but your tongue, too fast
may run.
The counsel you are giving may be
very fine and true,
But I'd rather get my lesson from
observing what you do.