





# THE SANCTUARY – KEEPER

*A Magazine for the Exposition and Defense of  
The Holy Scriptures*

*“Ye shall keep the charge of the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar”  
Num. 18:5*

*“Ye are...an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices.”  
I Peter 2:5*

*“Thou hast kept My Word and hast not denied My Name”- Rev. 3:8*

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## EXHORTATION

**N**O doubt we all agree that as long as we remain in this mortal life, as long as the warfare between the flesh and the spirit continues, we need exhortation. Not one of us ever has, or ever will have, reached that state of perfection, or that security of strength that will enable him to maintain the fullest spiritual life and vigor, apart from the wholesome, encouraging or admonitory words of his brethren. It is of the Father's appointment that we exhort one another.

Every brother who undertakes to exhort his brethren reflects in his utterances his own interpretation of the doctrinal, moral and spiritual requirements imposed by the word of truth. In other words, he, if faithful and sincere, simply tells his brethren how he himself is trying to obtain eternal life. The attainment of eternal life is the supreme object, and calls for the supreme endeavor, of this present life. It involves the obtaining of an honest livelihood, but many ten thousands have obtained an honest livelihood who will not obtain life eternal. The purely natural and temporal, however excellent, dies with the dying man and contains no promise of life. Let this fact be deeply impressed upon our minds, as we see the eager hands of the Gentiles grasping for the things which the apostle deemed but dross. Let us be sobered by the thought that because of these, and kindred things, the majority of the Sons of God have been beguiled from their allegiance to Him, and have lost their crown of life.

Everything that has life makes some effort and some progress toward the perfection of its being, but of all these myriad forms of life, few indeed are the units which reach the goal. In the spring of the year, when God again clothes the earth with verdure and the trees with beauty, all is rich with promise. Who has not seen the fruit tree white with bloom, giving generous promise of bounteous harvest? Who has not been disappointed when, in one brief week, all the promise was blighted, the bloom had fallen and no fruit had set? This, however rarely occurs; after the bloom has fallen, when we examine the tree there is usually seen an abundant promise of fruit; but unfavorable conditions arise and a large quantity drops to the ground. We examine the tree again and clearly see that the prospect is much diminished, still there is promise of fruit. As the season progresses, insect pests have been busy and parasites of various kinds have preyed upon the tree, and now we view with much concern the appearance of the fruit. We may now feel that perhaps the worst has passed, and have some assurance that there will be *some good* fruit. But there are dangers yet to come. It may be a mighty wind, like the one spoken of in the Apocalypse, which shakes the unripe figs from the fig tree. We again examine the tree and see much lessened prospect for harvest. By and by the fruit is gathered and there is often a great surprise to find that much worthless fruit remained on the tree, while much apparently good fruit had fallen to the ground. Of all the glorious, gladdening promise of the early spring, how small a proportion reached the perfection of its being!

The natural world abounds in illustrations of this character, which find their very highest counterpart in that family of the Deity of which we are sons and daughters. We have seen the spiritual life of many a fair child of promise blighted ere yet the fruit had formed. We have seen the half-grown, partly developed character shrivel and die, and finally drop from the tree of life. We have listened to the earnest and impressive exhortations of those old in years and wisdom, who themselves finally fell from their own steadfastness.

The things which have been in the ecclesias are the things which are. The forces or causes which contributed to the ruin of others are ready to operate in every one of us. They never die and can only be controlled by the powerful influence of daily meditation on the word of the Deity.

Daily, life-long meditation is necessary for various reasons. No new-born child of God ever yet understood the fullness of the Father's requirements. The brother or sister who may be satisfied with the standard reached or who may be making no progress toward a still higher spiritual development, has not heeded the apostolic admonition to go on to "perfection." "Perfection," let it be observed, is the great objective. "Perfection" begins with the enlightened mind, but who can tell where it ends? It comprehends the heart, purified from all moral defilement, but it is far from ending there. It is satisfied with nothing less than the "mind of Christ." But where and how can we get a true insight into the

mind of Christ? Not simply by reading the Bible, but by very studious, and very prayerful and very prolonged meditation upon it. The richest treasures of the saints' adorning come no other way. Statements in the Scriptures read over and over again produce little or no effect upon the mind, because we are still robed in the swaddling clothes of childhood, or in other words, because we read without consecration of heart and thought.

In the fifth chapter of Paul's epistle to the Hebrews, we have an exhibition of the mind of Christ, which reveals one aspect of the sublime spiritual perfection which he reached. It is written of Him that in the days of His flesh He offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him from death. Why did He do that? Can you give any reason why? He was the sinless one. He always did the things which pleased the Father. It is true that He was born under the law of sin and death, and truly needed deliverance from death. But it is not the doctrinal aspect of the matter we are now considering. There is another aspect – even the spiritual. He had the assurance that He was the Father's well-beloved son. He was conscious that He had never sinned. He knew that He was under the dominion of death through no fault of His own. Why then this intense, heart-breaking, agonizing crying for deliverance from death?

Perhaps we will admit that very many times, indeed, we have done things that did not please the Father, and because of such things are deservedly under the dominion of death. Do we who need our Savior to save us from our sins pray with the deep, affecting earnestness of Him who, so far as personal sins were concerned, needed no Savior? If not, why not?

Measure, if you can, how far you are removed from that state of mind, the mind of Christ. Consider by what means you can reach that state of mind. What mental discipline does it require? What moral purification does it include? What long-continued heavenward aspirations does it call for? What transference of thought from things of time to things of eternity?

Consider the awful majesty of the Uncreated One to whom even our Savior pleaded with tears, and learn what it means to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. The great, the serious, business of life is to develop the mind of Christ. It calls for ceaseless effort to produce mental transformation, but produced it must be or we shall never share that elevation to the Divine nature which is the richest blessing the Father can bestow.

Our Father would have us delight ourselves in the thing wherein He delights. He would have us grieved over the things wherein He is grieved. He would have us view things from His viewpoint.

This is the present meaning of our Savior's prayer for the oneness of all who believe. "That they all may be one, as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent

me." This oneness begins in our obedience to the elementary principles of our faith. It is a progressive condition. None of us may reach absolute perfection such as existed between the Father and the Savior. But our acceptance in the great scrutiny undoubtedly depends on the effort we have sustained to attain unto this unity, a unity which comprehends the mental, moral and spiritual parts of our being. It is with the latter we are now particularly dealing. So far as the doctrinal aspect of the truth is concerned, we are practically of one mind, and I doubt not our moral relations with the world and with each other are above reproach. But these two conditions, so necessary in their places, may quite possibly co-exist with the condition described in Rev. 3:15-17.

Doctrinal purity and moral integrity are no guarantee against lukewarmness in the things of God. This is apparent to every observer. Now, as we are pre-eminently and emphatically in the lukewarm era of the world's history, it behooves every one of us to closely question our own hearts, and by all means to test our secret thoughts by the examples given us in the Word. We have already seen how far from lukewarmness were our Savior's prayers for deliverance from death. If He, who did no sin, prayed as recorded in Hebrews, how should we feel, who have done so many sins? Let us answer this each one for himself, when he comes with humble and contrite heart before the throne of grace. In seeking to enforce the lesson here taught, we wish to adduce one illustration from the Old Testament.

In the book of Nehemiah we have an account of Nehemiah's inquiry into the welfare of the captive Jews and the ruined city. He was told that the captives who had escaped and had returned to the province of Judea were in great affliction and reproach, the wall of Jerusalem also was broken down and the gates thereof burned with fire. When Nehemiah was made acquainted with the sad tidings he sat down and wept and mourned certain days and fasted and prayed. Why was Nehemiah so deeply affected? His countenance showed his grief so deeply that the Persian king could clearly discern it was caused by sorrow of heart. Why was his heart sad at the desolation of Jerusalem? He had an honorable position at the court of the Persian king. He lacked nothing that could minister to its temporal well-being. The king had never seen him sad before. But here he was so overwhelmed with grief that he could not possibly conceal it, even in the presence of the king. He knew that Jerusalem was the only city that God had chosen. He knew that God had highly honored it, even to the extent of placing His name there. He wept as he thought how successive generations of wicked men had despised the solemn warnings of God's faithful prophets and mocked at their tender pleadings until their land and city were involved in solitude and desolation.

Nehemiah's faith in the God of Abraham was the root cause of all his sorrow. Was this to be the end of the people whom God had redeemed by His great power and by His strong hand? Nay, verily. But the prophet knew full

well that *the reproach of Israel was the reproach of Israel's God*, and he wept, not merely because of his love for Israel, but because of his love for the mighty God of Israel whose purpose appeared to be frustrated and His name dishonored.

How does it appeal to us, brethren? The land and the city for centuries under the power of the desolater, God's chosen land, the land of the covenant, the land of our inheritance, for ages a wilderness, a desolation and a reproach among the heathen. God's chosen city the city of the Great King, once the peerless and the glorious, once the favored and the loved, now under the dominion of the uncircumcised and the unclean!

God's chosen people, scattered and peeled, wanderers among the nations, homeless, friendless, in affliction and reproach. God's holy word held in ignorant reverence by some, viewed with indifference by the multitude, repudiated, ridiculed, rejected with every mark of contempt by the learning and philosophy of the day! Darkness covering the earth and gross darkness the people.

Instead of justice there is oppression. Where truth should be, there falsehood sits enthroned. Where righteousness should be, there iniquity abounds. Where peace and purity should dwell, there is strife and all uncleanness. Instead of our Father's will being done on earth, the earth's corrupt before Him and filled with violence.

Who is there that sighs over these things? Who is it that mourns over it all and weeps rivers of waters like the Psalmist of old? Whose heart is it that breaks with longing as the cry ascends to the hallowed Father, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as in heaven"?

There are none on earth to do it but the children of the covenant. All the way through the Scriptures we note that prophet and Psalmist, Master and disciple, manifested the same attitude toward the things of God. It is the last, the crowning evidence of true sonship to the Deity. It is the great antithesis to lukewarmness. After all the wordy warfare is over, after the mind is sated with doctrinal discussions, after the Gentiles have had their curiosity satisfied and will no longer listen, after all eternal stimuli have ceased to operate; after all these comes the autumn of our probation, when the fruit left upon the tree should attain unto perfection. It is the last crisis in the believer's life, but the sorest of all. Many a one has survived all previous perils and storms, but has fallen here – fallen short of that perfection which alone renders all previous service acceptable.

There are many minor reasons why we should love God with all our minds and hearts. It is comparatively easy to love Him for a while, for such reasons. But unless the love generated by these reasons leads us to love Him for Himself

the love we have for Him will surely grow more feeble and will certainly manifest itself in what is called "lukewarmness."

Why is this? It is because there are competitors for our affections and for our interests. These competitors offer all their attractions *now*, and they appeal so naturally and so powerfully and so continuously to our weak flesh that we require the *whole* armor of God to enable us to resist them.

The "whole armor" of God, in the final crisis of the believer's probation, is the love of God for what He is Himself; a love established upon the revelation of Himself, a love based upon the full assurance of faith, nourished by the glory of the blessed hope of immortality, a love that cannot be satisfied with any created thing, but ever more and more reaches for fellowship with the Great Eternal. Thus the believer is made perfect in love. As we nourish this love and note its growing strength, we note a corresponding decrease in our love for the world and the things of the world until, one by one, we comprehend the Scripture which says, "If any man love the world, the love the Father is not in him."

Dear Brethren and Sisters, I want you to feel that your destiny is in your own hands. Seize every moment you can to meditate upon the Eternal, His purpose, His promise, His commands. In doing this you will become more like Him. The temptations of the world will assail you with diminishing power until they are all beneath your notice. You will grow in grace and beauty; you will bring forth fruit to perfection, and in the day of ingathering shall be included in the first fruits to God and to the Lamb.

*James Laird (Christadelphian Advocate, May, 1910)*

### A BEAUTIFUL PLAN

Stated in its simplest and most concise form, the plan of redemption may be defined in the following manner – One member of the Adamic race, who was at the same time God's Son in a special sense, died to redeem from everlasting death, or non-existence, that portion of mankind who believe and obey God, and to give them unending life to be enjoyed upon the earth, thus restoring to man the inheritance which was lost by the sin of the first human pair.

This is the outline of the picture; all the other incidents constitute the subordinate figures and the background which are necessary to give life, colour, and variety to the main features. And truly it is a most glorious picture: it reflects all the attributes of the Deity – His power, His wisdom, His love, His mercy, His justice, His benevolence, and His truthfulness.

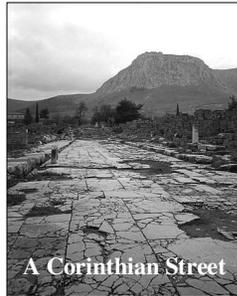
*Bro. J.J. Andrew, The Real Christ (originally, Jesus Christ and Him Crucified)  
p. 220*

# MODERN DAY LESSONS FROM THE LETTERS TO THE CORINTHIANS

## PART 2

### WORLDLY INFLUENCES LED TO MORAL ERROR

**A**S referred to in Part 1, the second main theme that Paul was compelled to address with the Corinthians was that of moral error that had crept into their ecclesia due to the constant detrimental influence of the world that surrounded them. Compounding the problem is the fact that their ecclesial leaders were remiss in acting as Watchmen to the ecclesia and addressing these issues that were commonly known to exist. In neglecting to do so, it gave the Corinthian ecclesial members the false sense that they were doing nothing wrong. The invasion of moral error into the ecclesia is very prominent during the present Laodicean time period that allows us to live in such ease, comfort, and well-being, which was also the state of the Corinthian ecclesia at that time. The next portion of our study will involve looking into some of the specific moral offenses that threatened the ecclesia.



**Problem:** The Corinthians were allowing themselves to be influenced by the so-called wisdom of the world. They were becoming conceited in their worldly education, learning, and status, and this worldly influence resulted in an aversion to the true wisdom of God. They were trying to apply their so-called worldly wisdom to the things of God, which is impossible, as the ways of man are foolish to God. God is the only source of true wisdom and it is man's duty simply to search for and find it.

1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 1:18-20; 26-29: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish

things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence."

**Solution:** It was imperative that the Corinthians should discount their so-called worldly wisdom and diligently search exclusively for the wisdom of God. As pronounced in Gen 3:15, there is a constant enmity and hatred between the things of Yahweh and that of sinful man, and the Corinthians were trying to meld the two together, the result of which is apostasy. They were to put their prideful so-called wisdom aside and understand that it is considered foolishness to God. In an effort to prove this point, Paul calls upon them to recognize that there are not many wise men after the flesh (worldly scholars), not many mighty men from a human standpoint (strong in body only), not many noble men or dignitaries of the world who are called and attracted to the wisdom of God, for they are not prepared to come to the recognition that their inherent ways are foolish. In similar manner, the Corinthian ecclesia was exhorted to put aside these humanistic tendencies if they were to understand and avail themselves of God's ways.

**Problem:** The Corinthian ecclesia refused to condemn the actions of a member who was known to be involved in an incestuous relationship. If allowed to continue uncorrected, then it would open the door for other moral issues.

1<sup>st</sup> Cor 5:1-7: "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."

The existence of this case of obvious misconduct that was commonly known among the members of the ecclesia was so egregious and shocking that it was not even accepted in the unbelieving pagan community. Why was it, then, that the Corinthian ecclesia allowed this person to remain in their congregation? As Paul admonishes them, they were haughty, prideful, and "puffed up," in their opposition to those who sought to correct them in this gross error. They refused to "judge" the matter in their midst themselves, thereby forcing Paul to engage in a matter that should have been policed

internally. Although this most obvious error may be met with shock and surprise by the modern-day Believer, this attitude of refusing to judge among brethren is becoming more and more commonplace. How often have we heard it said that, "I don't need to judge this person. That is between him and God." Or have we heard it said that, "If I correct him and admonish him for this action, it might drive him away, and then he'll never come back. He's better off here, so that he may eventually see his error and change."

**Solution:** These thoughts may sound appealing, but they are the thoughts of the flesh, rather than that of God, for Paul says, "I verily, as absent in body but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present! Deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord." When coming to an understanding of this passage it is first important to recognize that the definition of the word "judged" used by Paul means, "condemned." Paul was not just discerning the error, but he was condemning the error and the action of the person. Did Paul have the authority to condemn the brother to everlasting condemnation? Of course not, for that is the role that Christ will fulfill at his return. However, it *was* appropriate that Paul condemn this most egregious *action* and instruct the Corinthians to remove it from their ecclesia so that others would not be affected by it.

This is a consistent concept throughout Scripture, and is particularly referenced in such cases as Achan in the Old Testament and the erring brother in Matt 18. In the case of Achan, his sin in knowingly stealing a Babylonish garment directly resulted in the death of 36 soldiers of Israel because it was determined that all the congregation of Israel had sinned in the sight of God. After his sin was discovered, Josh 7:25 states that Achan and all of his immediate family were taken and "All Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they stoned them with stones." Since his family was part of the sin for not exposing it, being complacent in it, and allowing 36 members of the congregation to perish, they also were held accountable for the sin.

In like manner, Christ proclaims in Matt 18:17 in regard to an offending brother who will not turn from his error that, "If he shall neglect to hear the ecclesia, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a tax collector." A heathen was not allowed to be part of the ecclesial congregation, and a tax collector was one who was despised by the congregation. The rebellious brother who refused to heed the admonition of the ecclesia to turn from his error would have a very negative spiritual effect on the members, possibly leading to their spiritual demise, as in the case with Achan. He was therefore to be marked as a danger to the ecclesia and removed from their midst. As Paul proclaims, "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out, therefore, the old leaven that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened." Though this action may sound harsh, it is actually the practice of agape love toward that brother,

for it is correcting him and seeking to show him his error that must be repented of. If he is allowed to continue in the congregation, then it is very possible that he will never see the magnitude of his sin. However, if he is cast out of their midst, then the hope is that he sees the magnitude of his error and will repent of it. If so, then he will be gladly accepted back by the ecclesia, as was the case in the Corinthian ecclesia, as Paul later shows in 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 2 his support of their decision to allow the perpetrator back, in love, after he had repented of his sin and changed his situation.

**Problem:** Members of the ecclesia were engaging in fornication. The influence of the world and the promiscuity of the Corinthian society had negatively affected the members. Whether the ecclesia in the present day-and-age would like to admit this or not, this is a current problem within our body.

1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 6:18-20: "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

The pervasive influences and lusts of the society around us have led to a degradation of morals to the extent that fornication is becoming more and more common. The barrage of filth on the television and internet, the constant advertisements and magazine articles, and the commonality of young couples living together before marriage have led our young children to be severely tested in this regard. As stated, the Corinthian society is a very apt description of the world around us in the present day, and we must recognize it for what it is, taking responsibility for the spiritual health and well-being of our own children who are easily influenced and negatively affected by society.

**Solution:** In order to combat this most powerful enemy, our children must be raised in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They must constantly be taught in the Ways of Yahweh so that they will have the necessary tools to combat the pervasive influences of the world that so strongly appeal to the flesh. This is only achieved by constant, sincere, and diligent study of the Word of God so that they will always be prepared for the assaults carried out upon them by the world. As an example, it should be noted that, when Christ was tempted in the wilderness, his *first* response, without hesitation, was to quote a Scripture that clearly said what he *should* do, rather than what the flesh *wanted* him to do. By having Scripture and the Word of God immediately in his mind and on his lips, he was thereby able to stave off temptation.

**Problem:** Women were usurping and challenging the authority of the brethren. This is also a commonplace event in modern society, as mankind no longer looks to the Bible and God's Word to understand and define their role within the family structure. This has resulted in confusion and error, including the

feminizing of man (as stated in the introduction to the class in regard to the Corinthian society), the increase in the authoritative role for the woman, and confusion for the children.

1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 11:5: “But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman: but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.”

As shown, the act of covering her head was meant to demonstrate the woman’s subjection to her husband. This was intended to be an outward representation and reminder to her so that she would recall her status in the family organization and recognize him as the authoritative figure in the household. For this reason, the act of dismissing these coverings was a demonstration that the woman did not accept her subservient role, but sought to usurp the husband’s God-given authority. As Paul notes, this was a shame to both the wife and her husband, and should have been recognized as such. Just as it was deemed a disgrace for a woman’s head to be shorn in that day, the act of uncovering her head was to be treated in like manner. As stated by Paul, all members have their own distinct role: the children subject to their parents, the wife subject to her husband, and the husband subject to Christ. Any deviation from this structure would result in folly, as we have witnessed in our modern-day society.

### CONCLUSION OF THE LETTER

Paul concludes the first letter to the Corinthians with the exhortation found in 1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 16:13-14 to, “Watch, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with love.” Again, this is a very appropriate message to the ecclesia in the modern day – a message that becomes even more pertinent when closely considering the words that Paul uses in the passage. He instructs them to:

**I. WATCH:** Again, we are reminded of the need to be Watchmen in the ecclesias against error and sin that so easily creeps into the flock and leads to the destruction of many. The exhortation from Paul is for the members thereof to be alert and ready to combat the various adversaries (both doctrinally and morally) that present themselves. The only way to do this is to consistently indulge in the diligent study of Scripture so that, as Christ did, we are able to instantly recognize error and sin, and respond in God’s way and according to His wisdom, rather than that of mankind.



**2. STAND FAST:** This is the reaction to the act of Watching and identifying error, falsehood, and moral deficiencies in ourselves and the ecclesia. After study has revealed the Truth that we are to follow, we are led to *act* in the capacity of a Watchman over the congregation in identifying things contrary to God’s will as revealed in Scripture. After doing so, Paul instructs the believer to “Stand Fast,” in the battle, not straying from the gospel message, not retreating from our spiritual duties or being overcome by error, but standing strong in the One Faith.

**3. QUIT YOU LIKE MEN, BE STRONG:** The battle will not be won unless the Watchman remains strong and resolute in carrying out the will of God. The word, “Quit,” means to, “act manly,” in this battle, and not allow oneself to be overcome with cowardice, fear, or apathy. In doing so, one is instructed to “Be Strong,” in the faith, not wavering to and fro and tossed about with every wind of doctrine, but having searched the Scriptures daily, the Watchman is therefore able to be confident and strong in his stand against error. In doing so, he will not succumb to the enemy of sin, but stand and fight with all his might against the adversary—never relinquishing or giving in, but always wrestling and fighting for the prize, though constantly withstanding the “fiery darts of the wicked.”

**4. LET ALL THINGS BE DONE WITH LOVE:** Paul ends this demonstrative lesson with the exhortation that we must not forget *why* we are fighting, but must always remember the need to seek the best spiritual outcome for our brethren and the congregation at large. In our efforts to fight, overcome, and conquer sin and error, the brother must never forget to demonstrate agape love. While warring and engaging in the fight against error and sin, the Believer must not, as did the ecclesia in Ephesus written of in Rev 2:4 “lose our first love,” or forget that the reason we are watching and fighting against error is to promote the spiritual well-being of our brethren. (*to be continued*)

Arthur Sankey

### *The Mode of Attack*

The enemies of the Truth do not attack from the front. Rather the attack comes from the rear in the form of a method known as *Reductionism*. Their battle cry is, “It is not really necessary to believe the traditional Christadelphian doctrine of...” By this subtle reasoning, the terms of the Truth are eroded and *reduced* until only a husk of faith is left.

Edward Farrar (*Christadelphian Advocate*, February, 1996)

# THE SONS OF ZADOK

## *Immortal Priests of the Age to Come*

IN 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 8:17 we are first introduced to a priest of the family of Eleazar, son of Aaron. This man lived during a unique period of time in the history of Israel, serving under King David and King Solomon. His life, like the lives of many faithful, was an allegory of things yet to come. Although a historical figure, Yahweh has chosen his character and attributes to represent a unique class of men to serve Him and his Son in the restored Kingdom of Israel. (Ezekiel 40:46, 44:14, 48:11).

### THE HISTORY OF ZADOK

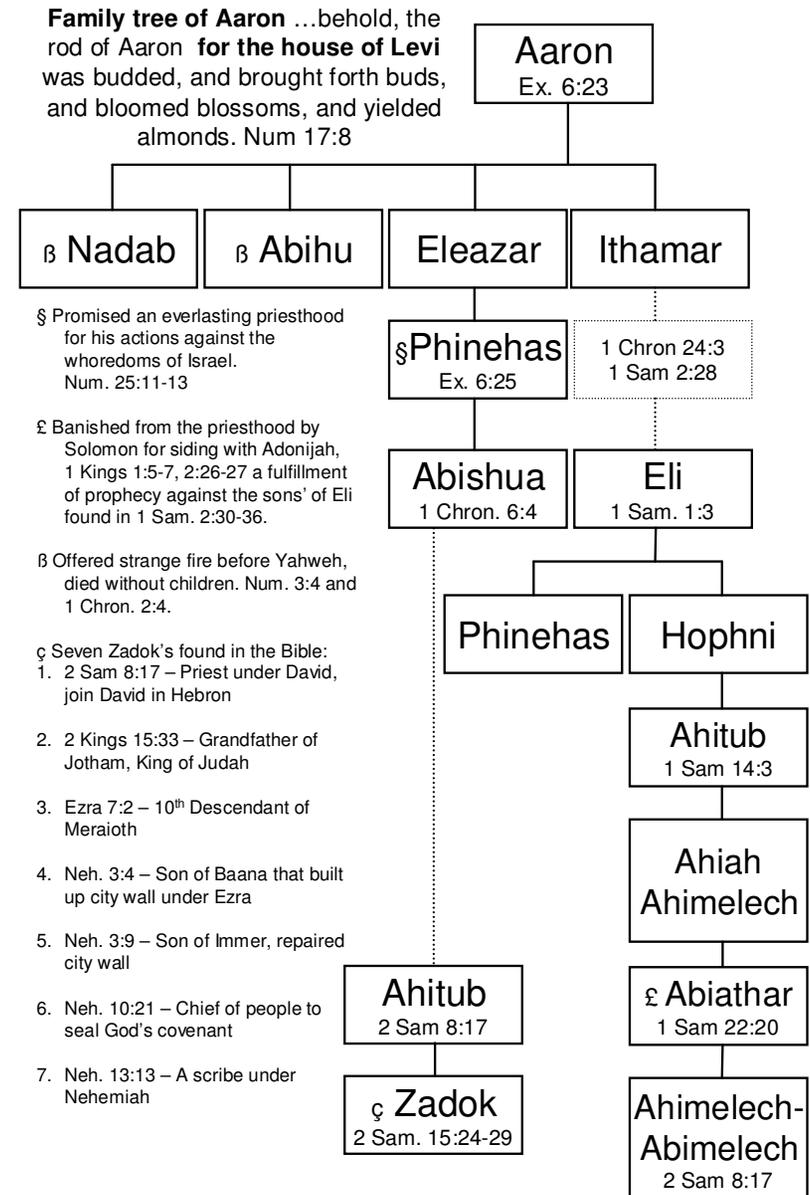
In our first introduction to the priest Zadok we find him officiating under the direction of Abiathar the High Priest during the reign of King David. Zadok was the son of Ahitub a descendant of Eleazar son of Aaron. Zadok served along with Ahimelech who was the son of Abiathar of the lineage of Ithamar, Aaron's youngest son. (See Family Tree chart, p. 14)



At this time Abiathar was the high priest, and Ahimelech and Zadok acted as his assistants, as did Hophni and Phinehas when Eli served as high priest. In the days of David, the Tabernacle was at Gibeon (2<sup>nd</sup> Chron. 1:3), whilst the ark was in Zion (1<sup>st</sup> Chron. 15:29). Priests were therefore required in both places. Zadok was made priest in Gibeon (1<sup>st</sup> Chron. 16:39), and Ahimelech was priest in Zion.

In 1<sup>st</sup> Chron. 24:4 we read of the division of the house of Aaron, "And there were more chief men found of the sons of Eleazar than of the sons of Ithamar; and thus were they divided. Among the sons of Eleazar there were sixteen chief men of the house of their fathers, and eight among the sons of Ithamar according to the house of their fathers." Zadok and Ahimelech, represented the two great families of the house of Aaron, the families of Eleazar and Ithamar. In the lineage of Aaron, Eli was of the family of Ithamar, but God had declared that he would take the honor from the family of Ithamar and give it to one of Eleazar's family (1 Sam. 2:27-36). Zadok, because of his faithfulness, would become high priest in the place of Abiathar in the days of Solomon, thus fulfilling the words of Samuel, the Man of God. (Story of the Bible, Vol. 3, pp.78-79)

## THE LINEAGE OF AARON



Twice as many chief men were recorded in the family of Eleazar (16) as there were in that of Ithamar (8). Yet the total of these men is 24, a multiple of 12 – symbolizing the 12 heads of the tribes of Israel that are blessed in the kingdom, and the 12 apostles that shall sit upon the thrones vested unto them by the Greater than David, the Son of Yahweh. These men are the twenty-four, the elders which surround Christ’s throne as foretold in Revelation 4:4. (Rev. 21:12, 14; Matt. 19:28, Lk 22:30) Revelation 4:4 – “And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.”

As one regards how Zadok and his family represent the redeemed, then we cannot ignore that the Scriptures identify six other men that took upon them this significant name. All these men had appointments that proved to be positions of just men, servants of Yahweh, and focused upon the promises provided unto the fathers. We find record of these men in the following Scriptures:

1. 2 Sam 8:17 – Priest under David, join David in Hebron
2. 2 Kings 15:33 – Grandfather of Jotham, King of Judah
3. Ezra 7:2 – 10th Descendant of Meraioth
4. Neh. 3:4 – Son of Baana that built up city wall under Ezra
5. Neh. 3:9 – Son of Immer, repaired city wall
6. Neh. 10:21 – Chief of people to seal God’s covenant
7. Neh. 13:13 – A scribe under Nehemiah

Another individual that may be added to this list would be Melchizedek, who preceded them all, and typifies all those that are justified and will be amongst those singing the New Song of Revelation 5:9-10. Melchizedek was the first man entitled a Priest by Yahweh, taking on a position that was typically restricted to the head of the family or family ancestors (Numbers 8:14-18). Paul teaches of this fact when he stated “Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually. (Heb. 7:3). Melchizedek, like Jesus, was ordained a priest by Yahweh, that is, “by the word of the oath” and not by inheritance. This fact is illustrated by Paul when he wrote of Jesus, “For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.” (Heb. 7:14).

Melchizedek’s name means “king of righteousness”, it is a compound of two Hebrew words – *melek* (a king); and *tsedeq* (a root of *tsadaq* right, equity, or prosperity). This second word, *tsedeq* is from the same root word as that of the name Zadok, *tsadaq*, to make right. From this association, one can see the spiritual relationship between Melchizedek and Zadok who each represent the Just One, i.e. Jesus Christ and the multitudinous body of redeemed who have been washed in the blood of Christ and shall be made kings and priests unto God (Rev. 1:5-6).

### THE HISTORY OF THE LEVITES

In regards to the lessons gleaned from Melchizedek, we find that in the Kingdom, the duties of the king and the priest shall be centralized into the occupation of one individual – Jesus as prophesied by Zechariah (6:13). Yet the first divinely organized priesthood, the Levites and son’s of Aaron, were separated from the royal family obligations. On the subject of separation, Scripture reveals that the Levites were to be separated from the rest of Israel and were given or dedicated completely to Yahweh. Their tribe assumed the position of the first-born, or was elevated to the position of the priesthood for the nation, above the other tribes, although Reuben was the eldest of the sons of Jacob.

Yahweh blessed Levi with the privilege typically provided in the birthright, the priesthood. This tribe was granted this position due to their faithfulness to Yahweh when all the other tribes were disobedient as recorded in Exodus 32:26. Therefore God took them to be His instead of the firstborn of all other tribes (Num. 3:12,41,45). “The Bible shows that the real firstborn in a family could be replaced by a younger brother if he were disobedient, or could not perform the necessary duties.” Case in point would be Ishmael & Isaac, Jacob & Esau, Reuben & Joseph or in this instance, Reuben & Levi. Quoting again from *The Story of the Bible*, Vol. 1 – ““The 'priests' were descendants of Aaron whilst the Levites comprised the rest of the tribe. All were Levites, but only the sons of Aaron were accounted priests. The Levites acted as servants to the priests. **Thus God took one family out of the tribe of Levi and made them priests above all the others.**” (p339).

Other attributes of the Levites were:

- They were to minister unto Aaron and the priests – Num. 3:6
- They were to watch or preserve the actions of the entire congregation in the activities concerning the tabernacle – Num. 3:7
- They were to guard or protect all the instruments of the tabernacle – Num. 3:8
- They were to bear the ark of the covenant – Deut. 10:8
- They were the closest to encamp around the tabernacle in the wilderness, Num. 1:53
- They were to be teachers of the Law to the Israelites – Deut 24:8, Lev. 10:11
- They were to act as judges to the Israelites – Deut. 17:9
- They were to have no land inheritance in Israel – Num. 18:23-26
- Upon entrance into the Promised Land they were appointed cities – Num. 35:2-8

Numbers 1:50 – “But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that belong to it: they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the vessels thereof; and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle.”

“In setting the tribes and in appointing one family above all others in Levi, God was teaching Israel a very important lesson we, too, must learn. Israel was selected by Yahweh from all other nations, to be a “peculiar treasure” unto Him “above all people” (Exod. 19:5). Paul tells us that outside of Israel, people are “without hope and without God in the world” (Eph. 2:12). In other words, to approach unto God, we must do so through the “hope of Israel” (Acts 28:20), by baptism into Christ, who is the Messiah of Israel. Even in the days of Moses, anyone desiring to approach Yahweh had to do so through Israel; there was no other way. But, Israel, itself, was cut off from access to the Tabernacle, and God, by the Priests and Levites. Yahweh was teaching them that though they were accounted a holy nation, according to the flesh, or from the natural viewpoint, they were no better than any other nation, unless they made a real effort to serve Him aright. Therefore, out of this one nation, selected from all others, God selected one tribe, and taught Israel they must approach Him through that tribe. But then men of that tribe might have thought they were more worthy than the other tribes merely because they were born Levites, so God selected one family, the family of Aaron, above all the others, and made it chief. Even the family of Aaron could not go into the Most Holy. Only one man, the chief of them all, could do that: the High Priest. The other priests had to defer to him. This taught them humility. It caused them *to recognize the virtues found within oneself cannot be elevated above the virtues found in others. The Law therefore* forced all to look to the High Priest. Without his mediation on the Day of Atonement they could not officiate as priests. He was supreme in the appointed worship of the nation. But even he was humbled, for before he could enter the Most Holy Place, he had to offer a sacrifice. This reminded him, that though his position was a high one, it was his by divine appointment, and not because he was physically better than others. *He, too, had to recognize that as he sinned, he was in need of the mercy of Yahweh. In this wonderful worship, therefore, all flesh was humbled before God.*” (*Story of the Bible*, Vol. 1, p.339-40)

Besides the second class position occupied by the Levites to the priests the Levites were not allowed to have any land inheritance once the children entered into the promised land of Canaan. Because of this they had to rely completely upon God for their food, requiring them to dedicate their lives fully to His work. Also, this caused them to be scattered amongst all the tribes. The lesson in this teaches that both natural Israel of the past and the spiritual Israelite of the present day must endure as strangers and pilgrims in lands in which they reside (Heb. 11:13).

“The scattering of the Levites throughout the whole of Israel would also mean that each part of the nation would have the Law brought before them all the time.” (*Story of the Bible*, Vol. 2, p.154) From this we realize our responsibility to be examples and witnesses of Yahweh’s character at all times as we live and work as pilgrims in today’s society.

### THE PRIESTHOOD BEING CHANGED

**Hebrews 7:12** – “For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.” Just as there was a change in the priesthood at the crucifixion of Christ, so shall there be another change in the priesthood at the inauguration of the Kingdom Age. The precedent of a changing priesthood was set by Yahweh when he changed the marching order of the Israelites just before they were to enter into the Promised Land. Instead of having the Levites bear the ark in the midst of the congregation as they traveled across the Jordan (Num. 4:15; 10:14-28), Yahweh directed the priests to bear the ark before the people (Josh. 3:3-6). Paul, in Hebrews 7:11-12, spoke about the first change to come about in the laws concerning the priesthood. “If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchizedek, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.” This remarkable event that brought the children of Israel into the Promised Land was a symbol that pointed forward to the change that should occur in the priesthood of the Kingdom.

“The New Testament shows that those who are followers of the Lord Jesus are called to be priests (1 Pet. 2:9), and they bear aloft before all men the Ark of God, or the Lord Jesus Christ. What is more, when they do that, they cause the waters of the Jordan to flow in reverse” (*Story of the Bible*, Vol. 2, p.116), no longer flowing to the Sea of Death. In this allegory found in Joshua 3:6 we find Yahweh teaching us of that great day when His Redeemed will bear upon their own shoulders the very nature of their Messiah. The Ark which they bear is a declaration of their faith, a faith manifest by three precious elements contained within their hearts; the commandments of Yahweh (the tablets of the law), complete reliance upon Yahweh’s provision of natural necessities (the manna), and the hope of resurrection to life (Aaron’s rod that budded).

Joshua 3:6 – “And **Joshua** spake unto the **priests**, saying, Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people.” These historical words provide insight to the Future Age. First: that the redeemed will be first to inherit the great and precious promises that have been promised to Abraham’s seed. Second: this indicates that the administration of the laws and worship shall be changed as directed by the antitypical Joshua in the outset of the Kingdom. Many Scriptures allude to the fact that a change in the priesthood shall occur in the Kingdom Age (2 Peter 1:9, Zech 6:13, Rev. 1:6, 5:10, 20:6), but Ezekiel details the classification and duties of the future priesthood, which will be considered in our next installment.

*Robby Bennett*

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## PREPARE THYSELF FOR THE DAY OF THE LORD

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**H**OW does the future Day of the LORD impact each of us on a personal basis? How are we preparing ourselves for that day when we will hear the angel's voice speak these words – "The Master has come and callest for you?" **John 11:28**. We know that the Scriptures teach us that only the covenanted brothers and sisters of our risen Lord and Savior will hear these wonderful words. However, I hope these words of exhortation will also be helpful to any who have not yet taken on the Name of the Lord.

We suggest that the principles that we will discuss in this exhortation are of the utmost personal matter. Each of us needs to answer and contemplate their own truthful answers to the questions that will be raised in this exhortation and should use these principles in the way that will provide each of us the most spiritual value in these evil days. We also recognize that these principles could and should be used by the entire Christ Body, collectively.

The first thing that I hope that you will accept is that this exhortation, the questions within and the request to apply these principles to our daily life are not pointed toward any one person or group. These words are primarily an exhortation to myself. The daily application of God's Word may come easy for some people. And for some people, like myself, it is a daily struggle to always seek first the Kingdom of God and put aside the things of the flesh and the pleasures of this world. Our failures may be plenty, our victories may be small. Let us not give up, brothers and sisters. Let us press on towards the prize of our high calling in Jesus Christ. **Philippians 3:14**. The rewards and opportunities that God has promised in the future age far exceed the temporary pleasures of this probationary life. Let us not wait until tomorrow to learn how to apply the divine principles and accept the guidance and direction that Yahweh has provided for our benefit. God sends us various trials and tribulations, some severe and some not so severe, teaching us the simplest things regarding our position in His eyes. Let us learn, and continue to learn.

We will now turn our attention to a few things that we must do to prepare ourselves for that great and mighty *Day of the LORD* when all nations will learn to prostrate themselves before the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. This list of subjects that we include in this exhortation is not exhaustive of all that we should think about or act upon in this life. We pray that these few concepts will provide us spiritual meat to digest and strength for those days of weakness that we will experience through the coming days. As we contemplate these subjects, we must recognize that the subjects will by design overlap for they all

are provided that we may be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord – **I Corinthians 15:58**.

I would like to approach this process of preparation by using these four subjects with the understanding that none is any more important to our spiritual welfare than the others.

- Be Obedient
- Be Studious
- Be Watchful
- Develop the Mind of Christ

When we hear exhortations concerning our walk in Christ, one of the feelings that we may experience as individuals still inflicted with the problems caused by our sin nature are the thoughts that Brother so and so should be listening to these words, for he surely needs to change his ways. Let us not even think that thought. Let us use these words and see how we individually compare to the standard of Perfection – Jesus Christ.

### OBEDIENCE TO THE COMMANDMENTS OF YAHWEH

Please read **Psalms 119:1-16**. This entire Psalm could be read in regard to this section of our exhortation. This Psalm gives us great insight into this subject. In these few verses, we read that God expects us to keep his ways, and that He has promised blessings to those who walk in the law (commandments) of the LORD and to those who keep His testimonies. However, in verses 5, 10, and 11 we read of the situation where mankind will not obey these divine commandments. These few verses tell us of the great struggle that mankind faces between the ways of the flesh and the ways of the LORD – between the carnal mind and the spiritual mind.

Brethren, can we pick and choose between the commandments of Yahweh? Can we willingly choose obedience to some commandments and then willingly choose to thrust aside other commandments that are not easy for us to obey or those that require some sort of sacrifice to walk in the way of the LORD? We are commanded to confess all of our sins. Any commandment that we willing put aside is a sin. We should be willing and able to admit our problems and be willing and able to draw strength from others in order to overcome these daily struggles so that we can be successful in our preparation for the Day of the LORD. We should never gloss over our individual or collective Ecclesial problems in the hope that they will just go away. Brethren, we should be desirous to help each other with our individual struggles. We should also be willing to accept loving advice and counsel from our brethren when we have placed ourselves in a state of continual disobedience. This is most difficult for us to do. We allow the impulses of the flesh to rule the situation. There are times when we do not understand or refuse to understand how to overcome our

pride and self-interests when dealing individually and collectively with the sins that we continue to commit. The Scriptures teach us that it is of the utmost importance to overcome, overcome, overcome all of the effects of this sin nature that we continue to struggle with. We must ask ourselves why we do not want to help our brethren along the way. Individually or collectively, we cannot ignore continual sin. The Word of God provides direction and guidance to help us address our individual and collective sins. If we ignore these jewels of gold that God has given unto us, we are disobedient to the commandments of our Heavenly Father.

We are told that Christ learned obedience by the things He suffered (Hebrews 5:8). If learning obedience was difficult for that man who was always about His Father's business, we must realize how difficult it will be for those who do not and cannot manifest the will of the Father. We are also told that if we love Him, we will keep His commandments (John 14:15). None of us will ever come close to perfection, this side of the Kingdom Age. We must continue in our struggles and never let sin rule over us. Although we cannot overcome all things, we will have some victories if we successfully use our spiritual armor of truth, righteousness, peace, faith, the hope of salvation, the word of God and prayer. When we sin, does that mean that we do not love our Father and His only begotten Son? Absolutely not, as long as we do not continue in our sins. As long as we can recognize and confess our disobedience, we can be assured that we have a faithful High Priest and a forgiving and merciful Father on High who will forgive our transgressions and will always love us with the greatest love that could ever exist. The love that was manifested through His Son is our example of obedience.

### BE STUDIOUS IN THE WORD OF GOD

*“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”* (2<sup>nd</sup> Tim. 2:15). And, *“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”* (2<sup>nd</sup> Tim. 3:16,17)

Are we good students of the entire counsel of the Word of God? Each of us has our own special subjects that we love to study more than others in the Bible. Maybe it is the Law of Moses, maybe it is the Psalms, maybe it is the Gospels, and maybe it is Revelation. We cannot let our personal favorite subjects place us in a position of unbalance in our studies. The entirety of the inspired word of God is given as one subject with many varied details. The Plan and Purpose of Yahweh is the message that one should understand from their readings from Genesis to Revelation. We cannot ignore some parts of the Holy Writ because they may be hard to understand or because they may be controversial in this day and age. We should always take our personal studies and understandings and place them alongside the inspired word of Yahweh to

test and prove the correctness of our system of beliefs. In our studies, we should use the example of the Bereans in Acts 17:11, who searched the Scriptures daily to determine that the words of the apostles were true. However, when found to be true, we should uphold them and follow them at all times.

One of my favorite verses is **Amos 3:7** - *“Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.”* This verse tells us that God has revealed in His Word everything that we need to know to live our lives in preparation for that great Day of the LORD. We should never speculate about anything that is not written about in His Word.

Brethren and young people, do we study enough? What is enough, we may ask? Our minds are such that we cannot study 24/7. However, we should be able to put forth the correct amount of effort to develop a good overall and balanced understanding of God's Plan and purpose. Whatever time that this takes on an individual basis and whatever personal sacrifices must be made, we should carve out a portion of the day to develop and maintain this understanding.

As we think about the subjects that we choose to study, we should ask ourselves why we have chosen this particular subject. Is our objective to reinforce something that we already know and are comfortable with? Is our purpose to gain knowledge so that we can debate the subject with others? Is our subject one that we have very limited knowledge about and we desire to gain additional knowledge of a particular part of the Scriptures? Is our selection based on our decision to stay away from controversial subjects in the brother hood? Our selection should be based on our desire to become well rounded in the divinely inspired Word of God.

Each of us should be wise and honest enough to admit that there are differences of opinions within the Christadelphian Body on a variety of subjects. These subjects include the marriage, divorce and re-marriage issue, the Unamended/Amended issues, and differences in interpretation of latter day prophecies. In our studies, do we ignore or refuse to study the Scriptures that the “other side” uses in their defense of their belief systems? Do we refuse to discuss these issues with the “other side”? Again, we must ask ourselves, why cannot we sit down as brothers and sisters of Christ and review all of the pertinent scriptural passages that deal with these controversial subjects? Again, I must ask each of us not to point to others when answering this question.

Another area of concern in which we should examine our own motives is the degree that we participate in Ecclesial study activities. Brethren, again, these questions are pointed towards me more than anyone else. Do we participate in all of the Ecclesial activities? Have our Ecclesias put aside the spiritual fellowship that that could be obtained through any spiritual activities

that may have been thrust to the side? Do we forego attendance at the Bible School activities? Brethren, can this be pleasing to our Father? Have we lost our first love, individually and/or collectively? How do we answer these questions? From my personal experience, I will offer three answers to these questions. 1) I am too tired. 2) I have other things to do. 3) It is too far to drive. There may be others. It doesn't matter how we answer these matters. If we are honest, most answers to these questions are just excuses to serve the flesh rather than serving Yahweh. When we do attend these spiritual activities, do we come prepared to discuss the spiritual subject of the classes or are we content to allow the teaching brother to handle all of the discussions?

Brethren, surely we are spiritually mature enough to recognize that the spirit of humanism dwells amongst us regarding the study of God's Word. There is a principle that I learned in my business life. "If you are not part of the solution, then you are part of the problem". If we think our Ecclesial activities need to be strengthened, what are we personally doing to make these events more pleasing in the eyes of our heavenly Father? Will the way that we approach our individual and collective study of the Word of God be part of our "account" when we stand before the Judge of the whole world?

#### BE YE WATCHFUL

**Matthew 25:13** – "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh"; **26:41** – "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."; **Luke 21:36** – "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."; **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 16:13** – "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong"; **Revelation 3:3** – "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."

There are three areas that I think these verses are applicable. The first is to watch ourselves so that we do not walk in sin, the second is to be watchmen over the Ecclesia so that false doctrines are not introduced into the Body of Christ, and that the Truth that is taught in our Ecclesias and Bible Schools is not watered down and diluted, and the third area is to watch the workings of the Kingdom of Men so that we can see and understand the fulfillment of God's Plan and Purpose with His creation. Brethren, each of these are critical in our preparation for the Day of the LORD. We cannot focus on only one of these three areas and willingly ignore the other two. We are commanded to perform all three of these activities.

#### WATCH THAT YOU ENTER NOT INTO TEMPTATION

In **Matthew 26:41**, we are told to watch and pray unless we enter into temptation, the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. In the context in which this is written, we find the Master and His disciples in the Garden of

Gethsemane. Christ had departed from the disciples and went further into the Garden to pray by himself. Jesus had commanded the disciples to sit while he went further to pray. He took Peter, James and John and went a little further to pray. He then told these three to tarry and watch while he went to pray. However, they were exceeding tired and fell asleep. Christ questioned them as to why they could not watch with him for one hour and then gave them this warning that we read in verse 41.

This was not the first time that the three favored disciples fell asleep during a situation of utmost importance. In Luke 9:32 we read that they also fell asleep during the time of the Transfiguration. The Scriptures teach us that these disciples fell asleep during a time of triumph and during a time of trial. What were they to watch for? What temptation was Christ referencing? It seems like Christ was teaching them a lesson that would take them back to Peter's false statement in Matthew 26:33-35. In these verses, we read of Peter's and all of the disciples vow that they would never deny their Lord. The question that we should ask ourselves for this lesson is how can we deny the Lord Jesus Christ? What was Christ needing and wanting from His closest followers during these two times in which they fell asleep? He needed their companionship and fellowship with him in his greatest hour and in his time of extreme sorrow. They let the flesh overcome their stated purpose of never denying the Lord.

We should be able to see from this example that we can deny the Lord just by letting the natural ways of the flesh rule our lives. To deny the Lord does not just mean a public pronouncement against the Lord and His Truth, but to deny the Lord is simply a manifestation of a lack of strength to overcome the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.

Our denials come in many and varied ways. It is those things of the flesh that overtake us like sleep. All of us have experienced that feeling of being wide awake and then the next moment falling sound asleep. Sin can overtake us in the same manner. An evil thought, a word of contempt, an inappropriate action can be manifested without any previous thought. Could this be the lesson that the Master is teaching His disciples of all ages? The Greek word for "Watch" in these verses means to stay alert. This is our duty in our warfare with the flesh. We can stay alert in these evil sorrowful times by the things that we are discussing here – the necessary preparations for the Day of the LORD. We must never allow ourselves to fall spiritually asleep.

We must always remember the sufferings of our Master that He willingly submitted unto as our representative. We must participate in His sufferings and rejoice in His Joy. To remain alert means in our personal lives to be studious and obedient though the development of the mind of Christ that will strengthen us in our time of trial and tribulations. Let us strive to be the companion of Christ that He wants, and stay awake and alert to those sins that constantly plague us as we wait for that time when Christ will return.

**BE WATCHMEN FOR THE TRUTH**

**Ezek. 3:17** – “*Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel*”; also Ezek. 33:7. Why is this important? What are we to watch for in this regard? I think we can read a few verses in Revelation that will answer both these questions. **Revelation 2:14-15, 20** – “*But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth...Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.*”

The members of God’s Ecclesias were and will be condemned because they allow false doctrines to be taught in the community of believers. The comingling of false doctrines and the doctrines of the Truth is as old as the Truth itself and takes us back to the days of Adam and Eve and Cain and Abel. False doctrines cannot be tolerated. They must always be dealt with. Although it is the primary responsibility of the leaders of the Ecclesia to be alert and aware of any attempts to introduce the ideas of the apostasy into the Brotherhood, each and every brother and sister must be constantly alert for any attempts by those among us that try to dilute the teachings of the one Truth.

This is a subject that we may not want to discuss, hoping that the subject will just go away. We know this is just an excuse not to deal with those things that we are commanded to deal with. Each and every one of us must be like the watchman on the walls of Jerusalem. We should always be alert to the possibility of the approach of the enemy of the Truth. We must be willing to sound the alarm to those in the city. We must be strong and courageous and not be shy or hesitant. If we do, the walls of the city may be torn down and our defenses breached. Brethren, we should always be ready to give an answer for the hope that lies within us.

**1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:15** – “*But sanctify the LORD God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meakness and fear.*” This principle should be applied to those outside the Truth who may pose questions about the Truth but also to those within the Truth who pose a threat against the Truth. Of course, we should handle both of these situations according to the divine commandments of the Lord. In our examinations, we must ask ourselves if we are as alert to those situations where the teachings of the Truth may be diluted as we are with the things of our personal flesh or the things of the political environment of the world. We must be equally alert and watchful of all three areas.

**BE WATCHFUL OF THE EVENTS IN THE KINGDOM OF MEN**

We are living in the latter days of the Kingdom of Men. There are shakings in the political earth that we should and must be alert to. We ask ourselves many times – What future events must happen prior to that great and mighty day that the Lord has determined to send His Son to the earth to re-establish His Glorious Kingdom? Many, if not all, of us believe that the return of our Lord could happen this very day. Therefore, we are convinced that we may not see the fulfillment of another major prophetic event. What joy that should give us brothers and sisters. Many of our readers have seen the partial re-gathering of God’s chosen people in the last century. Alongside of that momentous event, we have seen the rise of those nations that are geographically round about the Promised Land that has fulfilled their Biblical role as thorns in the flesh of the nation of Israel. Now, brethren, we are seeing the arousal and aggressiveness of the latter day invader of God’s Holy land. The political events, and fall out of the events commenced by the Russian Bear within the last few months must be viewed in the prophetic light in which the Bible predicts about this great enemy of the Jewish nation. These events are probably leading us to the brink of that great and mighty Day of the LORD. Are we ready? Are we preparing ourselves? Are we alert to these political shakings? We should absorb every detail that we can find about the actions of this Gogian giant that can impact Israel, the Moslem nations of the Middle East, Europe and the English speaking Tarshish nations. Brethren, this may be the last piece of the prophetic puzzle.

We also should be aware of all of the “stormy winds” that we are watching in the world. All of these events are indicators of the world wide conditions of the latter days of the Gentile nations. Even though the Brotherhood, collectively and individually, may be going through trials and tribulations, let us rejoice in these last days. Do not be discouraged, do not lose our first love, and do not be impatient.

**DEVELOP THE MIND OF CHRIST**

I think this subject summarizes, and is an appropriate closing for the entire message of this exhortation. We are commanded to be like minded with our Master. We can only do this by putting off the carnal mind. We must crucify the “Old Man” that lies within us as Christ did. We must strive to know and do the will of our Father as Christ did. We must love as Christ loved. We must learn obedience through our sufferings as Christ did. We must understand, appreciate and desire the joy that is set before us as Christ did. We must place our utmost trust in our Heavenly Father as Christ did. In 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:1, the apostle tells us to arm ourselves with the Mind of Christ. As we wield the spiritual weapons detailed in Ephesians 6, we do so in the same manner that Christ did. We are told that the natural or carnal mind is enmity against God. The mind of Christ does not come natural for us. We must cultivate the mind

of Christ through the other topics that we discussed – obedience, studious and being watchful.

**Philippians 4:4-8** – “*Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*”

**Revelation 19:7-9.** “*Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.*”

Be prepared, brethren.

B. Henderson

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## LUKE’S AUDIENCE

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IN an earlier installment, I endeavored to demonstrate that Matthew wrote his account of the Lord’s life, death and resurrection for a primarily Jewish audience. These assertions were substantiated by an examination of unique themes, citation of Scripture and an assessment of assumed background information on people, history and society. The same type of analytic approach may be applied to Luke’s gospel and as alluded to in the previous analysis, it may be demonstrated that his record is targeted to a primarily Gentile audience. In particular, the evidence indicates it was the Gentile convert audience of the Apostle Paul.

The prologue (1:1-4) of Luke provides invaluable instruction as to how he came to write his account of the Lord and his intended audience. First, it is quite clear that Luke was not the first to write a Gospel for circulation, because he states others have done so already. “*Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed*

*among us* (Lk 1:1).” Additionally, Luke’s Gospel is also an interesting study on the mode of inspiration. Luke immediately informs his readers that he did not have a visionary type experience like Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah or John. Luke (1:3 NASB) – *investigated everything carefully*. Luke obtained material by speaking to people who were witnesses. Since only Luke records the early account of Jesus’ life (Lk 2:41-50) and the interaction between Mary and Elisabeth, it is probable that Mary was one of his sources. Additionally, since Luke records the thoughts and words of Herod (9:7-9; 23:8) another source may have been Manaen, a brother in Antioch, who had been brought up with Herod the tetrach (Acts 13:1). From all this we see Luke is a historian. In fact, Luke follows the well-established format and language of a Greek historian. Parallels and similarities exist between the opening verses of Luke and Josephus’ preface to the Antiquity of the Jews. Likewise, commentators have recognized features similar to instructions given to Greek historians.\* Finally, reinforcing Luke as an historian is his method of establishing chronology for the reader based on ties to world events (Luke 1:4; 2:1-2; 3:1-2).

Luke also is the only Gospel writer to name his recipient. “*It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus* (Lk 1:3).” Ancient works were frequently dedicated to an individual, particularly if that individual was the patron of the author. Here, Luke states he is composing this work for a man with a Greek name that means “friend of God”. One cannot be for certain if Theophilus was a single individual or a symbolic name for a group of people. However, that question does not change the implications of the name being a Greek one.

Through the inclusion of additional explanation, commentary and details, Luke assumes his readers had limited background knowledge about the patriarchs, the Law of Moses, local society, and the local language. First, the difference between Luke’s and Matthew’s genealogies as to which line (Mary’s or Joseph’s) through which Jesus’ lineage is traced is well documented and recognized. However, the genealogies differ in another way. Matthew only traces the lineage to Abraham, but Luke carries it all the way to Adam. Matthew’s Jewish audience would have already known the relationship between Abraham and the first man. In contrast, Luke does not assume his readers know that fact. Additionally, Luke (3:38) plainly identifies Adam *was the son of God*. Luke’s audience is not familiar with the creation of the world and the first man. In terms of the Law of Moses, Luke has to explain certain aspects or offers clarification for his readers. After Jesus’ birth, Luke (2:21-24) records what Mary had to do (*present him to the Lord*), where (*Jerusalem*), when (*days of her purification*), why (*according to the Law of Moses*), and how (*offer a sacrifice ... A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons*). Luke provides similar details

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\* Lucian “The Way to Write History”

and explanation concerning the circumcision of Jesus (Lk 2:21) and has to identify the name of the feast of unleavened bread (Lk 22:1). In contrast, Matthew does not mention the purification of Mary or the circumcision of Jesus because they were assumed facts for his Jewish audience. Thirdly, Luke's audience also has a limited amount of knowledge on another front. From Luke's companion volume, the book of Acts (1:19), it is evident his readers did not know the local language, Aramaic, since he has to provide the translation.

Luke's provision of additional details to explain events also occurs in conjunction with the activities of the synagogue. Matthew (13:54) records, "*And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?*" Luke, however, gives us one of the earliest explanations of how the synagogue operated. "*And he taught in their synagogues... he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias... And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down*" (Lk 4:15-22).

A modern parallel can help reinforce the differences. If a brother reports in meeting he attended a Bible school, all those in attendance know the types of activities, schedules, living arrangements, eating habits, expected behaviors, and activities that entails, because they too have attended Bible schools. Now if that same brother were to tell a co-worker about that same Bible school he would probably have to explain how the week operates. Likewise, Matthew does not need to tell his Jewish audience about synagogue operations, he simply has to state Jesus went. On the other hand Luke by his description is almost answering the implied question, "What does that mean to go into a synagogue?"

More than any other Gospel writer, Luke highlights the faith and importance of Gentiles. Only Luke (4:24) records Jesus' statement that "*no prophet is accepted in his own country.*" In this same instance Jesus gives examples of the deliverance of Gentiles instead of Israelites (4:24-29) much to the indignation of those in the synagogue. Likewise, only Luke records the parable of the Good Samaritan, in which it is the most despised of the Jew's adversaries who demonstrates the character and compassion we are to have. Finally, only Luke records how after healing ten lepers only a Samaritan returned to glorify God and give thanks. Luke records how Gentiles believed on Jesus and never mentions that Jesus was only sent "*unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel* (Matt 15:4)."

Finally, we know of at least one person who utilized Luke's gospel. In I Timothy 5:18 Paul wrote, "*For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.*" The first portion of this verse is quoting Deuteronomy 25:4. The second half of the verse does not appear in the Old Testament. It is, however, a direct quotation of the

Greek of Luke 10:7. "*The labourer is worthy of his hire* (or reward)." The Apostle to the Gentiles utilized Luke's Gospel; this is not a surprising fact since Luke was a traveling companion (e.g. II Tim 4:11; Col 4:14).

The previous comments have examined some of the features of Luke's Gospel. Luke's primary audience did not know about the Law of Moses, the patriarchs, the first man, how the synagogues operated or the local language. All of these features clearly indicate a non-Jewish audience. In addition, Luke highlights the faith of Gentiles, writes like a classical Greek historian, writes to a person with a Greek name, and is quoted by the Apostle to the Gentiles. The above evidence demonstrates Luke's gospel was primarily intended for Gentile converts and specifically the converts of Paul.

Josh Vest

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## THE HOPE OF RESURRECTION

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## Fundamental Considerations

IN the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of John we have the account of the death and resurrection of Lazarus. Within this chapter we have the very enlightening and moving discourse between Jesus and Martha. Starting at the 23<sup>rd</sup> verse we read, "*Jesus saith unto her, 'Thy brother shall rise again.' Martha saith unto Him, 'I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.'* Jesus said unto her "*I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.*"

Our subject is the emphatic statement by Christ – "I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE". During this brief consideration we cannot give a complete treatment of all aspects of where this statement can lead us, nor can we take a look at all applicable Scriptures, but what we wish to briefly consider is how this statement relates to the Gospel message, and what exactly are the ramifications of this declaration as it relates to what the Scriptures reveal regarding the Hope of Resurrection and the bestowal of eternal life.

To get a proper understanding of Christ's statement we need to first review a couple of pivotal developments from early on in the Biblical record.

### COVENANTS OF PROMISE

In the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis starting in the 14<sup>th</sup> verse we have a most remarkable Promise given by God to Abraham. It is a passage that is widely

ignored by professing Christianity and can be taken for granted among Christadelphians for the impact it has on all levels of Bible Truth. God said to Abraham, “*Lift up now thine eyes and look from the place where thou art – northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land that thou seest, **to thee will I give it and to thy seed forever.** Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.*”

It is especially remarkable in light of what had taken place some 2,000 years previous to when this Covenant was made. The promise given to Abraham and his seed was to be **forever**, but the problem of death stands in the way of such a fulfillment. 2,000 years earlier Adam and Eve had sinned in the Garden placing themselves and the human race under condemnation to death. **Roman 5:12** – “*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, **in whom** all have sinned.*” As the Biblical account records, Abraham “*died in faith, not having received the promises*”. Stephen confirms in **Acts 7**, “*And He (God) gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on; yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession.*”

We know that the only way that God can fulfill His promise to Abraham, to give him an eternal possession of the land, is to resurrect him from the dead. That such a conclusion was to be drawn was further confirmed by God when speaking to Moses through the burning bush. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter of Exodus (**verse 14**) God gives His Memorial Name of *EHYEH ASHER EHYEH* or *I Will Be Who I Will Be*. “*Thus shalt thou say unto all the children of Israel: The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob hath sent me unto you; this is my name forever and this is my **memorial unto all generations.***”

When Jesus disputed with the Sadducees who denied the Resurrection, he used this verse to prove the reality of the Resurrection – **Luke 20:37,38** “*Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he called the Lord, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead but of the living: for all live unto him*”. These three patriarchs are mentioned as the personal parties of the Covenant and direct beneficiaries of the promise of resurrection. How could these be men spoken of as alive when they were dead? According to the principle laid down in **Romans 4:17** it is God “*Who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not, as though they were.*” God was speaking to a future time when they would be in all surety made alive once again.

To David was also given a Covenant. According to the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter of 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel David was promised a seed that would descend from him, whose Kingdom and throne would be established forever - A seed who would not only be a descendant of David but also the Son of God. And not only was such a promise given, but David was given pledge that this promised Kingdom would

be re-established “before thee” or in other words in David’s presence. The Hope of Resurrection was clearly laid out for David as well.

But without a way out of death provided, these Promises made to Abraham and David (also referred to in the Scriptures as the Everlasting Covenant) could not come into full force. Soon after Adam and Eve introduced sin and death into the world a way out of death was alluded to through a promised seed in Genesis 3:15, who though bearing the sin flesh nature would himself overcome sin, and destroy sin and death (the bruising of the serpents head) through death (himself being bruised in the heel).

#### “I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE”

With these points in mind we come back to the words of Christ and our subject – “I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE”. This is one of the many “I AM” statements found in the Scriptures. In the Bible we see this short phrase in connection with its future tense form “I WILL BE” (as it is found in the Yahweh name) to declare the manifestation of God’s characteristics as well as His purpose for this earth and mankind – first through His Son and then through the atoning work of that Son, in a redeemed Host of righteous ones from the Adamic Race. As the perfect manifestation of the Father (GOD MANIFEST IN THE FLESH) and as the vehicle provided to fill all the earth with the Father’s glory, Christ declared of himself: “*I am the bread of life*”, “*I am the light*”, “*I am the door*”, “*I am the good shepherd*”, “*I am the true vine*”. And, “*I am the way, the truth and the life*”.

Here in John 11 we have two “I AM” statements combined in one. First we have, “I AM THE RESURRECTION”. The word resurrection here is from the Greek word *anastasis* which indicates a *standing again* or the actual coming out of the grave. The second part of this is Christ’s affirmation – “I AM THE LIFE”. The word *life* is directly translated from the Greek word *zoe* and as it is used here it is clear that Christ is speaking of two distinct but closely related steps. First is that of resurrection (or a standing again) and by context here in John 11 is speaking of **The Resurrection** “at the last day” - looked for, through faith, by Martha. It is in reference to a coming out of the grave in a **mortal** condition, awaiting the decision of eternal life or death at the Judgment. As brother Thomas stated in Eureka:

*“passing through the grave cleanses no one. They who emerge thence, “come forth” with the same nature they carried into it; and therefore their coming forth is Resurrection.”(p.236)*

The second part of Christ’s statement (I AM THE LIFE) in its context here in John 11 **points to the bestowal** of eternal life. Not everyone that will come out of the grave will be granted eternal life as is stated by the prophet Daniel. “*And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth, shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*”

What Christ emphatically states here in very simple terms is that he is **THE MEANS** by which (#1) The dead will be raised to Judgment and, (#2) the reward of eternal life given. In **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:21** we read – “For since by man (Adam) came death, by man (Christ) came also the resurrection of the dead”. And in John 3:16, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Other men such as Elijah, Elisha, Peter & Paul also raised the dead but could not declare “I am the resurrection”. Such cases of resurrection, including that of Lazarus, were exceptions **that were not a part of The Resurrection and Judgment** spoken of by the prophets, nor were they related to the bestowal of eternal life and inheritance as contained in the Everlasting Covenant. LET IT BE CAREFULLY NOTED HERE that such instances of resurrection were independent of any Law or Promise that God had revealed. Such cases of resurrection were **resuscitations** to live out a normal life span to die once again, and in and of themselves as isolated miracles were **SIGNS** of the power of God and provided proof of the reality of THE RESURRECTION yet to come.

But what qualified Christ to be able to make such a claim as found here in the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of John? And what does our review of the Covenants of Promise have to do with this subject? In the Covenants of Promise (both to Abraham and to David) there was the promise of a singular seed that would be a direct beneficiary of the Promises made, which for this seed would also necessitate a resurrection. Christ is the preeminent singular seed as we read in **Galations 3:16** – “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, “And to seeds,” as of many; but as of one, “And to thy seed,” Which is Christ.” We also read in **Romans 15:8**, “Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.” And we know that the seed referred to in the Edenic promise, the seed that would overcome and destroy the power of the serpent (the sin flesh nature) through his own death, would be none other than the Christ. **Heb 2:14** - “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil (diabolis).”

Not only would Jesus be an inheritor of the Everlasting Covenant, he would be the means by which it would be ratified through the shedding of his blood. By the shedding of his blood – the blood of the Everlasting Covenant - He would be the vehicle by which atonement could be made for the sin flesh nature, freedom from Adamic condemnation given, freedom from the constitution or law of sin and death as being in Adam and deliverance into the law or constitution of the spirit of life; **and as a result** a guarantee of resurrection, AND eternal inheritance of the Promises possible – **first for himself** and then for a clearly defined class of candidates that we will discuss more in a moment.

The sacrifices under the Law or even before the Law (as those offered by Abraham) could not accomplish this, but Him who they pointed forward to would.

It is of fundamental necessity that it be understood that the subject of Covenant - the Everlasting Covenant - is directly and inseparably related to the subject and Hope of Resurrection; for the hope of resurrection and of eternal life is contained within the terms of the Covenant and not outside of it. David proclaimed in **2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 23:5** – “Although my house be not so with God; Yet He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, Ordered in all things, and sure: For **this** (the Covenant) **is all my salvation**, and all my desire.” There can be no salvation for David or anyone else, without resurrection, which is directly connected to this Covenant. This can be no more clearly demonstrated than what we read in **Hebrews 13:20** – “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.”

So we ask again - What qualified Jesus as “THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE”? God had made a promise. A seed had been promised to Eve, to Abraham and to David. A seed was promised who would be born of a woman, under the same unclean, Adamicly condemned nature, who by a life of perfect obedience (though tempted in all points as we are) would overcome that nature and destroy the power of sin and death through the shedding of his own blood in death; a seed through who all the nations of the earth might be blessed; a seed who would possess the gates of his enemies; a seed who would sit on the throne of David. Christ’s emphatic “I AM” statement was a matter of Promise. As a sacrifice fitly prepared by God (and as a testament to God’s RIGHTEOUSNESS AND JUSTICE), Christ fulfilled the conditions set upon him and was obedient – “even unto death” – as given by oath by God under the Everlasting Covenant. And through the everlasting covenant would be raised from the dead and then given the gift of immortality. On page 292 of the World’s Redemption bro. Williams stated:

“Since it is true that the everlasting covenant could not come into full force until it had been ratified by the shedding “of the blood of the everlasting covenant”, and since the everlasting covenant, and the law of the spirit of life, and gospel are all one and the same thing, it follows that the realization of the plan of redemption, expressed in these different terms, depended upon Christ’s successful performance of his mission – his obedience through a life of probation and his voluntary sacrificial death, which would insure his resurrection by the Father. Jesus would thus become the resurrection (*anastasis*) and the life (John 11:25).

Though at the time Christ spoke with Martha he had not yet fulfilled his function as the covenant sacrifice, he was completely cognizant of his role and

mission and could rightly say “I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE”.

### TWO NEGATING DOCTRINES TO CHRIST’S STATEMENT

But there are two positions that do not harmonize with Christ’s statement and that cancel out Jesus as the key to resurrection and eternal life.

One idea claims that we have an immortal soul and that at death such an invisible soul is immediately transferred to heaven (or to burning torment). This negates the Hope of Resurrection and definitely the hope of life eternal if all men are born with an immortal soul. A random quote appears in the 1899 Advocate, by bro. C.C. Vredenburg in which he makes the interesting observation – “*The popular view of the immortality of the soul and its attainment of heaven makes Adam, not Christ the bringer of eternal life in direct opposition to Paul’s teaching in Romans 5:12. Had Adam not sinned, he would not have died; and if he had not died his immaterial soul could not have winged its way to ‘realms beyond the bounds of time and space.’ Thus we have ‘nothing’ going ‘nowhere’.*”

Another idea contends that it is “light/knowledge” alone of God’s revealed plan - regardless of Covenant - that is the basis for The Resurrection to come and accountability to Christ’s Judgment seat. Such a view **does recognize** Christ’s connection to the Hope of Eternal life but **does not** recognize the role that Covenant through the atoning blood of Christ has in relation to a guarantee from the grave. It is important for us to understand that “light/knowledge” and FAITH, demonstrated through the acceptance of the terms of the Everlasting Covenant through the waters of baptism, is the consistent “WAY” revealed in the Scriptures for the Hope of Resurrection.

### OUR BASIS OF RESURRECTION

With that in mind, it is important for us to consider the impact that Christ’s statement has on our Hope for Resurrection and for Eternal Life. How do we become part of the “many” spoken of by the prophet Daniel who will be raised from the dead?

In **Galatians 3: 27** we find the familiar but unambiguous statement, “*For as many of you have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ... And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.*” To be baptized into Christ is the only way in the present dispensation that one can be considered as an heir of the Covenants of promise. Now knowing that resurrection is bound up in the Promises – If Christ’s basis of resurrection and if the basis for the resurrection of Abraham and David is the “Everlasting Covenant”; does it not seem logical to conclude that such is the basis for all others connected to the Covenant as well? Since the hope of resurrection is only revealed in the Scriptures as being bound up in the Everlasting Covenant, and knowing that Christ himself was raised through the operation of the “blood

of the everlasting covenant”, then it would stand to reason that **his servants** (i.e., those that through **knowledge** and **faith** in God’s promises have been baptized into his name) will also be raised from the dead by the same means. This is not a matter of conjecture but is a matter of clear scriptural revelation, and the only means that is revealed to us in the Scriptures for any to attain unto The Resurrection at the last day.

Turning to **Psalms 50** that looks to the time of the Resurrection and Judgment, we read starting in the **3<sup>rd</sup> verse**: “*Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence.....(vs. 4) He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His People. Gather My saints together unto Me; Those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.*” The saints of this current dispensation are those who have been joined to the Abrahamic Covenant through baptism into Christ – representative of Christ’s death, burial and resurrection. Bro. John Thomas in Eureka made this interesting observation in reference to this passage and the Judgment Seat – “*All who have made a covenant with Yahweh by sacrifice, and in any way related to ‘the Covenants of Promise,’ will be gathered and stand before this.*” A few lines earlier he also stated, “*the King of the Jews will first manifest his presence, not to the world at large; which will not know of his being there, or, if told the fact, would not believe it; but to those, whom “the blood of the covenant” brings before his tribunal.*” (p.234)

**Isaiah 55:3** – “*Incline your ear, and come unto Me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.*” The sure mercies of David and the Davidic covenant are the same thing and are a part of the Everlasting Covenant. Here we see that such a covenant is not confined to just David and Christ, but as is mentioned in the first verse of this chapter – “*every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters*” (in other words the *waters* of baptism). The “you” as mentioned in verse 3 is by extension those who connect themselves with the Covenant through Christ.

In **Zechariah chapter 9** starting in **verse 9** we are given information regarding Christ, with verse 10 stating “His dominion shall be from sea to sea”. In **verse 11** it is stated, “*As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.*” “The pit” is representative of death, and the only method mentioned here of release from death is through “the blood of the covenant”, in other words the redemptive work of Christ.

*Moving on to the New Testament even clearer statements are provided.*

After Christ’s ascension to heaven it rested on the Apostles to spread the Gospel message. It is recorded in **Acts 4:2** “*that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.*” The word through here is from the Greek preposition “en” and is equivalent to our word “in”.

According to Bullinger it “denotes being or remaining within...It has regard to place and space or sphere of action.” So this could read, and is translated such in other versions, “and preached IN Jesus the resurrection from the dead.” Here the apostles connect the hope of resurrection to those who are “in Christ”, as a matter of constitutional relationship. How do we become “in Christ”? – Through baptism.

In the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians, countering those who claimed there was no resurrection, Paul shows the connection between Christ’s resurrection and our hope of resurrection. **Verse 13** – “But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen”. **Verse 16** – “If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised”. Then in **verse 17** and 18 he clearly emphasizes the inseparable relationship between Christ’s resurrection and those that are “in Him” – “And if Christ be not raised, **your faith is in vain**, ye are yet still in your sins. Then they which are fallen asleep in (Greek – en) Christ are perished.” Christ’s statement, “I AM THE RESURRECTION” is clearly demonstrated here in Paul’s argument. It is important to note here that only those who have “fallen asleep in Christ” are mentioned in relation to the act of Resurrection. No mention is made here or any where else of those **outside of Christ**, whether they be “enlightened” or otherwise.

Paul continues his exposition, (vs.21) “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so **in Christ** shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward **they that are Christ’s**, at His Coming.”

**2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4:13,14** – “We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, “I believed, and therefore have I spoken;” we also believe, and therefore speak; Knowing that He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.” The preposition “by” used here is from a different Greek word than what we have discussed. The word is “dia” and according to Bullinger, “Denotes any cause by means of which an action passes into accomplishment.” What is the action being discussed in this passage? Resurrection. Who is the means through which that action is accomplished? Christ. It is also important to mention here that Paul makes note that “Knowing” or understanding is **a matter of faith** (or the usage of “faith” here as a noun – THE FAITH.) Our understanding of this matter is a fundamental principle of our Hope.

In 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians chapter 4 we have a passage of great comfort for the believers. Starting in the **13<sup>th</sup> verse** – “But I would not have you to be ignorant brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.” Here there are two groups specified – those who are “asleep” which represents the believers and those “which have no hope” or those outside of the Christ community.

It continues in **verse 14** – “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which **sleep in Jesus** will God bring with Him.” Here we again have a connection between the resurrection of Jesus and the resurrection of the believers – or as is stated here those “which sleep in (dia) Jesus”.

Continuing on to **verse 16** we read, “For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and **the dead in** (now using the Greek preposition “en”) **Christ shall rise first**”.

More passages could be considered, but from these verses we have sufficient evidence to comprehend the direct correlation between Christ’s statement “I AM THE RESURRECTION” and our Hope so that we can conclude that the **surety or guarantee of resurrection** as revealed in the Scriptures **is only in relation to those who are in Covenant relationship**, those who are spoken of as being “in Christ”.

#### A MATTER OF COMFORT

As we consider the doctrinal implications of Christ’s “I AM” statement we need to be careful not to lose site of the exhortational value of such words. Jesus’ words to Martha were well placed during a time of great grief. Martha understood that there would be a Resurrection “at the last day”, but Jesus helped her to understand that he himself was the promised means by which that hope would be realized. Not only are Christ’s words a matter of crystal clear explanation but they are words that reveal the beauty, mercy and justice of God’s workings as well as being words of great comfort to our hope.

In **Psalms 116:15** we read, “Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints.” The word “precious” is from the Hebrew yaw-kar and indicates something which is valuable. Other things that are referred to in the Scriptures as being “precious” include: “the word of the LORD”, “redemption”, the blood of the “poor and needy”, knowledge and wisdom are referred to as being “precious” as well as God’s thoughts. What greater comfort can we have knowing that the death of God’s servants throughout the ages, “those who have made a covenant with him through sacrifice” are viewed by God as being precious? It is not that death itself is viewed as precious by God – for it is the great enemy of mankind and the fruit of sin. But unlike the masses of humanity that perish eternally in the dust, there is something marked or unique about the death of the saint – Something that is not forgotten by God and is held in the highest value by Him. That “something” is the value placed upon it through the redemptive work of Christ. **1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:18,19** – “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish.” We also see in **Revelation 14:13** – “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord”.

There may be disagreement among us as to the order of prophetic events and battles to take place when Christ returns, but I believe it is a fact that should not be lost on us that the very first order of business that Christ will take care of when he returns is to raise his fellow brethren, including Abraham and David, from the dead. As we have already read in I Thessalonians 4 – “*For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.*” To rescue his brethren from the “*pit wherein there is no water*” will be the top priority of Christ. Though the sobering matters of the Judgment Seat will face those who arise from the dead through the blood of the everlasting covenant (as well as the living who are under the covenant), for those who are found worthy the blessings of eternal life (I AM THE LIFE) will be granted and eternal blessings enjoyed of those promises first given to Abraham and David and the covenant sacrifice himself – Jesus the Anointed.

*“I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”*

A. Thomas

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## EDITORIAL FLYLEAF

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### WCF

WCF continues its “Seminar” programs with the addition of, “*The Judaizers: An Historical Perspective and Today*”, facilitated by the author of “The Judaizers”. Hasn’t the book (and WCF) done enough harm towards the Truth and the Brotherhood, without adding this to the WCF “seminar” selection?

WCF has also recently announced the development of an “On-Line Bible Commentary.” This is advertised as “*a future project of WCF to create a dynamic, participative and comprehensive Christadelphian commentary. The plan is to allow brethren from all over the world to post their studies and comments on Bible passages.*” Some of the reasons given for the “need” of this are – “*There is currently no comprehensive repository of Christadelphian exegesis on the Bible that is organized for quick retrieval of pertinent Biblical information;*” “*Finding information on relevant passages for those preparing Sunday school, Bible classes and exhortations can be cumbersome;*” “*It will provide a healthy exchange and forum on ideas. Iron sharpeneth iron.*”

First of all, it is important to point out that we do have a “*comprehensive repository of Christadelphian exegesis*”. Between the writings of our pioneers, sound writers to follow, and “verse by verse” expositional efforts, we have quite a reliable and comprehensive collection of detailed, scriptural information. As far as having a “repository”, it depends if one has made it a priority to put them on the shelf. Finding the information is simply a matter of looking up the Scripture/Subject index in the back of many of our books. If one has to take time to try to find something, they may learn

some other things in the process – the time and effort it takes to open up books and dig the answers out is a good thing. Regarding the exchange of “ideas” – we are not to be as the Athenians who like to “tell, or to hear some new thing”, and WCF’s track record in regard to promoting traditional Christadelphian belief & practice is not a good one.

### “PRE-EXISTENCE OF CHRIST”?

On another sobering note: A young brother who has been drifting from his Unamended Christadelphian background has recently advertised two articles that he has written that promote the “*personal pre-existence*” and “*deity*” of Christ. Though recognizing that such a teaching is challenging to “*a lot of deeply held Christadelphian convictions*” he states that, “*I don’t consider myself as creating a fellowship divide with those who hold to traditional Christadelphian beliefs about the origin and nature of Christ and his relationship to God the Father.*” We shouldn’t have to point out the apostate nature of the “pre-existence of Christ”, and the irrationality of claiming that such a doctrine has no bearing on fellowship. Sadly, it should be realized that no Christadelphian beliefs, no matter how solid and basic we may think they are, are safe from the attacks of those who come from **within** the Household in these Last Days.

### U.S. ADMINISTRATION MOVES FURTHER AWAY FROM ISRAEL

President Obama’s recent and much heralded speech to the Arab world that was delivered in Cairo (6/4/09), signalled a remarkable reversal of over 60 years of U.S. policy towards Israel. An intentional focus is being placed on appealing to the “Muslim World”, but to appeal to the Muslims one has to be perceived as not in alliance with Israel. As a result, the present U.S. administration (despite overwhelming and unconditional support of Israel by Congress) is separating their strategic interests and cooperation from Israel and going on an all out blitz towards the finalization of a “Two State Solution.” As Debka recently reported: “A cold wind blows through Jerusalem. Israel was the first country in the region to feel the chill blowing from Obama’s reshuffle of America’s allies. His declaration to a million and a half Muslims that America cannot accept the legitimacy of Israel’s settlement put Jerusalem in the hot seat by using the settlement issue to test Israel’s credibility as a seeker of peace and therefore worthy of being aligned with America’s policies. DEBKA-Net-Weekly’s Washington sources say that even if that controversy is resolved, the US administration will present Israel with more tests on issues on which Obama refuses to be flexible or meet Israel halfway. **Israel therefore finds itself on a crossroads, with a hard choice between two paths.** One is to line up with Cairo and Riyadh. This relationship had been working quietly three years before Obama entered the White House, notably in the 2006 Israel-Hizballah war. From the inside, Jerusalem can try and tilt the partners in its favour on matters on which the Obama administration adopts courses inimical to Israel’s interests. The other path calls for strong nerves: And independent stance free of outside constraints imposed by Washington, Cairo or Riyadh **and much reduced reliance on the United States. Either path leads inevitably to confrontation with the Obama administration.**” (emphasis added)

The blessing and curse of Genesis 12:3 comes to mind here.