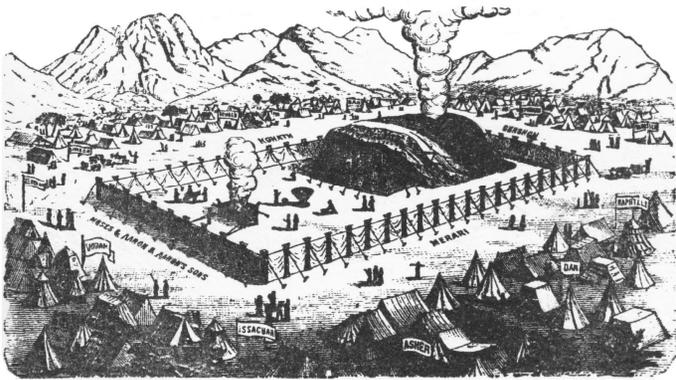


THE SANCTUARY-KEEPER

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



In this issue...

WOMAN'S POSITION

"ONE VOICE" – THE VOICE of FEMINISM

WOMEN at the PODIUM

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to the CORINTHIANS**

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FIFTY TWO TIMES a YEAR

"UNITY" RESULTS in DISUNITY

The **Sanctuary-Keeper** is published on a quarterly basis. The doctrinal position of this magazine is founded exclusively on the principles of Bible Truth as outlined and defined in *The Christadelphian Unamended Statement of Faith*

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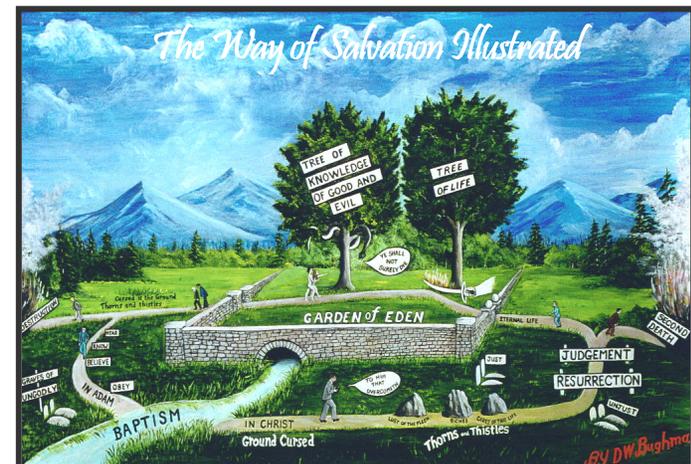
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“One of the treaty's key areas is the removal of national vetoes in a number of areas. These include the fight against climate change, energy security and emergency aid.” The treaty also makes way for the formation of an extensive foreign diplomatic service.

IRAN continues to carry on with its nuclear ambitions and its threat to destroy Israel, with ever more defiance. In recent missile tests of the two-stage Sejil-2, Iran has shown that they have the capability to deliver nuclear weaponry as far as S.E. Europe. December '09 was set as a terminal date by the U.S. in which the diplomatic door would be closed to Iran in regard to negotiations. Israel was pressured to hold off any military action, and to allow diplomatic channels to run their course (previously it had been October). Here we are at the end of the



year, and the situation continues to deteriorate. The question for the world is – what now? The U.S. threatens, as it has done over the past couple of years, to slap Iran with crippling sanctions. But as Russia does not support any meaningful action against its ally, this leaves any consequential exploit resting on the shoulders of Israel. In a recent *Arutz Sheva* report, Israel's generals claim that they are now ready for military action against Iran. As there is compromise going on by the Netanyahu government in regard to Jewish settlement issues, there seems to be a great deal of effort to appease the U.S. and Europe in exchange for a degree of lenience if and when military action is taken by Israel. It would appear that Israel is preparing for something, while we watch and wait for events to unfold.

VATICAN ON THE MOVE: The Catholic Church's recent move to accept



Anglicans into the Catholic church - without conditions – further demonstrates that the ecumenical goals and desire for all to come back to the “one true church” are alive and well. Progress also continues to be seen on the Catholic- Eastern Orthodox front as well: Referred to as a “major development”, both groups have already agreed to share priestly services and infrastructure in India. And, Pope Benedict continues to push heavily on the EU for more

Vatican influence on EU policy.

Brothers and Sisters, this is only a small sampling of events and information that are unfolding on an increasing and daily basis. This is no time for complacency, but extreme and unrelenting vigilance. – S.K.

SANCTUARY-KEEPER RENEWAL NOTICE

The 2009 4th Quarter edition of the SK Magazine marks the annual end of our 5th year of publishing the magazine. If you would like to continue to receive these quarterly editions of the SK in 2010, please complete the enclosed subscription slip and mail to:

The Sanctuary-Keeper
P.O. Box 13045
Maumelle, AR 72113

Woman's Rights

A woman's rights, what do those words convey?
What depths of the old-world wisdom do they teach?
What is their real intent? Oh, sisters, say;
And strive in daily life their truth to teach.
The right to minister to those that need;
With quiet song the weary to beguile;
With words of peace the hungry hearts to feed,
And cheer the sad and lonely with a smile.
The right in others' joys a joy to find;
The right divine to weep when others weep;
The right to be to all unceasing kind;
The right to wake and pray while others sleep.
Right to be noble, right to be true,
Right to think rightly – and right to do;
Right to be tender, right to be just,
Right to be worthy of infinite trust.
To be the little children's truest friend,
To know them in their ever-changing mood;
Forgetting self, to labor to the end
To be a gracious influence for good.
To be the ladies of Creation's lords,
As mothers, daughters, sisters, or as wives;
To be the best that earth to them affords,
To be to them the music of their lives.
The right in strength and honor to be free;
In daily work accomplished, finding rest;
The right in “trivial round” a sphere to see;
The right, in blessing, to be fully blest.
Right to be perfect, right to be pure,
Right to be patient and strong to endure;
Right to be loving – right to be good –
These are the rights of the true womanhood.

The Christadelphian Advocate, September, 1888

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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WOMAN'S POSITION

Excerpt from *Elpis Israel*

W

hear much in some parts of the world of the political rights and equality of women with men; and of their preaching and teaching in public assemblies. We need wonder at nothing which emanates from the unenlightened thinking of sinful flesh. There is no absurdity too monstrous to be sanctified by unspiritualized animal intellect. Men do not think according to God's thinking, and therefore it is they who run into the most unscriptural conceits; **among which may be enumerated the political and social equality of women.** Trained to usefulness, of cultivated intellect, and with moral sentiments purified and ennobled by the nurture and admonition of the Lord's truth, women are “helps meet” for the Elohim; and much too good for men of ordinary stamp. The sex is susceptible of this exaltation; though I despair of witnessing it in many instances till “the Age to come.” But, even women of this excellency of mind and disposition, were it possible for such to do so, would be guilty of indiscretion, presumption, and rebellion against God's law, in assuming equality of rights, and authority over man, which is implied in teaching and preaching. It is the old ambition of the sex to be equal to the gods; but in taking steps to attain it, they involved themselves in subjection to men. **Preaching, and lecturing,**



women, are but species of actresses, who exhibit upon the boards for the amusement of sinful and foolish men. They aim at an equality for which they are not physically constituted; they degrade themselves by the exhibition, and proportion as they rise in assurance, they sink in all that really adorns a woman.

The law, which forms a part of the foundation of the world, says to the woman, “He shall reign over thee.” The nature of this subjection is well exhibited in the Mosaic law (Num. 30:3-15). A daughter being yet in her youth in her father's house, could only make a vow subject to his will. If he held his peace, and said nothing for or against, she was bound by her word; but if when he heard it, he disallowed it, she was not bound to perform; and the Lord forgave the failure of the vow. The same law applied to a wife. A widow, or divorced woman, were both bound to fulfill, unless their husbands had made them void before separation. If not, being subject to God, they had no release. This throws light upon the apostle's instructions concerning women. “They are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.” And “let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.” The reason he gives for imposing silence and subjection, is remarkable. He adduces the priority of Adam's formation; and the unhappy consequences of Eve's talkativeness and leadership in transgression; as it is written, “Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression” (1 Tim. 2:11-14) first. And then, as to their public ministrations, he says, “Let women keep silence in the congregations; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but to be under obedience, as saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the congregation” (1 Cor. 14:34-35). It is true, that in another place the apostle says, “let the aged women be teachers of good things;” but then this teaching is not to be in the congregation, or in the brazen attitude of a public oratrix. They are to exercise their gift of teaching privately among their own sex, “that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God (which they profess) be not blasphemed” (Tit. 2:4-5). Christian women should not copy after the god-aspiring Eve, but after Sarah, the faithful mother of Israel, who submitted herself in all things to Abraham, “calling him lord” (Gen. 18:12). Nor should their obedience be restricted to Christian husbands only. They should also obey them “without the word;” that is, those who have not submitted to it, in order that they may be won over the faith, when they behold the chaste and respectful behavior of their wives, produced by a belief of the truth (1 Pet. 3:1-6).

Such are the statutory provisions enacted in the world's constitution at the beginning, with respect to the position of women in the body social and political. **Any attempt to alter the arrangement, is rebellion against God, and usurpation of the rights of men to whom God has subjected them.**

Their wisdom is to be quiet; and to make their influence felt by their excellent qualities. They will then rule in the hearts of their rulers, and so ameliorate their own subjection as to convert it into a desirable and sovereign obedience. (All emphasis has been added)

Elpis Israel, pp. 123-125

“ONE VOICE” – THE VOICE OF FEMINISM

IN the last quarter of the S.K. we addressed the overwhelming amount of error that is promoted on the Internet under the Christadelphian name. Most of it is not worth taking the time to deal with, and there is so much of it, it would be practically impossible to address everything one may come across. But, we were recently forwarded information regarding a “Christadelphian” website that originates out of Australia under the title of “One Voice”, formerly known as “Sister Speak”. A basic overview of the site is the premise that traditional views of sister’s roles are outdated and unscriptural and that it is perfectly acceptable for sisters to play a more prominent role in the ecclesia – namely **speaking, teaching, public prayer, and leadership duties**. As its introduction alludes to and which we reluctantly quote below:



“This site addresses the issue of women’s roles within the church, or sisters’ roles within the ecclesia, to use terminology more familiar to those within the Christadelphian community for whom this resource is primarily provided.

Since the inception of the Christadelphian body in the mid 1800’s, its congregations have, by and large, accepted and implemented traditional church restrictions on the roles of women as were current within society at the time.

With the passage of some six generations, we now have opportunity to reflect on the effects of these policies, and consider also the increased scholarly resources which were not available to our pioneer brothers (i.e. modern, liberally slanted works – S.K.), but which give a clearer understanding of how the 1st Century believers lived and worshipped.”

We might consider this as an isolated matter and a problem for the Central Fellowship (more specifically those of Australia) to deal with. But, considering the fact that the *Williamsburg Christadelphian Foundation/ Great Lakes Bible School* and *CYC* influences have promoted women teachers in their seminars and classes in recent years, and as we come to realize that such attitudes of “liberation” and “equality” and resulting practices are gaining traction in some

quarters of the Unamended community, it is unfortunately needful to address this extremely serious matter with our readership and review some of the fundamental principles that are critical to uphold.

The movement is heavily driven by the work of an Ian & Averil McHaffie and a book they wrote called, “*Male and Female Created He Them*”, which can be read in its various parts on the website. The site also includes many writings from various authors, mainly “sisters”. A general theme can be found as one peruses through the various articles, and we paraphrase with the following:

Mainly that, *there is no scriptural basis for keeping sisters out of teaching, speaking and leadership roles; and That to keep sisters from these roles is to create inequality and disunity within the ecclesia – that all (men and women) are to have a “equal” role in all the various ecclesial responsibilities and duties so as to foster true “unity”*. As the “One Voice” brand implies – they are trying to use this “unity” angle as a hard sell for their feminist agenda.

When we were first made aware of the web site, comments such as the effort being a part of a type of “*activism*”, and *that the term “Brotherhood” in regard to the Household is demeaning to sisters* appeared in the introductory comments on the site. Those comments have since been taken off (at least we can no longer find them), but it provided a very blatant and telling connection with the general language and attitude promoted by the Feminist movements of the world – that which, no matter how well intended, is in complete rebellion with the commands of Yahweh.

“Counter Arguments”

It is not our intent to provide an extensive rebuttal to the ideas promoted on the mentioned website – but we do wish to at least provide some excerpts as to demonstrate the distorted thinking that is being promoted under the “Christadelphian” banner, and hopefully heighten our own senses to yet another humanistic influence and latter day sign of our times that will negatively impact the hope of salvation for any who are influenced by such seductive reasoning.

Under the heading of “*Counter Arguments for the leadership role of females with males*” the McHaffie’s summarize with five points as directly quoted in the following (pp. 10,11):

1. **Relevance of Key Texts** - All the key quotes like 1 Cor 14:33 and 1 Tim 2 **are ambiguous and open to various interpretations**. No one can be dogmatic hence we should show forbearance to contrary views.
2. **Cultural Context** - The apostolic prohibition against women speaking in the assembly (1 Cor 14:33, 34; 1 Tim 2:11, 12) is based on the need to control uneducated and unruly talking amongst sisters. Paul was concerned with the orderliness of the meeting not a headship principle. Similarly no females were appointed as apostles because the culture in the first century was so strong against

this practice that the gospel would not have been received by the world if it had been delivered through the hands of female apostles. The issues Paul was dealing with can be explained as answers to local cultural problems and only apply to the first century circumstances.

3. **Women's Roles in the First Century Ecclesia** - Women laboured with Paul 'in the gospel' (Phil 4:3); Priscilla taught Apollos (Acts 18:26); women prayed and prophesied in public worship (1 Cor 11:5, 10; see also Acts 2:17); Phoebe is called 'deacon' and 'patron' of the ecclesia at Cenchreae (Rom 16:1, 2). That Paul allows a woman to learn (1 Tim 2:11) is already a revolutionary step away from Jewish practice since it implies that they can then teach. It is therefore questionable whether 1 Tim 2:12 (a woman is not to teach or have authority over a man) must be read as a principle without qualifications.
4. **Equality of Men and Women in Christ** - Galatians 3:28 gives to women a position in the ecclesia not known within contemporary Judaism. The new creation in Christ (2 Cor 5:17) confirms the equal standing of women with men before God (Gen 1:26-28). So, within marriage, husbands and wives are to complement one another (1 Cor 7:4) and to be subject to one another out of love (Eph 5:21). This status removes the hierarchy of the old covenant restrictions.
5. **The Inclusivity of the Gospel** - The NT includes all believers, regardless of their sex, in the work of preaching and teaching (1 Cor 16:16).

(end of excerpt)

Let's take a moment to consider the errant logic in the above quoted summary:

- 1) **"Relevance of Key Texts"** - 1st Corinthians 14:33 and 1st Timothy 2:11 receive much attention from the "One Voice" effort by many different writers. They seem to understand that these two passages – "*Let your women keep silence in the ecclesias: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience*" (1st Cor. 14:33)", and "*Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection*" – if taken at face value, stop their agenda dead in its tracks. Just because they make the claim that such passages are "*ambiguous*", doesn't make it so. This is a typical mode of operation from those of a liberal mindset – if you can't dispute the evidence you dismiss it as irrelevant. The verses are extremely clear and supported by their emphatic context, and the historical position of Christadelphia has not viewed this as something "*open to various interpretations*." To show "*forbearance to contrary views*" is to make allowance for rebellion against the commands of the Spirit Word, which will result in dire consequences. More on this in the second point.
- 2) **"Cultural Context"** - In the previous point the "One Voice" proponents argue that 1 Cor. 14:44 & 1 Tim. 2:11, 12 are "ambiguous", and yet in the very next point provide a very explicit explanation of the passages that goes beyond anything scripturally supported. They here rightfully admit that this is an "*apostolic prohibition against women speaking in the assembly*",

but then explain this as a way to keep the "*uneducated and unruly talking amongst sisters*" under control. Here we have another contradictory explanation – on one hand it is rightfully admitted that the sisters are prohibited from speaking in the assembly but at the same time we are told to believe that this is about inappropriate talking amongst sisters themselves. Neither the context in 1 Cor. 14 or 1 Tim. 2 support the latter claim. And, if these passages were merely dealing with "uneducated and unruly talking", then why would brothers with such a problem not be addressed as well?

It is then explained that the reason there were no female apostles was because of cultural concerns of the time. (We know that there is no scriptural evidence for such a conclusion. Christ conducted matters according to the Truth and was not burdened with cultural and political considerations.) And, they further speculate that what Paul was dealing with was nothing more than "*local cultural problems and only apply to the first century circumstances*" – despite the fact that Paul is consistent in his various epistles regarding the role of women in regard to marriage and the ecclesia. They fail to acknowledge that there has been a general pattern of the world for some 6,000 years, and it is only within the past generation that "the culture" regarding the position of women has dramatically shifted right along with all other moral standards (e.g. "sexual revolution", the homosexual agenda and the redefining of marriage etc.). **Such a shift has not taken place upon scriptural grounds**, but upon the advance of humanism in the 20th century. They also fail to recognize that the general pattern of the scriptures themselves repeatedly set a distinct and specific guide in regard to the passive role that women fill in contrast to any sense of a "leadership role". A few examples:

- The explained reason in 2nd Timothy 2:13 in regard to Eve, as to why women are forbidden to teach in the assembly. Paul carries the argument all the way back to Eden, which proves this is clearly not merely a "local cultural problem", but in fact the system that God has established.
 - Sarah's submission to Abraham (1st Pet. 3:6)
 - Ruth's humble relationship to Boaz and meek submission to the Jewish Commonwealth.
 - Esther's humility and respectful approach to Ahasuerus, contrasted with the prideful and self-determined actions of Vashti.
 - And of course, the prime contrasting example – Jezebel.
- 3) **"Women's Roles in the First Century Ecclesia"** - That sisters played a key role in the First Century Ecclesia, or among believers throughout the ages, there can be no doubt. The work and influence of sisters (faithful sisters) is a critical and valued role of the Christ ecclesia. The question before us though is in regard to sisters having a position of official

leadership and teaching, speaking and praying from the platform, in the assembly of the Believers.

We are given a few examples by the McHaffies to imply that since sisters played more of a role in the Ecclesia as opposed to the Jewish practices within Judaism that “*it implies that they can then teach.*” And they go on to conclude, “*It is therefore questionable whether 1 Tim. 2:12...must be read as a principle without qualifications.*” This is a giant leap in logic to make. We should all recognize a general rule in Biblical interpretation, that it is those scriptures that are specific and unambiguous in nature that help us to understand passages that appear veiled, lack detail or are more difficult to understand. A few of the proofs they attempt to put forward are:

- **Phil. 4:3** - *regarding women who labored with Paul in the gospel.* Of course all sisters are laborers in the Gospel, but there is nothing here to imply the kind of roles that the “One Voice” movement is striving for. If it is viewed that speaking and teaching are the only ways that one can “labor” for the Gospel – this reveals a very perilous, misguided and prideful view of what the teaching/speaking duties are all about.
- **Acts 18:26** – *Priscilla, along with Aquila, taught Apollos.* Again, there is **nothing** here to imply that women are to share roles equally with men in regard to teaching/speaking/praying from the platform. But, there is no prohibition in the scriptures of sisters being ambassadors for the Truth of the Gospel message. Sisters have always, and continue to be lightstands along with the brethren. Both Aquila and Priscilla heard the incomplete logic of Apollos and appropriately took him under their wing to further enlighten him. How many sisters have been involved with teaching the truth to an alien, whether through conversation or a Bible study in the home? But such a fact does not give way to the more prominent and public role that the “One Voice” proponents would like to achieve for women.
- **1st Cor. 11:5; 10** and **Acts 2:17** - *Both passages deal with the principle of both brothers and sisters “praying” and “prophesying”.* The principle of “prophesying” is related to the Holy Spirit gifts, which we know is no longer manifested in our age. Interestingly enough, in 1st Cor. 11, before mention is made in regard to the sisters, the hierarchal principle is clearly laid out – “*the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.*” (also Eph. 5:23) Plus, when the activity of praying and prophesying was engaged by sisters, they were to cover their heads as a symbol of their submissive relation to the man. Again, we see no evidence here of sisters taking a leadership role or teaching/speaking or even praying over the assembly. We are not clearly told here as to what degree this was applied – whether it was spontaneous activity that went on in a group/ecclesial setting or even what might take place at home. That sisters are in need and have access to prayer as a matter of

the same necessity as brethren is a point that doesn’t even need to be made. Again, the question is the public nature of such matters that we are familiar with in regard to the leading of prayer over the assembly or public exhortation/instruction from the platform. 1st Cor. 14 and 1st Tim. 2 **are more than specific enough** to clear up any questions that may arise from the unspecific nature of what is found in 1st Cor. 11 or Acts 2.

- **Rom. 16:1,2** – *in regard to Phoebe.* Verse 1 refers to her as a “servant” (Gr. διάκονος, diakonos) which can be translated as a “deacon” or minister. This word simply implies service or servitude, though in certain cases, according to Strong’s, it can represent a “*Christian teacher or pastor*”. But the word appears some 30 times in the N.T. and overwhelmingly represents servitude and service and has no consistent relationship to leadership or the exercise of duties from the platform. In regard to this Greek word, Bullinger states, “*a servant as seen in activity*” and goes on to say, “*It is not found in Acts, where the institution of the so-called deacons is recorded.*” Phoebe is also referred to as a “succourer” or patron – which means one who provides assistance. Clearly, this faithful sister played an influential and positive role in the ecclesia that was at Cenchrea – **a servant and assistor for the needs of the brethren.** Across our community, as in the past, we have valued sisters that do likewise. Again, such service does not require time at the podium, in that it is crucial for all of us to understand that service for the benefit of the Truth is SO MUCH MORE than that, involving many things that are not as high profile or receive as much attention as time at the podium.
- 4) **“Equality of Men and Women in Christ”** – We do need to stress the fact, that in regard to the *Hope of Salvation* and *future reward*, that men and women (brothers and sisters) are in an equal position. As we are told in Galations 3 – “*ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*” We are both “*heirs according to the promise*”. **But**, this does not change the Divinely assigned roles for both men and women – either in the institution of marriage or in their various roles in the ecclesial setting. It could be argued that we all have a certain degree of “equality” with Christ himself in regard to the Hope of Salvation and the promise of eternal life and future governance with Him as “*joint-heirs*” – but such is dangerous ground to reason upon as we are explicitly taught of our subservience to the Master and the roles that we have under Him. As there is to be a profound appreciation, love and mutual-reliance upon one another in marriage, likewise there is to be the same within the ecclesia under Christ’s authority – but with specific roles and duties wisely assigned by our Heavenly Father based upon the qualities and differences that do in fact exist between the sexes as well as the consequences of Eve’s disobedience (briefly mentioned by bro. Thomas in the previous Elpis Israel excerpt.)

The McHaffies conclude this point by saying, “*This status*” i.e. of equality, “*removes the hierarchy of the old covenant restrictions*”. Whatever the “old covenant restrictions” are, they do not explain. But clearly, there are specific restrictions as to how far this “equality” goes as detailed under the New Covenant through the writings of the Apostle Paul.

- 5) “**The Inclusivity of the Gospel**” - They close their summary by concluding that, “*The NT includes all believers, regardless of their sex, in the work of preaching and teaching.*” If their conclusion was in relation to sisters being a light stand for the truth among those interested aliens they may come in contact with, or in the teaching and guidance of their children (2nd Tim. 1:5), or the wise council and example directed towards the “young women” (Titus 2:4,5) – then we could agree with such a conclusion. But this is not their intent – the arguments found in this book and the intention of the website is to justify and promote women in the position of ecclesial leadership, lecturing, teaching and public prayer. We hate being so redundant, but we must emphasize the point – THE SCRIPTURES DO NOT DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY APPROVE THIS. And in fact, TEACH EXPLICITLY TO THE CONTRARY.

Liberation?

Much is written in various articles and testimonials by the “One Voice” proponents in order to justify their logic - much of it itself is redundant and emotionally slanted. But the scriptural teaching regarding the matter of the role of Sisters, as we have already shown, is basic and very explicit. From the various testimonials there is a consistent theme of “sisters” expressing tortured thoughts of feeling oppressed and “silenced”. One “sister” at a certain point in her life, was even questioning as to why God would have to be considered as a male, and even expressed desires toward suicide due to feeling of oppression. All express a kind of liberation due to their newly perceived ability to loosen themselves from the “traditional” restrictions placed on women. But, we understand that there can be no liberation when Yahweh’s principles are cast aside and the shackles of rebellion and sin are embraced. Any feelings of “liberation” will only be fleeting in nature.

We have no doubt that these kind of perceptions and desires are a result of the times that we live in. Since W.W. II, there has been a **dramatic** and **profound** shift in the role of women in our society. As women go to college, earn degrees and pursue careers once reserved for men – so to have those in Christadelphia followed a similar path. All aspects of culture, even to the point of making it a moral imperative, have touted the equality of women in career, education politics and athletics. And if women have not followed this cultural path, society and the feminist movement has done its best to demean the role of the “homemaker” and the historical role of mother and wife. The world tells women that “you can have it all” – but the dirty little secret to all of this is that you can’t. **The mental abilities of women are not in question here** – but they

have not succeeded in both home and career. The destruction of society through the neglect of the rearing of children and the collapse of the institution of marriage are indisputable statistics of such a fact. Men and women have both dramatically been affected by this massive cultural swing in mindset and societal structure. Society has emasculated men to become subservient to women and their ambitions, even switching their roles (e.g. “stay at home dads”), while women have had to take on more masculine qualities to succeed. Media portrays men as ignorant and juvenile, while the women are portrayed as having all of the wisdom and intelligence to save the day. Men have become fearful, not wanting to be perceived as “chauvinistic” to the “equality” ambitions of women. In a society that once claimed that “Father Knows Best”, this is no longer viewed as the case.

This mindset is taking its toll on Christadelphia as well. Christadelphia, in some quarters, has tried to hold on to the scriptural roles for women in both the home and ecclesia, but the world has crept in and clearly infected the thinking of a growing number – both brothers and sisters.

To further demonstrate the point: one testimonial found on “One Voice” makes the observation regarding the irony of *how sisters can be an accomplished “microbiologists” teaching at a university in front of men and women, but yet cannot even teach in front of the ecclesia.* This clearly indicates a complete misunderstanding of the scriptural role of women in the ecclesia and at home, but also of woman’s role in the world as well. Are the scriptural roles for women a blessing or a curse? Is there no satisfaction to be found in women faithfully fulfilling the duties and responsibilities that are commanded by God?

A sign of humility or pride?

There can be no doubt that this is all heavily driven by pride. Women have perceived a value in the goings on in the careers and ambitions of man and have desired the self-esteem and sense of accomplishment that is thought to accompany accomplishment in this world. Likewise, there seems to be a false perception that teaching, speaking and leadership roles within the ecclesia are equivalent to a sense of accomplishment, validation and honor. Such a view is a serious danger for brethren themselves to fall into, when in fact such roles are a matter of assigned **duty and responsibility** and not for the satisfaction or glorification of the flesh. It can be taxing, thankless and painful to our own energy, time and sense of worth to carry out the brotherly responsibilities of public speaking, prayer and guidance of the ecclesia – all of this in addition to the responsibilities of making a living out in an evil world. There is no liberty, validation or glory in this, if it is scripturally and dutifully carried out. That this is not the scriptural role of sisters should be rightfully perceived as a blessing and not something to be lusted after.

There is a strong element of the “lust of the flesh, lust of the eye and the pride of life” in desiring something that is not scripturally assigned and clearly denounced. The spirit of Eve is manifesting itself once again – i.e., to be “as the

Elohim”. And, we have a comparison with the case of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, when they forsook their already privileged position that they had in Israel (Num. 16; Jude 6) and desired the authority that Moses possessed. Moses did not seek the position, it was assigned to him by Yahweh – And as he pleaded with these ambitious rebels, “*Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you...*” The fact that Brothers and Sisters in Christ have been separated from the world itself, is a most privileged and blessed position. How dare we desire more than is scripturally commanded to our trust?

The blessing, honor and responsibility of sisters

After considering what sisters cannot and should not do – what responsibilities do sisters have? Titus 2 informs us that she is “*to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet (self controlled), chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.*” The proverb of the “Virtuous Woman” (Proverb 31) ties in very well here. Though a supreme type of the Christ-Ecclesia, this proverb is rooted in natural application and demonstrates the active, time consuming and vital role that women are to fill as “keepers at home”, both in the practical matters of its **daily function** as well as its **spiritual atmosphere**. We are informed that “*she perceiveth that her merchandise is good (vs. 19)*”; and the result of faithful duty in this aspect is that, “*Her children arise up, and call her blessed; Her husband also, and he praiseth her.*” What honor! What joy! What accomplishment!

Previous verses in Titus inform us of the role of the “aged women” and the influence for good that they are to have with “*behaviour as becometh holiness.*” They are to “*teach the young women*”. The word “teach” is from the Greek word σὺντροφία (sōphronizō), which means *to make of sound mind, to discipline or correct*. This obviously does not have to be done from the podium but from the interaction between elder and younger – through discussion, example and precept.

We understand that sisters are to be an influence of righteousness and truth within the ecclesial setting, no more excused from the allowance and promotion of false doctrine than their male counterparts. The Apostle John exhorted the “elect lady” (or “Kyria”) in 2nd John to preserve the ecclesia which was in her own house from the “anti-christ” influences. Lois and Eunice are shining examples of the spiritual upbringing of Timothy (2nd Tim. 1:5) in the absence of a believing father. Sometimes there are cases where male/brotherly influence is not available or it has failed, and faithful sisters bear more of a responsibility. But these cases are rare, and a strong degree of spiritual discernment and humility is necessary to discriminate the circumstance as to what is appropriate and what is not in the carrying out of spiritual necessities.

Many more examples could be mentioned, but it should be clear as to the vital nature and role of sisters within the home and ecclesia. How can we lessen or turn our noses up at the value and grave responsibility of such roles by

demanding that there can be no value for sisters unless they are allowed the supposed “equality” that goes along with duties associated with the podium and ecclesial leadership? Such is an appalling and Truth negating philosophy and it must not be given any quarter!

The truly scriptural understanding of this matter is not a man vs. woman principle. This is not about the exaltation and authority of man over woman and the humiliation and servitude of her. (*Husbands and brethren in general bare their own responsibilities to not demean or oppress the contributions and wisdom of sisters. There is always the danger of going to such an opposite extreme.*) This is a matter of scripturally defined, complimentary roles and responsibilities, which is absolutely necessary for the success of the marriage; the upbringing of children; the health and vitality of the Christ-Ecclesia itself; and any hope that we may have of inheriting the blessings of *The Coming Age*. Such roles have been confused and inverted by a Godless world with disastrous results. Why would we make the same tragic mistake?

A. Thomas

“Women at the Podium”

An excerpt from the past

In dealing with the rise of conferences and seminars for and presided by sisters, bro. James Stanton had these comments:

“...let us say that it is admirable for anyone to endeavor to instruct and exhort the women of the household. They are saints on an equal footing with men as far as the hope of salvation is concerned. “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal. 3:27-28) It is equally admirable to endeavor to instruct the men of the household. This instruction and admonition can be effected through individual contact, or through mutual Bible study classes. But it is not the prerogative of sisters to get up at the podium and address the members. This is usurping the divinely delegated appointment of the man as the head of the woman and the head of the ecclesia. “But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God (1 Cor. 11:3). This is the divine order of appointment and when women seize the opportunity to display themselves as public speakers and seminar-givers, they are blatantly wrong. Even when the men are somewhat inept or inexperienced the duty is theirs to address the ecclesia in the hopes of building it up spiritually. All well-informed sisters know this. It is the spiritually-bankrupt ones that fail to recognize the principle. The order is as follows: God, Christ, the man, the woman. The woman has a role and she should fulfill that role, but it is not public speaking. Women should have no more objection to being subservient to the man in presiding and speaking at ecclesial functions than any man should have at being subservient to Christ, his Lord and Master in all things.”

The Sanctuary-Keeper, May, 1989, p. 204

MODERN DAY LESSONS FROM THE LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

PART 4

A PLEA FOR CHANGE

Having adequately defended himself against the slanderous accusations that the Corinthians levied against him, Paul draws this portion of his defense to a close by pleading with them in 2 Cor. 6:11-18 (CJB), saying *“O Corinthians! We have spoken frankly to you, we have opened our hearts wide. Any constraint you feel has not been imposed by us, but by your own inner selves. So, just to be ‘fair’ (I am using the language of children), open wide your hearts too. Do not yoke yourselves together in a team with unbelievers (“those without faith”). For how can righteousness and lawlessness be partners? What fellowship does light have with darkness? What harmony can there be between the Messiah and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?”*

Though Paul had been maligned, criticized, and questioned by his opposition within the Corinthian ecclesia, he shows in this passage that he still did not consider them enemies. Rather, he states that, even though he has been accused of being underhanded in his words and deeds concerning them, that his speech is “frank” with them, and that his heart (#2588: “thoughts or feelings”) is open wide to them, in that he was extremely concerned with their spiritual welfare and their spiritual well-being (in agape love). He did not possess or exhibit towards them the fleshly traits of anger, hatred, or malice, but only the desire that they be led in the Way of Yahweh. Though having been accused of “constraining” them with his teachings and criticism, he teaches them that it was not he who imposed this constraint upon them, but rather their own conscience, created by the Spirit Word (imparted by him), that was affecting them. Therefore, since he had opened his heart to them in agape love, they should also do the same with him. They should not dislike or hate him from a phileo standpoint, but should agape love him in the same way that he did them.

From a fleshly standpoint, it certainly would have been easier for Paul to tell them “smooth things,” and assure them of their righteousness, when in fact they were walking in error. If he would have taken this route, then certainly they would have “phileo-ed” or had good feelings towards him from a personal perspective. However, if he did this, Paul would have failed to act as a

Watchman for the flock, but would have been responsible in leading them to spiritual demise.

Paul chose the more difficult task of being critical of their unrighteous acts, and implored them to change so that the flock would ultimately be saved. If he acted differently, he would have been as the False or Blind Watchman that is described in Isa. 56:10-12, which says, *“His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.”*

Note that in verse 10, the wicked watchman is described as “blind” and “ignorant” of God’s word, being likened to, “dumb dogs,” that cannot bark because they are “sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.” They are described as “dogs” because they are “unclean” and not cud-chewers, so that they do not ruminate on the word of the Lord. They are at rest and sleep because they are too complacent and comfortable in their surroundings, which led to laziness in their studies and in their resulting works (reminiscent of the Laodicians). They are useless, because they do not warn the inhabitants of the house of evil that creeps into the household unnoticed. They are described as “greedy dogs that never have enough,” showing insatiable pride and desire for worldly ease and glory; they are shepherds who are drunken with the wine of apostasy, and are therefore unable to recognize error in their midst.

These false shepherds were again described by Christ at his first advent in John 10:12-13, being referred to as a hireling (hired hand, and not a son of Yahweh) who desires his own gain rather than the well-being of the flock. As the wolf of apostasy approaches, he leaves the flock to its own demise – stealing away to save himself and leaving the flock to be spiritually destroyed. In regard to Paul and his seemingly derogatory message to the Corinthians, he displayed the characteristics of a True Watchman, who identified error and warned the ecclesia to change in order to save them from spiritual demise. Those opposing him were the “sleeping dogs,” who did not see the error that had already entered the household and as a ravenous wolf was tearing them apart spiritually. For this reason, in this reference in 2 Cor. 6, Paul instructs the Corinthians *not* to separate themselves from the True Watchmen (being he and his faithful companions), but to separate themselves from the Hirelings within the ecclesia who were permitting evil wrongdoing for the sake of supposed peace, ease, and for their own prideful gain.

In this call for separation, Paul then reminds the Corinthians that the state of comfort and ease that they desired (as is the characteristic of this Laodician time period in which we live) is not acceptable to God. Rather, there is a *battle* and a *war* that must be *won or lost*. This on-going battle precludes the believer

from being permitted to be “at ease,” and “slumbering,” rather than wrestling and fighting for the prize. The battle that has raged since Gen 3:15 between the Seed of the Woman and the Seed of the Serpent continues to this day, and every inhabitant of the world must make a decision as to which side they will align themselves. The Corinthians had *professed* to side with the Seed of the Woman, but they sought for the ease and wealth of the world. Here, Paul shows the stark difference that exists between the two systems, and reminds them that there is no “meeting in the middle,” or compromise with the things of God and the Truth. If one does not wage war and stand strong in the battle, then he has lost already. As Dr. Thomas writes in *The Herald of the Kingdom*:

“It is evident that if we are to carry on ‘the good fight of faith’ our friends must do something more than form a ring, or take up a safe position on a distant eminence, as spectators of the fight. The warfare in the valley may be a very exciting and interesting scene to them beyond the reach of harm; but it is life or death, victory or defeat, to the combatants below. Are there any of our friends who would adorn their brows with the victor’s crown? They must ‘fight if they would win.’ It is not the spectators of a combat, but the warriors of the fray who turn not their backs upon the enemy, that win the prize. Fighting is a painful operation, though an animating one in a good cause. It is painful to the flesh through the wounds inflicted on the character and purse of the Woman’s Seed; but when their spirit, not their blood, is up, they glory in the cost and suffering of the contest, and take joyfully the wreck of their possessions, in doing battle for the truth.”

The Corinthians had become teamed with those who opposed Paul and therefore Christ, because they were being led by shepherds who did not criticize them for their errors. These false shepherds made them feel good about themselves and their spiritual state, but ultimately they were being led to destruction. Paul’s plea was that they choose their relationships wisely and distance themselves from those who have turned against him. The strong lesson is that one who seeks righteousness cannot be in partnership with one who is lawless, as were those who maligned him. Those who opposed him were in darkness and Paul was the light source who illuminated their evil and exhorted them to change from their unrighteousness. Darkness is eliminated when light shines upon it, and this is what Paul tried to do through constructive criticism and Godly guidance. He, as a representative of the Messiah and Yahweh, exhorted them to distance themselves from those of Belial, which is symbolic of those who rebelliously oppose God (the Seed of the Serpent).

There is no common ground between the Seed of the Woman and the Seed of the Serpent, and the Corinthians were exhorted to “choose you this day,” which side they would follow. The last phrase is a very apt lesson that should always be remembered—that the believer should have nothing in common with the unbeliever – so much so that they do not seek their company and

companionship. Rather, they seek the companionship and strength that only resides in fellow believers.

This is not the last time that Paul addresses these leaders who he determines to be “False Apostles.” In 2 Cor. 11:13-15 (CJB), he says, “*The fact is that such men are False Apostles: they tell lies about their work and masquerade as Apostles of Christ. There is nothing surprising in that, for the Adversary himself masquerades as an angel of light; so it is no great thing if his workers masquerade as servants of righteousness. They will meet the end their deeds deserve.*”

In this discourse, Paul identifies those who elevated themselves in defiance of him as “false apostles,” in that they did the opposite of demonstrating agape love (seeking the ecclesia’s spiritual well-being) desiring only to exalt themselves, while leading the flock into spiritual destruction. These false apostles are revealed by Paul as pretending to be apostles of Christ, but actually leading them away from Christ. This is the most disturbing and damaging type of person – one who pretends to be an elder or leader in the Truth, but who actually is leading the ecclesia into error and destruction for his own gain of pride, self-exaltation, glory of men, prestige, and even monetarily. If these entered into the flock from outside, then they would be easily recognized and rejected by the ecclesia. However, since they arose from within the ecclesia, being someone’s husband, son, brother, or in-law, they had credibility within the body that they would not have had otherwise. They used their personal relationships to their advantage by influencing the body of believers with the promise of ease that is simply not the case during this probationary period. Paul says that their erroneous teachings should not be a surprise, for these “false apostles” are described as being void of scriptural understanding and relied only on their so-called “human” or fleshly wisdom.

As the Corinthians were still in need of the “milk” or first-principles of the truth, they were easily drawn into error, being scripturally insufficient to debate it. However, when one such as Paul opposed them from the wisdom of the scriptures, these “false apostles” showed their true fleshly character by the use of character assassination and false accusations in order to regain credibility in the eyes of their flock. Paul describes such persons as being as the Adversary to the Truth, in that their actions and character are void of the things of God. Though adversaries to the Truth, they pretend to be “messengers of light,” or of the knowledge of the Truth. Just as the Serpent in the Garden pretended to bring “light” or understanding to Eve, these False Apostles pretended to bring truthful understanding to the ecclesia. Just as Eve was deceived and it led to her death, the ecclesia in Corinth had been seduced and deceived, and would go to their spiritual destruction unless corrected by Paul. Paul writes that these False Apostles, “Will meet the end their deeds deserve.” Just as the Serpent was duly punished for his role in seducing Eve, as his seed was afterward determined to

be the Enemy of God, the False Teachers who led the ecclesia astray will be duly punished and known as an Enemy of Christ when he judges the household.

An Example of Tireless Work & Love

Unlike his accusers, Paul was a man of tireless work, humility, love toward the ecclesias, and self-sacrifice in an effort to better perform God's will. In 2 Cor. 7:23-29, he is forced by his accusers to demonstrate his accomplishments while laboring in the vineyard of God. His opposition in the Corinthian ecclesia had frivolously boasted of their so-called accomplishments, so that Paul was forced to do the same, lest by discrediting him, his teachings would be dismissed. He states, "*Are they servants of the Messiah? (I'm talking like a madman!) I'm a better one! I've worked much harder, been imprisoned more often, suffered more beatings, been near death over and over. Five times I received 'forty lashes less one' from the Jews. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. I spent a night and a day in the open sea. In my many travels I have been exposed to danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from the Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the desert, danger in the sea, danger from false brothers. I have toiled and endured hardship, often not had enough sleep, been hungry and thirsty, frequently gone without food, been cold and naked. And besides these external matters, there is the daily pressure of my anxious concern for all the congregations. Who is weak without my sharing his weakness? Who falls into sin without my burning inside?*"

In this reference, he discloses the physical difficulties that he endured in his efforts to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, of whom the Corinthians were part of, including the fact that he: 1) Toiled, 2) Endured hardship, 3) Lack of Sleep, 4) Hunger and Thirst, 5) Cold, and 6) Nakedness. As did Christ, Paul forsook all worldly pleasures and comforts in order to accomplish the will of Yahweh during his lifetime, with the hope and expectation of that deferred reward to be given in the Kingdom. As he had stated earlier in this letter, he did not care if harm was done to his mortal body or what physical discomfort he had to endure. His motivation was to fulfill the great task for which he had been chosen, and he was sustained by looking earnestly toward the fulfillment of that "joy set before him." He well understood the concept of "laboring to enter into that rest (Heb 4)," as demonstrated by the intense labors that he subjected himself to.

This is a common trait of those who have gone before us to teach the word of God, from Christ to the Apostles, to Paul to our Pioneer Brethren. They *all* tirelessly *labored* for the Truth and fiercely defended it because it was the thing most precious to them. In comparison, we must ask ourselves: Where do we place our efforts? Where we place our time and efforts is where our love resides. These worthies of old loved the Truth and the Ways of Yahweh to such a degree that they gladly subjected themselves to physical and mental difficulties because they held the Truth in high esteem. Where do our labors reside? In our jobs? In our hobbies? In recreation? Or, in the constant and

zealous study and application of the scriptures? The fruit of our labors will tell us where we have concentrated our efforts. Our desire should not be for the temporal things, but for that "city whose builder and maker is God." As Paul demonstrates in this section, these physical difficulties that he faced were small in comparison to the mental weight and anxiety that coincided with his zealous care for the ecclesias. His example continues to be a great lesson to the modern-day believer, in that our first desire should be for the Truth and the spiritual care of the ecclesia. In this way, we "seek first the kingdom of God," rather than for the ease that the world entices us with.

Hope in Times of Trouble

While it is true that Paul constantly and willfully endured hardship for the sake of the ecclesias, he did so (as should we) with the confidence that God would lead him through any difficulty during this present life, and with the anticipation, surety, and confidence that his labors would lead to the realization of the rest and joy that has been promised by God to "he who overcomes." Paul demonstrates this concept and understanding in 2 Cor. 4:7-9 (CJB), saying, "But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it will be evident that such overwhelming power comes from God and not from us. We have all kinds of troubles, but we are not crushed; we are perplexed, yet not in despair; persecuted, yet not abandoned; knocked down, yet not destroyed."

As Paul demonstrates in this section, before glory in the kingdom is granted, the "treasure" or hope of this glory is contained in clay jars – or within the mortal, sinful bodies that we all possess. Though mortal, we look to the establishment of our future hope, while recognizing that all present talents and blessings are derived from God, whom we constantly depend upon for our welfare. The evidence that we are powerless without him is demonstrated by the weaknesses that we exhibit, which Paul describes by saying, "We have all kinds of troubles." While we are "clay jars," these difficulties are inherent upon us. They will not, however, destroy us, as long as we cast our cares and dependence upon God – the only one who can strengthen and save us. Certainly Paul would have understood this better than most, as he continually was reminded and aware that God alone was the source of his strength, especially in the otherwise overwhelming task of caring for the ecclesias, and the constant recognition of his weakness through the "thorn in the flesh," that he writes about in 2 Cor. 12:7-10.

Through his reliance upon God, he was "not crushed," by the heavy burden that was placed upon him. Though he was "perplexed" in what direction he should take, he was "not in despair" because he knew and had trust that the Lord would guide him. Though he was "persecuted," to great degrees, he was "not abandoned," because he knew that the Lord was constantly with him, protecting him. Though he was "knocked down," and discouraged by his adversaries, he was "not destroyed," because the Lord saved him. We must remember always that the Lord is the source of *all* of our blessings, and

withstand the human inclination to heap glory upon ourselves. We are just the recipients of His goodness—not the originator of them. He is our strength and salvation, and we ourselves are weak and helpless without Him. If we always remember this, then we will be granted strength to continue in His ways, as Paul was.

Paul continues to demonstrate this understanding in 2 Cor. 4:17-18, stating, “For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. ¹⁷For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; ¹⁸While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

Though he was subject to the physical difficulties that accompany mortality and the constant warring against the flesh, he completely understood, maybe better than anyone other than Christ, that the corruptible fleshly body is only a temporary vehicle that houses our minds, which is to be renewed daily through the washing of it in the Word of God. Without this *daily* renewing of the Mind, we fall subject to the nature of the flesh, which resides in our bodies. Paul considered his daily infirmities and physical difficulties as “light,” and “fleeting,” being only a temporary condition that would result in “everlasting glory,” if we serve the Lord in “mind and body.” The last sentence of this verse is rendered in the *Diaglott*, “excessively exceeding aionian weight of Glory.” Notice the purposely redundant “excessively exceeding,” phrase used, which was meant as double emphasis in regard to the great Glory that awaits for eternity, if one overcomes the flesh through the “renewing of the inner Man,” through zealous study and effort.

Paul understood this, and it sustained him through the great difficulties that he constantly endured – an example that should not be lost upon us. He continues these thoughts in 2 Cor. 5:1-8 (CJB), saying, “*For indeed, in this we are groaning, earnestly desiring to be invested with that habitation of ours which is from Heaven; and surely, having been invested, we shall not be found destitute. For, indeed, those being in the tent are groaning, being oppressed; in which we desire not to be divested (take something off), but invested (put something on over it), that the mortal may be absorbed by life,*” or, “*so that what must die may be swallowed up by the Life. Therefore, we are always confident, knowing that, while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight; we are confident, then, and would much prefer to leave our home in the body and come to our home with the Lord.*”

Paul again demonstrates mankind’s state of being while in his mortality, as an example of one who (like us), while struggling against sin and difficulty during his mortality, earnestly looked and desired the time yet future that he could see only “afar off.” If the believer is not “groaning,” under the weight of

sin during mortality, then something is amiss, and that person is not fighting and contending sufficiently. If we do not, “labor to enter into that rest,” then we are not deserving of that rest. If we are not “wrestling for the prize,” then we have lost the battle and are unknowingly lulled into the Laodicean mindset. Paul demonstrates his earnest desire for that which has been promised, rather than ease of life during his mortality. He desired to be part of that “New Jerusalem,” that is “from heaven,” rather than in the “destitute” state of his abode while mortal. The Corinthians, with their wealth and ease of life, must have lost sight of this, just as we are in danger of doing at the present time of Laodicia.

Mankind groans under the Law of Sin and Death while mortal. However, Paul states that we do not wish to have this “groaning,” removed from us, like a garment is removed from the body. Rather, this “groaning” actually aids us, because it prompts us to look forward to the approaching day when mortality and sin will be swallowed up in immortality and victory. So, rather than desiring the removal of our difficulties, we instead should desire to “put something over it (our mortal bodies),” which is the covering of Christ that occurs at baptism. In this manner, “what must die” (which is our corruptible, fleshly body) is swallowed up, or covered up in the Life that is only available through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Again, without that recognition, the mortal is hopeless and reserved only for eternal death. The current mortal state of mankind is not to be desired or cherished, but it is to be in constant groaning for that which is promised.

As Solomon discovered throughout the various experiments and experiences that he put himself through, the vanity of mortality is futile, fleeting, and unfulfilling. Paul explains in verse 7 that our hope is in the future – not in the present. We are not to “seek the good life now,” as Christianity tells us (sold as the “doctrine of prosperity” – Ed.), but rather we are to recognize that our mortality is a training and proving ground. It is not to be blissfully enjoyed, but is to be persevered and overcome, as one who engages in battle and warfare. Paul summarizes this most important point in verse 8, saying that he (as should we) would much rather prefer and desire to leave this mortal body, whether by death or by the return of our Lord and Master, so that we may be enjoined to the Lord in immortality and the glory that awaits the accepted. Regarding this desire, Paul writes in 2 Cor 6:9-10 (CJB), “*And we present ourselves as God’s workers headed for death, yet look! We’re alive! As punished, yet not killed; as having reason to be sad, yet always filled with joy; as poor, yet making many people rich; as having nothing, yet having everything!*”

The passage demonstrates a very hopeful and encouraging message from Paul – that though this life is to be spent in working in the ways of God, laboring and wrestling against sin so that we may be given the ultimate prize, it is not all difficulty and despair. Rather, Paul exclaims that he “is alive!” He states that, though he endures punishment during his lifetime, he is “not killed,”

and though he has reason to be sad concerning the fleshly difficulties that he faced, he was “always filled with joy,” which must be determined as being not only the “joy set before him,” due to the hope that he had, but also the joy in knowing that there is a coming time of blessing and glory that awaits those who remain faithful during this lifetime. There is joy in hope and expectation, and certainly the Believer understands this. Paul continues by saying that, though he was literally poor as far as the world was concerned, that he is “making many people rich,” by giving them the most precious gift that he could offer them – the gospel message and the opportunity for salvation.

Finally, he says that, even though he is viewed by the world around him as “having nothing,” from a temporal standpoint, that he “has everything.” Paul did not desire the ease and riches of the world. If he did, then he would have remained a, “Pharisee of Pharisees,” and enjoyed exaltation by men and riches in worldly goods that were available to him. Rather, like Moses, he chose to forsake the pleasures of sin that only lasts for a season, so that he could avail himself of the eternal glory that awaits the faithful.

Conclusion

In conclusion to his letters, Paul writes in 2 Cor. 13:11 (CJB), “*And now, brothers, Peace! Put yourselves in order, pay attention to my advice, be of one mind, live in Peace—and the God of love (agape) and Peace will be with you.*”

The word “Peace (shalom)” is used three times in this verse, which is an appropriate way to end this letter; as much emphasis is placed upon it, because the Corinthians had been involved in so much internal turmoil and antagonism, while pulling Paul into it as well. Paul instructs them to “put yourselves in order,” which would only be possible if they “pay attention to my advice.” If they did so, then they would be “of one mind” and “live in peace,” because they would be living according to the Word of God. The end result of doing these things would be that the God of Agape Love (which they had been instructed to display to one another) and Peace (the result of agape love to one another) will be with you. In this phrase is a most valuable lesson to remember – that ***Peace with one another is only achieved through the Word of God.*** Without it, there will be a constant warfare between those who follow the Word of God and those who do not.

To reiterate this study, Paul’s exhortation is to:

- Act as a Watchmen to the Household
- Flee doctrinal and moral error
- Agape one another—seeking the best spiritual interest of our brethren, no matter what the difficulty
- Avoid meaningless strife
- Zealously Search the Scriptures
- Be Introspective of Criticism
- Have all Trust in God

- Persevere during our mortality
- Tirelessly Work in the Vineyard
- Earnestly Desire the “Joy Set Before Us”

Engage in the Battle:

WATCH...STAND FAST...BE STRONG...DO ALL THINGS IN LOVE.

If the Believer follows Paul’s instruction, then when our Master returns, there will be a crown of glory laid up for us, and the joy and rest that has been promised will be realized, through Yahweh’s mercy.

Arthur Sankey

THE SALVATION OF JESUS CHRIST

The character of Jesus Christ as a Saviour occupies such a prominent position in the Bible that the need for His own salvation is in great danger of being overlooked. ... And yet the direct evidence in Old and New Testaments - apart from the indirect – is by no means scanty. The Epistle to the Hebrews contains at least ten or twelve proofs, and in the Psalms they are equally numerous...

Commencing with Hebrews, we find it recorded that Jesus Christ. “in the days of His flesh ... offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared” (Heb 5:7). To need saving from death He must have been under its power. From what cause? Death results only from sin, and He committed none. Yes, but as “the Son of Man” and “Seed” of “the woman”, He was descended from the first pair that sinned. “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin” (Rom 5:12). Jesus Christ was one of the “all men” on whom “death passed” for “one man’s offense” (ver 17); and from this death He could not be saved without the removal of the sin which caused it. For this an acceptable sacrifice was requisite. In the immediate prospect of His offering the prepared body (Heb 10:5, 10), He prayed, “if it be possible” (Matt 26:39), that “this cup” might “pass from” Him; but it was not granted, and therefore it was not “possible”. Knowing this, He subordinated His own “will” to His Father’s. ... He was saved from death, not by exclusion from the grave, but by *release from it*. ... A sacrificial death without resurrection would have been no “profit” to Christ or any other member of the race. And yet, without such a death, His resurrection would have been impossible; for it was “through the blood of the everlasting covenant” that He was “brought again from the dead” (Heb 13:20). His prayer “was heard” because He had yielded to all that the law of sin and death demanded of Him. When this had been done, “it was not possible the He should be holden of death” (Acts 2:24).

The Sanctuary Keeper – December, 1895 – Volume II – J. J. Andrew

THE FUNDAMENTALS of PROPHECY

Introductory Thoughts

Throughout the history of the Christadelphian Body, there have been ongoing conversations, discussions and debates regarding the correct interpretation of Biblical prophecies. We have witnessed many conversations regarding the fulfillment of the many prophecies that Yahweh has left on record to encourage His covenanted children of all ages. We find divinely inspired prophetic utterances in every book of the Bible. Therefore, prophecy is not a subject that should be taken lightly and should always be a part of our ongoing Biblical study as we patiently await the second coming of our Master. Many expositors of the Truth throughout the ages have written volumes regarding their own interpretations of the prophecies found in God's Holy Word.

When we initially come into covenant relationship with our Heavenly Father and His only begotten Son, we probably do not have a full understanding of these various prophecies that we encounter in our studies. As we mature in the Truth, we develop a fuller appreciation of the prophetic promises that are the foundation of our divine hopes. Regardless of the length of time that we have been in the Truth, we should always remember the relationship of prophecy to these two verses.

- ⇒ **1st Timothy 2:15** – *“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*
- ⇒ **2nd Timothy 3:16-17** – *“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.”*

These verses teach us that we have the same responsibility regarding prophecy as any of our other favorite passages. We must study prophecy; we must rightly divide it (as prophecy is part of God's Truth); and we must remember that it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and for instruction in righteousness. We may believe that it is our responsibility to hold



firm and be steadfast regarding doctrine or moral issues, while at the same time believe that it is OK to have differing beliefs regarding the prophetic word. Brethren, where is the scriptural reasoning and logic behind this way of thinking? Surely our young students must be utterly confused. When we discuss the Truth in a group setting with those outside of covenant relationship, such as classes, public lectures, etc. Which way of thinking does the Ecclesia present to those that want to understand the Christadelphian system of beliefs?

This writer firmly believes that Yahweh has used our pioneer brethren in the Truth to develop a very good understanding of the prophetic word, and gave them the ability to record their understandings for future study. We do not think that these brethren of ages past were divinely inspired. As we study these pioneer writings, we should remember the example of the Bereans in Acts 17:10-11 to *“receive the word with all readiness of mind, and search the scriptures daily, whether those things were so”*. We should follow the admonition given by Paul to the Thessalonians – *“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”* (1st Thessalonians 5:21.)

Although our community may never be in complete agreement on all aspects of the prophetic word, we believe that there are fundamental prophecies and prophetic principles in which we should not waver. However, we realize that even on these prophetic fundamentals, there have been a variety of beliefs expounded upon by our brethren. We truly are saddened by our inability to be of one mind regarding these basic principles of prophecy doctrines. It is the objective of *The Sanctuary Keeper* to present a series of articles over the next several issues that put forth our understanding of these fundamentals of prophetic understanding. Although all may not agree with our considerations, we pray that everyone will be strengthened in the one Hope and will be encouraged to continue to study prophecy – so that we all can be of one accord in these matters, as we are encouraged to do throughout God's Holy Word.

In this issue, we will present some very basic and standard principles regarding our study in the prophetic arena. In future issues, we will present more detailed considerations of specific prophetic passages. Lord willing, our endeavors throughout this series of articles will be completed with our Bibles and our pioneer writings by our side. Some may object to our use of the pioneer writings, but it is our contention that until proven incorrect, we will use the pioneers to assist us in our study.

WHAT ARE WE TO UNDERSTAND?

Our community should be able to confess that although there are some prophecies that are divinely interpreted in the pages of Scripture, there are many prophecies that must be verified and validated by comparing scripture to scripture and scripture to history. This writer firmly believes that the message that we find in Amos 3:7 is one that should guide us in all of our studies, especially in the arena of prophecy. *“Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.”* In this verse, we learn

that God has given us all that we need to know in order to understand what we are supposed to understand, and what we need in order to remain faithful and steadfast in the wicked environment that all of His sons and daughters have had to live. We should also remember the words of the wise man in Proverbs 25:2 – “*It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honor of kings is to search out a matter.*” God has given us all we need. We cannot add to His word and take away from His teachings. The only thing that Yahweh does not always provide is the exact timing of the fulfillment of some prophetic events. This lack of knowledge about the specific time in which prophecies have been fulfilled has been the cause of many differences in our community.

CURRENT EVENTS AND PROPHECY

Christadelphians have always had a passion and zeal for watching current events and trying to determine how these current events fit into the God’s prophetic Plan and Purpose. As we monitor these events of the nations of the world, we should not try to make the current event fit an individual prophecy, but we should use the whole counsel of God to determine if these events are truly a fulfillment of God’s prophecy.

One example in latter day Christadelphian teachings, where this zeal has led to incorrect interpretations, was the identification in the 1990’s of the madman from Iraq, Saddam Hussein, with the latter day Assyrian of Micah 5:5. Although using this verse in isolation may lead to this false application, other Scriptures such as Ezekiel 38 and Daniel 11 teaches us that the latter day invader of the land of Israel would be a confederacy led by the Russian bear. The application of Hussein’s fall to latter day prophecy should teach us not to “fit a square peg into a round hole”.

We have at least four warnings not to add to or take away from God’s Word. We ask our readers to open their Bibles and read Deuteronomy 4:2; Deuteronomy 12:32; Proverbs 30:5-6; and Revelation 22:18-19. These are very serious admonitions. The words of John in the Apocalypse are especially sobering.

PROPHECY AND THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

In Acts 8:12, we are taught that there are two major doctrines that must be understood prior to baptism – *the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ*. The elements of both of these concepts are full of prophetic impact. We also understand that the promises made to Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David are part of the fundamental prophetic understandings in which we should be of one mind. Our Statement of Faith is full of scriptures that teach us of our future. We cannot ignore prophecy and we must strive to be of one mind and one accord.

IMPORTANCE OF PROPHECY

We must have a scriptural understanding about why it is important to study prophecy. In Proverbs 29:18, we learn that without a vision, we will “*perish*”.

Peter tells us in 2 Peter 1 of the “*sure word of prophecy*”. In Revelation, we learn that blessings are pronounced on those who study prophecy. Brother Thomas made this statement in 1866 – “*The more we understand of what we profess to believe, the stronger is our faith therein and the nearer we approach its development, the more necessary it is that a lively interest be kindled in us, that our lamps may be well trimmed and our lights be found brightly burning.*” (END QUOTE)

In John 13:19 and 14:29, we find the ultimate purpose of prophecy. In these verses, we see that there is a prediction of an event, the exact fulfillment of the event with the result of increased belief, faith, and conviction on the part of the observer. In 1st Corinthians 14:33, we learn that God is not the author of confusion, but of peace – God’s word cannot be contradictory. We also should remember that any interpretation of prophecy should not contradict actual historical events that God caused to happen to fulfill the prophecy.

HOW TO APPROACH THE MATTER

In order to remove any apparent confusion regarding prophecy, we should ask these questions – **Who? What? When? Where?** We should determine who the prophecy is speaking about – Jew, Gentile, all believers or all mankind? What time frame does the prophecy apply to? Has the event already occurred or is it still in the future? Can the event have a dual application to a historical event and also to a future event? What is the expected result or fulfillment of the prophecy? Are there other parts of God’s Word that also addresses the same prophecy? (A good example of this is the events in Daniel 2 and Daniel 7.) Are there any direct interpretations from Yahweh that have been recorded by the prophets and/or apostles? Where do the details of the prophecy direct our minds - to Israel, to the nations of the Gentiles, to the entire world or to a specific geographic area?

Brother Ted Farrar in his pamphlet “*In Defense of the Year-Day Interpretation of the Prophetic Time Periods of the Bible*” makes these comments regarding our responsibility to test the accuracy of the fulfillment of the prophecy:

1. The prophecy must have been written long before the fulfillment of the event it foretells.
2. The fulfillment must be so specific that its correspondence with the original prophetic statement is unquestionable.
3. The fulfillment must not be the result of actions deliberately undertaken to guarantee the fulfillment.
4. The predictions attributed to the prophet must be 100% accurate in their fulfillment. Even one tiny error of prediction would render the prophet’s credibility to be null and void.

The points that our brother made are very critical to gaining a better understanding of prophecy.

PROPHECY AND DIVINE JUDGMENT

Many of God's prophetic utterances are in regard to His Judgment's poured out on an evil and Godless world. In *Eureka*, Brother Thomas makes these comments regarding the outpouring of God's wrath on Jews, Gentiles, or both. He states that the result of the manifestation and outpouring of the wrath of God will be sevenfold:

1. The Apocalypse of Yahweh, the King of Israel in Jerusalem.
2. The taking away of the judgments from Jerusalem.
3. The purification and pardon of the remnant.
4. The exaltation of Israel to fame and praise throughout the earth.
5. The restoration of Israel to the Holy Land from all points of the earth.
6. The abolition of all the "Names and Denominations", and other superstitions of every form, shade and color, that now bewilders and divides mankind; and which are sustained as elements of the civil and ecclesiastical polity of the nations.
7. The establishment of the One Religion and One Government for all the world.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Brethren, we look forward with extreme joy to the future fulfillment of all prophetic events that lead us to that Appointed Day, in which Christ will judge the world in righteousness, the entire world will be filled with His Glory as the waters cover the sea and finally, to the time when God will be all in all – no more sin, nor death. As Peter tells us, we have such great and precious promises (2 Pet. 1:4).

Let us not thrust aside the study and discussion of the details of these promises because they are controversial or thought to be hard to understand. These details make up a large part of the Word of God and are vital to our understanding of the promises that we so longingly hope for. Will the Christadelphian Body be able to agree to all things prophetic? – Probably not, this side of the Kingdom. However, we can and should be able to sit down with those who agree with us and those who do not agree with us and discuss these matters. We should use the entire counsel of God to help us in our studies. We should use the writings of our pioneer and current brethren to assist us in gaining a better understanding of these prophetic matters. Brethren, there are basic prophetic fundamentals that cannot be ignored or debated. In the next few issues, Lord willing, we hope to offer some of these fundamentals for your consideration with the hope that we may all be of the same mind when our Lord returns.

B. Henderson

WHO IS THE ANTI-CHRIST? *Fundamental Considerations*

There is a popular doctrine among most Christian churches, which has long been taught in various ways, depicting an event of future times. This is mainly about a man (with supernatural and diabolical abilities) spoken of as the Antichrist. This man is supposed to come to Jerusalem, proclaiming himself to be Jesus Christ, who will attempt to set himself up as the king of the world in Jerusalem. He is to gain much power among the Jews through many miracles and attempt to conquer the nations of that time. The Christian churches, led by the Catholic Church are preparing their people for the need to proclaim a holy war against this person and his followers. This doctrine is based on only a few verses in the Bible that have been sadly misinterpreted by religious leaders ever since the first century after the demise of the Lord's Apostles.

The present teachings mostly stem from a paper written by a Jesuit priest of the Catholic Church named Ribera during the days of the Reformation, when religious leaders were opposing the Pope even to the point of proclaiming him to be the Antichrist. To defend the Pope and Catholicism this doctrine was put out by the Church to support their claim that they were Christ's appointed Church and that the Pope was indeed the Vicar of Christ as he claimed. Since that time many of the other churches have taken up various similar teachings and have been warning their people to be on the lookout for the appearance of this "Antichrist", and to be ready to defend the world against him.



Francis Ribera

As true believers can easily see, the reality of what the churches have come up with is almost the exact description of what the Lord Jesus will do when he returns and begins to set up God's Kingdom. We know from the Scriptures that at the time of His return to earth, the Lord Jesus Christ will indeed set up his Kingdom in Jerusalem and proclaim himself to be the Son of God and begin to manifest God's Name before all nations with power and might which will indeed be miraculous. This will undoubtedly draw the ire of governments and churches of that time and they will oppose him. This seems to be what is depicted in Psalm 2 where the nations refuse to accept the Lord's Anointed at his return and attempt to destroy him. What a futile and fatal effort! The Psalm says that the Lord will laugh at them in derision!

Let us now look at what the Bible really teaches about the antichrist. The term antichrist is indeed a Biblical term but has no connection with this false personage imagined by the world's churches although it has very fearful connotations to true believers. This is what I would like to look into at this time and see if and why we should be concerned with the appearance of any "antichrist".

The word "*antichrist*" only occurs four times in the Bible, all in the writings of the Apostle John. The word "*anti*" is referred to in Webster's Dictionary as, "*a prefix meaning against or opposed to; preventing or counteracting; opposite or contrary to; rivaling.*" When used in connection with Christ it would then mean an opponent of Christ. Webster's Dictionary agrees with this as they define the term Antichrist as "a false Christ." Strong's Dictionary supports this view as they explain it as "an opponent of the Messiah".

Let us now look at the first scripture using the word "antichrist", 1 John 2:18-19, where we see these words; "*Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; (Diaglott: "many have become antichrists") whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.*" It is important that we take notice that John is not speaking of any particular person but of many whom he terms "antichrists". The Apostle John was the last of the writers of our Scriptures, living until after A.D. 90 and was witness to a falling away of many believers who were beginning to teach things that were in opposition to the true Gospel taught by Christ and the Apostles. In these two verses he does not explain just what false doctrines were being spread but in vv. 22-23; he tells us one false doctrine being spread and that was the denial of the miraculous birth of Jesus as the only Begotten Son of God. According to Adam Clarke's Commentary this was mostly being done at the time of John by many Jews who saw him as just another man making false claims. There were also people called Gnostics, puffed up by their own wisdom, denying this miraculous birth as well and causing many to fall away with their teachings.

1 John 2:22-23; "*Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? (Diaglott= the ANOINTED One) He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.*"

These people had no understanding about the true relationship between God and His Only Begotten Son, Jesus. They looked upon him as neither the Only Begotten Son of God nor as one anointed by God for the work that he was to do. These people no longer had the Truth but had gone astray from the way of salvation and even more seriously were turning many others away from the Truth as well.

John speaks of another form of false doctrine in 1 John 4:1-3 in this fashion: "*Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*" What does John mean by the term *spirit* and *spirits* in these verses? The word translated *spirit* here is translated *breath* in other places. What does the *breath* do? It gives life to something, and in this case the false doctrines were giving life to this false movement, so in reality John is referring to the false doctrines that were at the root of the problems – teaching that Christ did not come in actual flesh. He speaks of this same problem in 2 John 1:7; "*For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.*"

We cannot be certain just in what form these false teachings were being put forth but this is evidently somewhat different from that previously spoken of in the verses we already looked at. This seems to have been people that were actually teaching that Christ did not come in man's flesh but was born with another nature or that he never existed at all but was just a figment of men's minds. Either of these false doctrines destroys any chance of those teaching or believing it to be saved. Either would prevent a person from understanding the relationship between God and Jesus and would also prevent any understanding of Jesus' relationship with his fellow man who shared his Adamic nature. This would prevent any understanding as to just what Christ's sacrifice was and how it affected himself first and all those believing in him. These teachings were most definitely anti or against Christ – being a barrier to his work as the Anointed Saviour.

These teachers would, after John's time, weaken the Ecclesias just as Christ warned John in the Revelation. Inside of 300 years this corruption involved a grasp for political power, resulting in the formation of the Catholic Church, which became the official church of the Roman Empire and in time of most of the civilized world. Centuries later, as more and more people became able to read and along the invention of the printing press and a translation of the scriptures became more available, many broke away from the Catholic Church to form the various Protestant religions. Even though separated from the Mother Church, various denominations either retained most of her doctrines containing the terrible errors that had begun during Apostolic times or soon fell back into her false doctrines after initially repudiating many of the Roman fallacies. These churches remain into our day, and in addition many others have been formed from the basic Protestant churches. These all still maintain all the errors and therefore are of no help to their people as far as helping them to obtain salvation from death. Their beliefs destroy any true understanding of God's relationship with Christ; the relationship between Christ and his fellow man; any

understanding as to why Christ had to be sacrificed; any chance of understanding of the return of Christ to the earth and the setting up of the Kingdom of God on the earth and the fulfillment of God's plan and purpose for His creation. Most believe Christ is really God Himself who in some way took upon Him the flesh of man and came to the earth as the Saviour. This results in their belief that Christ came in an immaculate nature untouched by sin and therefore having no need for a sacrifice for himself. Not understanding God's word they believe that there are three separate Gods all still being in some way one God; an impossibility.

All this confusion has roots in the false brethren that rose out of the 1st Century Ecclesia and continued and grew thereafter, changing the Gospel into something completely false and therefore of no value to man. Their gospel is powerless to bring salvation so it cannot be the "good news" or "glad tidings", which is what the word "gospel" means.

Although other New Testament writers did not use the term antichrist, they in fact warned believers of this same danger. Thus we see the Apostle Paul write in 2 Thes. 2:3-4; "*Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*"

What better description can one find than these words of Paul to describe the Popery which developed and has continued through the centuries? They claim *infallibility* and that they are the Vicar of Christ appointed by God to lead His church when everything they believe and teach is the direct opposite to the Word of God.

The Apostle Peter wrote these words about these conditions as well; 2nd Pet. 2:1; "*But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.*"

Our Lord Jesus warned his followers shortly before his ascension with the following words in Matt. 24:24; "*For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*"

I would like to refer to Adam Clarke's Bible Commentary to show that even some of the world understood what the term, antichrist, referred to. Adam Clarke's commentary on the antichrist; "**Antichrist shall come** – Who is this ἀντιχριστος antichrist? Is he the Emperor Domitian, the Gnostics, Nicolaitans, Nazareans, Cerinthians, Romish pontiffs, etc., etc.! **Ans. Any person, thing, doctrine, system of religion, polity, etc., which is opposed to Christ, and to the spirit and spread of his Gospel, is antichrist.** (*bold and underlining added*)

for emphasis by C.K.) We need not look for this imaginary being in any of the above exclusively. Even Protestantism may have its antichrist as well as Popery. Every man who opposes the spirit of the Gospel, and every teacher and writer who endeavors to lower the Gospel standard to the spirit and taste of the world, is a genuine antichrist, no matter where or among whom he is found. The heresies which sprang up in the days of St. John were the antichrist of that time. As there has been a succession of oppositions to Christianity in its spirit and spread through every age since its promulgation in the world, so there has been a succession of antichrists. We may bring this matter much lower; every enemy of Christ, every one who opposes his reign in the world, in others, or in himself, is an antichrist; and consequently every wicked man is an antichrist. But the name has been generally applied to whatever person or thing that systematically opposes Christ and his religion. **Many antichrists** – Many false prophets, false Messiahs, heretics, and corrupters of the truth." (end of quote)

Examples

True believers of today should not be in danger of these false beliefs about an antichrist as it is taught in the churches of the world, but do we have another form of antichrist of which we should be concerned? Very definitely and there are many. Since the Truth was dug out of the Scriptures by our pioneer brethren there have arisen many who have "gone out from us teaching false doctrines" of many types.

There have been those who separated themselves because they believe that anyone even hearing the Truth taught and rejecting it would be resurrected and judged by our Lord at his coming and at his Judgment Seat (bema). This is a false doctrine opposing the truth of the Gospel that teaches that in Christ, through covenant, is the only scripturally revealed means by which there is hope of The Resurrection and appearance at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

There have been those gone out from us who teach that man is not a sin stricken, unclean and condemned creature by birth and only becomes affected by sin upon committing sinful acts. This is directly opposite to what the Scriptures teach us.

There have been many who have gone out from us believing Christ did not come in sinful flesh and had no need of his own sacrifice. This is in direct opposition of the teachings of the Scriptures about this subject and destroys the foundation of the Gospel teaching of Christ being in all points like unto his brethren and in need of cleansing for the Adamic and sin-flesh nature as any other descendant of Adam.

There are those who at the present time who are trying to lessen the need for Believers to strictly obey the laws and commandments of our Lord and His Father. They falsely claim we can gain salvation through faith, love, and compassion for our fellowman. They even claim that a "spiritual kingdom" now exists into which believers enter into at baptism. This is in opposition to the Scriptures teaching that only through the dedicated obedience to God's laws and commandment do we have a chance at salvation. Faith, love, and compassion

are necessary parts to our life of service to God, but are they not part of obedience to Him?

There are some who are trying to destroy the Statement of Faith, which in reality is merely a grouping of certain Scriptures outlining and defining vital doctrines of God, that have been conveniently and clearly arranged by our pioneer brethren to designate the Christadelphians Basis of Fellowship, in comparison to the apostate religions of the world around us. Many deny the need for such, but instead would remove all barriers to fellowship and open the memorial service to almost anyone regardless of their beliefs. Is this what the Scriptures teach us? Not in any way; so if this opposes the Scriptures it would be in opposition to Christ and therefore an antichrist!

Such teachings (to name a few) put up barriers to salvation and will result in loss by many of the chance to obtain a place in God's Kingdom. There are so many Scriptures dealing with this situation, but I will only take the time and space to refer to these few. First will be the words of the Apostle Paul to Timothy in 2 Tim. 3:1-7; *"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."* ⁶*For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."*

He also speaks of this in 2nd Tim. 4:1-4; *"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; ²Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. ³For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; ⁴And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."*

Jude, in his epistle speaks of this same danger; Jude 17-19: *"But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."*

It does not matter what false teaching is involved. If it opposes Christ and what he taught, it therefore makes the doctrine and the person teaching it an antichrist. Can we afford to let such teachings go unopposed in these last days as we see so many of the Body being turned aside from the true Gospel? I hope that we will all be in agreement that open opposition is needed to try to prevent losing our members to the world.

Christ in some of his last words to his followers, before his ascension to his Father, told them that they were all watchmen; (Mark 13:37); *"And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."* If this was his command to the followers of that day it would definitely apply to his followers of this day as his ways do not change.

Conclusion

In closing, I would like to call attention to what God told the Prophet Ezekiel concerning faithful and unfaithful watchmen. Ezekiel 33:6-8; *"But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand. So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand."*

Which type of watchmen would you like to be classed as at the Judgment Seat; faithful or unfaithful?

Charles Kelley

FIFTY TWO TIMES A YEAR

At the Table of the Lord

The United States has set aside a day to celebrate George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and other dignitaries. Days are also set aside to remember certain events that have occurred which are considered to be important. We remember Jesus Christ every first day of the week. If you were baptized one year ago you should have remembered our Lord fifty two times, three years ago would be one hundred and fifty six times, five years - two hundred and sixty times, ten years - five hundred and twenty times, twenty years - one thousand and forty times, thirty years, one thousand five hundred and sixty times, forty years - two thousand and eighty times, fifty years - two thousand six hundred times, sixty years - three thousand one hundred and twenty times, seventy years - three thousand six hundred and forty times.

Some brothers give the same memorial service every time (and there is not anything wrong with doing this). However, much has been written in the Bible concerning the Son of God, and in John 21: 25 the apostle John informs us that there are also many other things which Jesus did, which, if they should be written, the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. John

was an eye witness of the life, the death, the resurrection, and the ascension of Jesus Christ.

Also, John writes these words in the 20th chapter verses 29 - 31. *“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed. And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name”*.

If you have been a brother or sister of Jesus Christ for fifty years, you have experienced the privilege and the blessing of hearing and participating in the remembrance of our Elder Brother two thousand six hundred times; I will state that during most of those remembrances, some aspect concerning our Lord that we needed to consider was brought to our attention.

- Jesus Christ is the promised seed of the woman who will abolish death.
- Jesus Christ is the seed of the promises made to Abraham.
- Jesus Christ is the seed of the covenant made with David.
- Jesus Christ is the Saviour of both Jew and Gentile.
- Jesus Christ is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world without spot or blemish.
- Jesus Christ is our redeemer, our deliverer, our atonement, our high priest, our mediator, our elder brother, and soon to be the King of the entire earth.
- Jesus Christ is the truth, the way, the resurrection, and the life.
- Jesus Christ is the agency, the vehicle, the means, the being thru whom God is accomplishing his plan and purpose for man and this earth.
- Jesus Christ set the example for us to strive for during the days he was flesh of sin who committed no sin.
- Jesus Christ will be the Judge concerning whether we followed His example or not.

So, brothers and sisters, a day - the first day of every week - has been set aside to remember YAHWEH'S SON; so that, by remembering him this day, we will remember to be servants of YAHWEH the rest of the week.

The apostle Paul informs us, beginning at verse twenty three of First Corinthians chapter eleven: *“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, TAKE, EAT: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Covenant in my Blood: this do ye, as oft as ye DRINK it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and*

drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body”.

We cannot appreciate too highly the value of such assemblies as these. Removed from the world and its defiling influences, we have sought the company of those whose one aim is to follow Jesus Christ. We have left the land of estrangement to come into the family circle, to encourage each other to wait patiently for the return of our family head, Jesus Christ, our elder brother.

Though we lament His absence, in another sense we have His company today for we have the inspired record of His life and works; the things He did, the words He spake. With this material we need not the art of man to depict to us Him, whom having not seen, we love. Our thoughts, our surroundings, the very air we breathe, become affected with a tranquil calm as we step, so to speak, into the presence of Jesus our Lord. The harsh, unsettling experiences of the outer world seem to slip quietly from us and leave peace and joy. PEACE and JOY amidst all earth's conflicts we derive from this hour as we realize the love wherewith God loves us in that He has provided through His Son a way for our salvation and a hope for the soon ending of all our present day trials in everlasting peace and joy.

God and Jesus will never desert us. Unfortunately, men and women can and many times will desert us. Sometimes, we desert our brothers and sisters, and worse, sometimes we desert God and Jesus. What about this past week, Monday thru Saturday? Did we remember! Did we serve! The trials of the flesh we have are ever present with us. We are fully aware of our many shortcomings which separate us from the love of God, had He not provided a way whereby they may be covered and thus removed from His sight. And so we look back, remembering that Jesus Christ our Passover was sacrificed.

In Exodus, Chapter twelve, we read that the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, *“This month shall be the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, in the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for a house. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats. Ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper post of the houses in which they shall eat the Passover Lamb. And they shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Do not eat the meat raw or cooked in water, but roast it over the fire - head, legs, and inner parts. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; burning whatever remaineth”*. *“And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste; it is the LORD'S Passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all*

the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you for a destruction of all firstborn, when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it forever”.

The LORD'S Passover represents much more than the facts surrounding its establishment. It points forward to the life, death, resurrection, priesthood, and reign of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul styles Jesus Christ the believer's Passover and exhorts us to keep it with sincerity and truth. Jesus is the Lamb of the feast whom God has provided. His blood is sprinkled, not upon the doorposts of houses, but upon the doors of believers' hearts. None can eat his flesh but those who are circumcised in heart; for to eat his flesh is to digest, and make a part of our mental selves, the truth concerning the kingdom of God and Jesus Christ. This is the spiritual food upon which the believer's spiritual existence is sustained. Also, just as YAHWEH'S first-born son (Israel) was saved by the blood of the Passover Lamb in Egypt, so also is the believer in the Kingdom saved by the blood of Christ.

Jesus stated, while partaking of the Passover with his apostles: *"With desire,"* said he, *"I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God;"* and *"I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come."* And of this kingdom, he said, *"I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."* From this, it is clear, that the Passover was prophetic of what is to be fulfilled in the kingdom. Jesus Christ will be there, the Apostles, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, all the Prophets, and many others, - all of them the redeemed from the earth, saved by the sprinkled blood of the true lamb of God, and who shall find themselves as inheritors of its attributes; celebrating their own redemption, and the overthrow of all enemies.

The bread and wine of the Lord's Supper are the remains of the Passover, which are shared by the circumcised of heart and ears, until Christ comes in power and great glory. Faith in the Lamb of God supplies the absence of the Lamb in the Lord's Supper. The broken bread and the poured out wine, memorialize his sacrifice; and the testimony, *"this do in remembrance of me until I come,"* keeps alive the hope of his appearing in the kingdom of God. When hope becomes a reality, the supper will give place to the Passover; for when Christ is come, the memorial of his coming ceases to be prophetic of the event.

So let us look back and remember that life (YAHWEH'S SON) which was provided, lived, and given (YAHWEH provided the life, Jesus lived that life and gave that life) for the express purpose of overcoming sin and death. This was accomplished perfectly by Jesus. He overcame his sin nature by serving

YAHWEH faithfully even unto the shedding of his own blood and a cruel death. He, who was made sin, controlled that sin nature, committing no personal sin, living a life of serving His Father. Therefore, He was without spot or blemish and was qualified to be that sacrifice required for Adam's Transgression and all sin that resulted from that transgression. All who approach YAHWEH through this crucified, but risen, representative of Adam's disobedient race, are forgiven. His blood cleanseth from sin.

The bread and the wine - Oh, the depths of the meanings of these two emblems! We should strive to understand and appreciate them until the blessings of endless life is ours; so, until then, we gather here to remember and by so doing we should remain on that road less traveled which leadeth unto life. Thousands of Israelites and Gentiles have believed the Gospel and been baptized into Christ. THERE HAS BEEN MULTITUDES IN CHRIST AS THERE WERE IN MOSES, WHO DID RUN WELL BUT AFTERWARDS FAILED. They turned back in their hearts to Egypt, loving the present world, and not having faith enough to obtain mastery over it. They are like those of the fourth generation who were murmurers and faithless, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness. YAHWEH was not pleased with them. 1st Corinthians 10:1-6; *"Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted."*

If, after their example, we love the present world, though we may have believed and obeyed the truth in the beginning, we shall come under the sentence of exclusion from *"the rest which remains for the people of God."* We must remember verse thirteen of this tenth chapter of First Corinthians. *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."*

Brothers and Sisters, let us review here and now the road we are traveling. May we be assured and encouraged that our footsteps are leading us nearer to the desired end. With these thoughts we again remember our absent Lord; and remembering, endeavor to emulate Him so that we may greet him in that great day as our deliverer, redeemer, and King. Then, it will no longer be necessary for us to hide ourselves away in an enclosure of isolation from this present wicked world; for then we shall be the manifestations of YAHWEH'S GLORY and the exalted bearers of His Gospel to all the peoples of this earth.

Ernie Glass

EDITORIAL FLYLEAF

“UNITY” results in further disunity

In the 4th Quarter, 2008 S.K. we addressed the Canadian “unity” efforts that involved some 13 Amended ecclesias and then three Unamended ecclesias. Their basis of unity (Toronto Unity Agreement – 2008) was basically built around the NASU agreement along with additional points of clarification regarding Resurrectional Responsibility. As of March 2009 there was a suspension of fellowship among a few of the amended party so that the agreement could be re-evaluated. As of January 1, 2010 the suspension will be lifted and fellowship reinstated between all parties. The following announcement was forwarded by the *Christadelphians for Unity* Facebook group.

For the last several years the members of the Toronto East Ecclesia (TEE) have authorized its unity representatives to participate in numerous meetings with both Amended and Unamended representatives. In recent months, the TEE representatives have attended meetings with members of concerned Ecclesias, with the aim of assisting them in understanding the wording and intent of the Unity Agreement 2008 (UA08), as well as focusing on convening an inter-ecclesial study on fellowship. The TEE continues to support these ongoing initiatives. During this lengthy process the membership of the TEE was regularly updated with the findings and progress of these various meetings and discussions. In a joint letter dated March 7th, 2009, sent to the surrounding Ecclesias, the Toronto East Ecclesia, in collaboration with the three other Toronto Ecclesias, agreed to temporarily “suspend the extension of fellowship at the Lord’s table with the signatory Unamended ecclesias”. The Brothers and Sisters of the TEE supported this suspension with the express understanding that within a set amount of time they would revisit this decision. At the semi-annual business meeting on October 28th, 2009, after the set time required by the members had elapsed, it was agreed that the next steps in respect of the UA08 (whether to continue with or lift the suspension) would be decided by an Ecclesial ballot. It was determined by the results of that ballot, by a preponderant majority of the Ecclesia’s membership, that the members of the TEE “agree to lift ‘the pause’ and welcome in fellowship at the Lord’s Table, members in good standing from all Unamended Ecclesias that accept the Unity Agreement 2008”. The result of the ballot was announced to the members of the TEE on Sunday, Dec 6th. The effective date of the Ecclesial decision to lift “the pause” is January 1st, 2010, God-willing. Notwithstanding, we continue to welcome in fellowship members in good standing from Central Ecclesias, including Amended UA08 Ecclesias (paused and non-paused). The Toronto East Ecclesia remains satisfied that the Unity Agreement 2008 (UA08) is a sound document upon which to base Unity. We further maintain our commitment to continue working alongside our Amended and Unamended Brethren alike as we seek to broaden its acceptance, that all Brethren in Christ of like mind and purpose might enjoy full fellowship before the return of our Lord. In the shared Hope of Israel, On behalf of the Toronto East Ecclesia Brother Brian Carrick-Recording Secretary.”

With this in mind it is interesting to note the December, 2009 *Logos* which has an announcement for the “Silver Star Bible School” held in British Columbia. Their basis of Fellowship at their 2010 school is as follows: “Silver Star Bible School meets on the basis of the *Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith*. Participation in the Memorial Service will be restricted to members of ecclesias in the Central Fellowship,

without exception. Silver Star Bible School does not acknowledge the Toronto Unity Agreement 2008 or the proposed Mid-West Unity Agreement at this time. Members of other fellowships and members of ecclesias that have signed on to the previously mentioned unity agreements are not to partake of the Memorial Emblems. All persons officiating at the Bible School shall be members of Central ecclesias who fellowship consistently on the basis of the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith.”

Though we cannot endorse the BASF, we have to respect their conviction and understanding as to the serious differences that do in fact exist between the Amended and Unamended fellowships. And clearly, cries for “unity” are creating further disunity in the Central Fellowship as it has in the Unamended fellowship. Are we, the Unamended community, likewise willing to speak in such unambiguous, specific, exclusive, and uncompromising terms regarding this issue and the errors and practices that threaten our community in general?

Sea and waves roaring

As the U.S. continues to weaken due to economic troubles and political division, the rest of the world and especially those of prophetic interest carry on with their own agendas recognizing that the geo-political balance of power is shifting now that the U.S. is neither willing nor able to project power as it once did. A few matters that keep us alert and closely watching are here briefly mentioned.

“**GOLDSTONE REPORT**”: The U.N. Human rights council (which includes Russia) in October endorsed the report bearing the name of the former South African judge (Richard Goldstone – himself Jewish) which concluded that Israel’s 2008-2009 campaign against Hamas was actually aimed against Gaza’s residents as a whole. The report’s biased conclusion was that Israel’s action was an illegitimate exercise of “collective punishment.” This clearly anti-Israel report, though citing “human rights” violations on the part of both Hamas and Israel – is heavily slanted on condemnation of Israel, even though Israel’s actions came as a matter of self defense against continual rocket attacks, and was conducted with unprecedented effort to warn and protect Gaza’s residents. The report was further endorsed by the U.N. General Assembly in November with a vote of 114 to 18 with 44 abstentions. The U.S. voted against, while Europe was split.



PUTIN recently admitted, in his recent annual television interview, that he has no plans to leave power and that he “*will think about*” running again for the Russian presidency. Considering his already autocratic hold on power, and his high popularity within Russia, he probably will not have to think too hard about seeking the position that at least gives the facade of democratic appointment.

LISBON TREATY COMES INTO FULL FORCE As of December 1st the 27 nation EU bloc were officially under the force of the agreement. The treaty is designed to streamline decision-making and give the EU greater influence in world affairs. It creates two new posts - President of the European Council and a High Representative for Foreign Affairs. According to BBC news

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