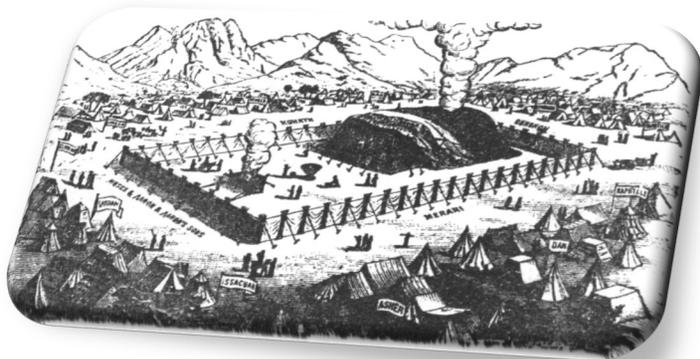


THE SANCTUARY-KEEPER

A Magazine for the Exposition and Defense of The Holy Scriptures



ON THE VERGE OF GREAT CHANGE
THE KING JAMES VERSION - 400 Years
THE IMMESURABLE BLESSING THAT IS THE HOLY SCRIPTURES
THE FOURTH BEAST: It's Development & Destruction
"EXTREMISM" - Editorial Comment
THE RETURN OF CHRIST
THE WORLD IN TURMOIL

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*

Printing & Distribution:
Bobby Henderson
bobdebhend@aol.com

Compilation & Publishing:
Aaron Thomas
aaronthomas2@juno.com

Please mail subscriptions to:

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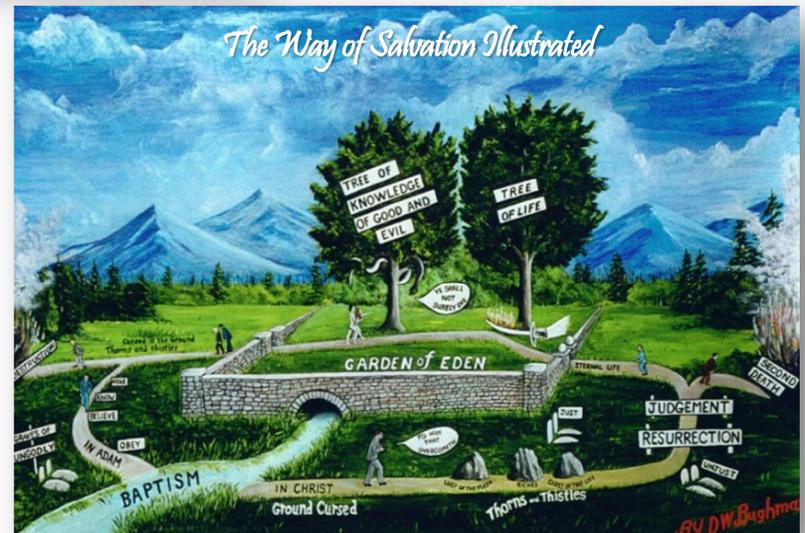
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The Earth Reeling To and Fro



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An interesting exchange is made when the individuals in the video are discussing what differences they may have experienced in belief. One of the Unamended brethren admits that he has come across “clean flesh” leaning doctrines among the Amended, but it is quickly concluded in the conversation that the “quirky” beliefs of individuals does not pose a barrier to fellowship.

The video provides nothing new in the “unity” debate, but it serves as a good reminder as to the deceptive and misled nature of the arguments that have been employed in the continued move towards Christadelphian ecumenism.

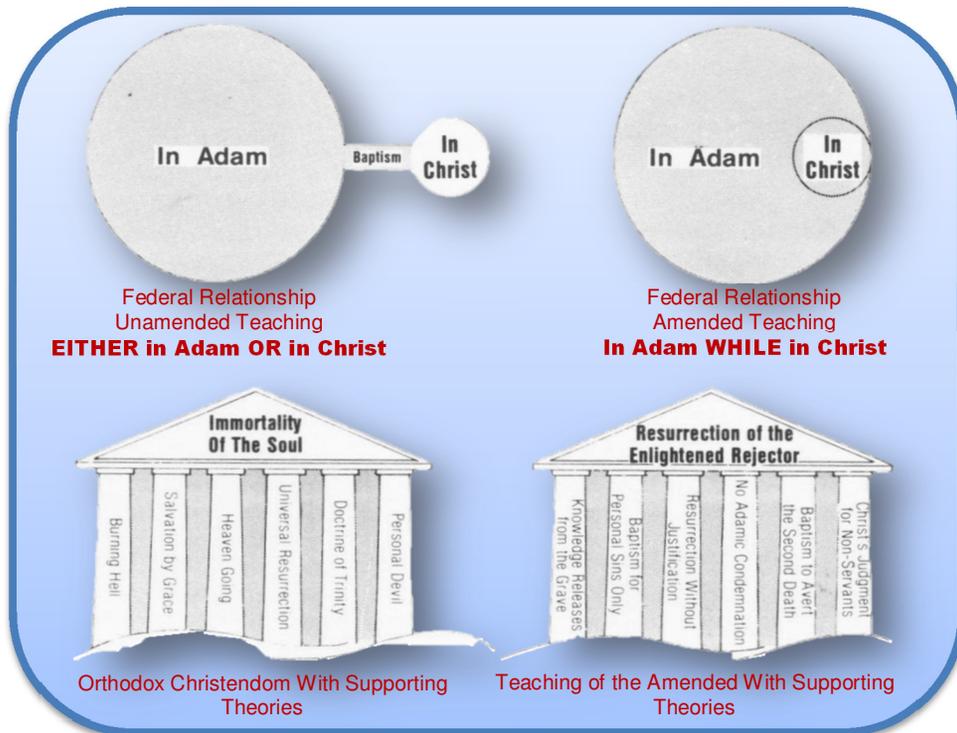
In contrast, a recent presentation of opposing Amended ecclesias to the UA08 can be accessed (both audio and PowerPoint presentation) at: http://www.livoniatapes.com/show_study.php?id=801

“UNDERSTANDING THE ATONEMENT”

This is the title of a new book that has come to our attention, authored by a Matthew Trowell of the Amended. This apparently has found a great deal of promotion within the Facebook/social networking world of the internet - (or the “Virtual Ecclesia” as we have heard this new worldwide, internet, Christadelphian phenomena negatively and rightfully dubbed.) The book is lauded in its own “Forward” section as a book *that should be in every Christadelphian home.*

We have not had the time to read through the book, but we do see where great effort is made to take shots against the Unamended position and to attack the teachings of bro. Thomas Williams and bro. J.J. Andrew as “extremes”.

This is yet another reminder that The Truth is always under assault. We will take the time to read through this further before providing additional comment.



The Earth Reeling To and Fro

(CNN) – The powerful earthquake that unleashed a devastating tsunami Friday (in Japan) appears to have moved the main island of Japan 8 feet (2.4 meters) and shifted the Earth on its axis. “At this point, we know that one GPS station moved (8 feet), and we have seen a map from GSI (Geospatial Information Authority) in Japan showing the pattern of shift over a large area is consistent with about that much shift of the land mass,” said Kenneth Hudnut, a geophysicist with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Reports from the National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology in Italy estimated the 8.9-magnitude (later upgraded to 9.0) shifted the planet on its axis by nearly 4 inches (10 centimeters). End quote.

The Japanese earthquake that hit that country in March is another example of the shaking of the natural earth in a world that has witnessed earthquakes in divers places over the last few years. The information quoted above regarding the movement of the earth and the shifting of the planet that was caused by the tremendous earthquake of 9.0 magnitude should cause our minds to think of the great earthquake that will occur when Christ sets his feet on the Mount of Olives, which will result in the uplifting of the area where the temple in Jerusalem will be constructed. When we see these natural events that are a harbinger of the Age to Come, the hearts of those who will be blessed to be with Christ and His Bride should be racing with anticipation of that great and mighty day when God’s eternal Kingdom will be established. If an earthquake with a magnitude of 9.0 can move one nation eight feet, how large will the earthquake be that will cause the land mass in the Jerusalem area to be raised over one mile? Luke 21:26-27, “Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.” Let us remain alert to the events of the world and be steadfast in our doctrine and walk and always be willing and able to serve Yahweh with truth and sincerity. B.H.

THE SANCTUARY – KEEPER

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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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NUMBER 1

ON THE VERGE OF GREAT CHANGE

WE see ourselves on the verge of that great change by which the kingdoms of the world are to be abolished, and transferred to a new order of rulers who have been in slow and painful preparation for ages past. Anon we see Christ again in the world, rousing his dead friends from the slumbers, apprising his living friends of his presence, and summoning them all before him for that grand assortment which has been both their hope and fear from the beginning. The judgment past, and the unfit sent back from his presence, we see him take part in the affairs of nations. We see him crush immense armies; we see him send messages to the governments; we see his claims set at naught, and mighty armaments raised to roll back the tide of his power. We behold a time of trouble such as never was. We hear the dreadful shock of war- universal war; we see armies shattered, fleets destroyed, fortresses and cities in ruins, commerce at a stand still. We see the tempest roar with unremitting fury till the whole world is a wreck at the feet of Judah's Lion. Then slowly, calm ensues; the storm abates; the sun shines; order returns; a new government rises out of the universal chaos. The kingdom of God spreads over all; the immortal friends of Christ take power

everywhere in the name of “divine right;” peace overspreads the scene: soldiers disbanded; fortresses dismantled; arsenals emptied; the arts of war suppressed, and mankind set free to worship God under heaven-sent guides and governors, and to live in joyful harmony everywhere, surrounded with plenty, and delivered from disease. “Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will among men.”

...It is no fiction of fancy; it is no product of the imagination. It is the offspring of “*words of truth and soberness.*” It is a sure and certain hope, built upon past and contemporary facts, as deep and solid and irrefutable as the everlasting foundations of the earth. The only uncertain element in the case pertains to our own individualities. Shall we be counted worthy of so great a salvation? Is our attitude towards the Eternal Majesty of the heavens sufficiently acceptable before Him as to ensure for us an entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Are we obedient, loyal, devoted, self-sacrificing, enthusiastic servants of this coming King of kings, and Lord of lords, who is now to us an absent Lord, to whom as stewards we shall give account? Do we show ourselves his friends in carrying his cross and upholding his name and keeping his commandments? Are we sufficiently wise to love him more than the things that we loved in the days of our ignorance? Upon the answers to these questions, which will be infallibly given one day soon, will hang our destiny in this great matter. Suppose the Judge say, “NOT WORTHY OF ME,” what grief, what vexation, what consternation, what unavailing tears of repentance, what horror of soul, what awful desolation will be ours! Our shrieks, our groans, our “weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth” will recoil upon our ruined heads and increase our agony. Better weep now. Let the mind be sobered by the word and prayer. Realize thus what it is that Christ requires of us in all holiness and godly conversation, “*denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.*” Then shall we assure our hearts before him, “*that when he shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming.*”

Robert Roberts

Excerpts from *The Christadelphian*, Sept. 1874, pp. 425, 426

SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you have received this issue of the S.K. but have not yet submitted your \$10 subscription for the 2011 calendar year, please submit as soon as possible. If you have any questions regarding your current subscription status you can contact bro. Bobby Henderson at 501.851.1021 or e-mail at bobdehnd@aol.com

THE KING JAMES VERSION

400 Years

The year 2011 marks the 400th anniversary of the King James Version of the Bible. Thomas Nelson, the world's leading publisher of the (KJV) Bible and the Oxford University Press, launched a 400 day celebration on November 26, 2010 with a website and partnering with the History Channel Club and Salem Communications for promotion of the anniversary.

The King James Version (KJV) was first published on May 5, 1611. It is called the King James Version because its publication was undertaken at the command of the King of England. When King James ascended the throne there were two versions of the Bible in common use. The Bishops Bible used by the clergy, and the Geneva Bible used by the people. At a conference in January, 1604, at Hampton Court Palace it was decided to make a new translation from



William Tyndale

Some 70 years earlier, in 1530, William Tyndale attempted to put everyday English Bibles in everyone's hands with the publication of the "Pentateuch". He was burned at the stake for this effort, because Bible reading by commoners was forbidden by law. Miles Coverdale's 1537 New Testament translation completed Tyndale's work, and the first full Bible printed in English was made. It has been said that approximately 80% of the KJV Old Testament was taken from William Tyndale's work.



Greek and Hebrew manuscripts and ten competing English, Latin and German Bibles. There was a mandate to fifty-four of the best scholars to make the Bible meaningful in English syntax. Forty-seven scholars actually took part in the work. They were divided into six companies, each company dealing with a separate portion of the Bible. The whole was afterwards reviewed in London by a committee appointed from the six companies, and finally by Bishop Bilson of Winchester and Dr. Miles Smith.

Some 70 years earlier, in 1530, William Tyndale attempted to put everyday English Bibles in everyone's

I did not become acquainted with the KJV until 1987, and it was then that I started reading it and became familiar with God's Truth and the covenants of promise. It changed my life. The King James Version is still the most widely used version, and it is the best-selling book in the world. I recommend this version, one reason being it is the only version I am aware of that is not copyrighted. Furthermore, our entire Pioneer works in which the covenants of promise are explained are based upon the KJV.



Miles Coverdale

The Bible conveys the Mind of God and the translators of the KJV believed that they were translating the Divine Revelation of God to mankind. The same cannot be said for our modern day translations and human based versions being touted, such as those promoting gender-friendly, gender neutrality, homosexuality, etc. In 1947, with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, it was confirmed that the manuscripts used by the KJV translators were accurate and authentic with only a miniscule difference with the Old Testament text of these ancient documents. The small variation found did not affect one single point of doctrine. The same confidence can be placed in the New Testament manuscripts used by the KJV translators.

Although we know that there are some translation errors in the King James Version (such as *candle* for *lamp*, *candlestick* for *lampstand*, *church* for *ecclesia*, and *Holy Ghost* for *Holy Spirit*) at least words or phrases that were not in the original manuscripts or texts were placed in *italics* such as found in Hebrews Chapter 9 verse 12 with the words *for us* added. When using the KJV we also have Strong's and Young's Concordances available as meaningful compilations of corresponding words in the original tongues, along with their root and variant meanings to assist in our studies.

I know that some criticize the King James Version by saying words used in it are hard to understand, especially for children. However, words used in computer and phone applications don't seem to present a problem for young people's understanding so I don't think that is a valid critique.

Unfortunate Alternative – The NIV

Today we have many different Bible versions with new versions coming out every year, it seems. The most popular modern day version of the Bible is The New International Version (NIV) which was first published in 1978 by conservative evangelical scholars drawing on Hebrew and Greek manuscripts. The translators of the NIV make it clear in their preface that (particularly in the New Testament) they would first decide what the text should say and secondly

translate it. In many of those decisions and translations their doctrinal bias is apparent. The 1611 Authorized Version has served the Christadelphian community well for many years, and I believe that it is a mistake to let the NIV or most, if not all, of the other translations creep into our public use.

There can be no doubt that the Catholic influence is presented in many modern day translations and this is also shown in passages from the NIV. In reading the NIV, verses have been changed to support the Trinitarian doctrines of apostate Christianity. This is apparent by comparing side by side verses in the AV (KJV) and the NIV. This is laid out for us in the book "*Which Translation*" on pages 77 through 79.

A few examples:

- **on the pre-existence of Christ**, compare John 1:18, John 20:17, and Heb. 1:5. The word "begotten" in the AV has a precise meaning to do with when life begins. In other words, Jesus clearly had a beginning to his life and to his work. Therefore there was a time when Jesus did not exist. The NIV has removed the word 'begotten' in some significant passages of Scripture. The NIV version of John 1:18 is presented in a form which I do not believe any brother could agree to read aloud in the presence of brethren and sisters or enquirers after the Truth. It clearly promotes the apostate doctrine of the Trinity and the pre-existence of Jesus.

John 1:18 – NIV
"No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known."
- In John 20:17 "*ascended*" has become "*returned*", thus implying that Jesus was to go back literally to where he had come from.
- In Hebrews 1:5 the NIV reads "*today I have become your Father.*" These words lack the strength and clarity of the unequivocal AV statement, "*this day have I begotten thee*". The word 'begotten' has also disappeared from John 1:14 and 3:16.
- **On Jesus' nature redefined**, compare Col 1:14, Heb. 2:14, and Heb. 7:26-27. The NIV Colossians 1 reference removes the link between redemption and the blood of Christ. This is a small shift away from a link with the Adamic nature of Jesus during his earthly ministry. The two references in the book of Hebrews show how subtle the shift is in the doctrinal position. The AV Hebrews 2 reference teaches that Jesus had flesh and blood, the same as we have. The NIV avoids such a clear statement, substituting, "*shared in their humanity*" for "*took part of the*

same". This could mean merely that Jesus experienced or understood human suffering in some way. Similarly, in the AV, Hebrews 7 teaches that Jesus's single sacrifice was superior to that of the priests. The priests' sacrifice was for their own sins and then for the sins of the people. Jesus's sacrifice covered both these requirements with a single sacrifice. Jesus was "without sin" (Heb. 4:15), therefore his "sin" was his Adamic nature (2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 4:4). The NIV presents a subtle shift in doctrine; Jesus's sacrifice was solely "for their sin", that is, the people's sins.

- **On the Trinity** compare John 6:69, Heb. 2:16, 1 Tim. 3:16 and Phil. 2:6. The John reference shows that the Sonship of Jesus is marginalized in favour of godliness. Such changes to individual verses may seem minor in isolation, but when the picture is viewed as a whole we can see that the teaching of Scripture, that Jesus is the Son of God, is being eroded in favour of the Trinitarian concept of God the Son. The Timothy reference blurs the clarity of the AV, "God was manifest in the flesh". The NIV, "He appeared in a body", could be interpreted to mean almost anything the reader chooses.
- The Philippians reference is possibly the most blatant change in favour of promoting the doctrine of the Trinity. This passage perhaps demonstrates most clearly why we should not use the NIV as a lead text for ecclesial or public reading. We cannot read around the translation, as we do, for example, when substituting 'spirit' for 'ghost' in the AV.

Philippians 2:6 – NIV
Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

When a Christadelphian brother promotes or reads in public the NIV version I wonder how he reads Phil. 2:6, which says about Jesus, "Who, being in **very nature God**..." The doctrine of the Trinity is a Mystery as presented and preached by the Catholic Church. This takes away from the Bible the important concept of God manifestation, which Christadelphians have believed since the time of Bro. John Thomas and other Christadelphian pioneer writers.

Sometimes we refer to other translations to get a better grasp of the meaning of difficult passages of Scripture, and there is probably nothing wrong with that. However, I think our Christadelphian Community would be much better off using the King James Version (AV) in our Sunday Meetings, Bible study classes, ecclesial functions and our private studies, leaving the other translations for reference only.

George Bernard Shaw, a well-known modern literary critic wrote of the Authorized King James Version the following, *“The translation was extraordinarily well done because to the translators what they were translating was not merely a curious collection of ancient books written by different authors in different stages of culture, but the Word of God divinely revealed through His chosen and expressly inspired scribes. In this conviction they carried out their work with boundless reverence and care and achieved a beautiful artistic result.”*

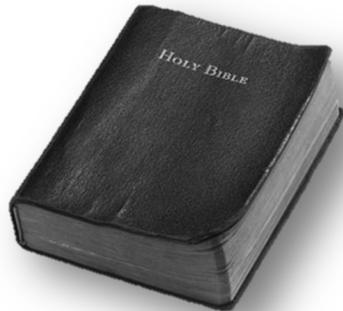
I can say that I truly appreciate the Authorized King James Version!

Pat Hamilton

THE IMMEASURABLE BLESSING THAT IS THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

“The first question ever asked by an Inquisitor of a ‘heretic’ was whether he knew any part of the Bible in his own tongue. It was asked in 1233 of a man who belonged to a dissident religious sect known as the Waldensians, which emphasized Bible study and lay preaching; and it would be asked again of thousands of others before the course of history would render its dark implications null and void”

From the opening prologue of *“Wide as the Waters”*, by Benson Bobrick - An historical overview of the efforts to translate the Holy Scriptures into the English Language.



AS mentioned in the previous article, May 2nd of this year will mark the 400th Anniversary of the King James Bible. This date in 1611 marked a climactic point in the long, dramatic and often tragic effort in the previous 300 years to provide a commonly accepted translation of the Scriptures into the English tongue. And not only to provide an accepted translation into English, but as the climax of a great struggle to allow free access of God’s word to all (even beyond the confines of England and the

English language), free of the prohibitions of such access to the common people by the cruel and evil restrictions of Roman Apostasy – the “little horn” of the 4th Beast of Daniel’s prophecy (Dan. 7). It marked, along with previous efforts, a cataclysmic change in history – tearing down the vicious monopoly of Roman darkness over the minds of the people and opening up opportunity for those to find Truth who were willing to search for it – eventually leading to the revival of the Apostolic Faith as seen in the Christadelphian movement. Though more often misused than heeded to faithfully, it was responsible for the building of empires, and the demise of old ones. It created new religious movements, decreasing the political and religious power of Catholicism. And, it shaped western culture for centuries to come. And we can safely state that its influence on the English speaking people helped lead (through the absolute directive of Deity) to the formation of the modern State of Israel (i.e., the Balfour Declaration in 1917 and final endorsement by a U.S. President in 1948).

As we sit here in this “modern” age, the Bible is so very accessible to us. Most of us have had a Bible in our hands since we first learned to read, and in our homes we probably have several copies, versions/translations, print types, wide margins, reference Bibles, and worn out copies that we keep as extras at our immediate disposal and reference; not to mention the Bible computer programs that many of us use. The price that we pay for a hard copy Bible may range from as little as free, up to around the \$100 mark – far less than we pay for many other common items that sit around our homes, including televisions, computers, radios, etc. We can easily buy one at are local discount retail store, at a common book store, a Bible book store or even off of the internet. Though we live in a society that is ignorant of what the Word of God in fact teaches (whether through false religious conviction or by simple rejection of its validity) the Bible is extremely accessible. Despite its controversial nature, history and its many enemies we can own and use one or many without fear of prosecution, persecution or execution.

Do we really appreciate what we have?

As Believers we are to understand the critical nature of what lies at our fingertips. We accept and comprehend from a point of logic the spirit expressed observation that *“he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”* (Heb. 11:6). We accept the premise that *“faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”* And we embrace the profound fact that *“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. (2nd Tim. 3:16,17)”*

But, do we really appreciate what we have and what has been accomplished in the past to secure its availability, and in more recent history the sacrifices made so as to ensure that we might comprehend its Truth in an environment of

gross darkness? **Do we sense this to the very core of our being?** Can we exclaim to the utmost degree of sincerity the joyous exclamations of the Psalmist who declared, “*O how love I thy law, it is my meditation all the day*” (Psalm 119:97)? These are questions for personal reflection. But before the reader answers too quickly in the affirmative, let the words of God through the prophet Jeremiah work as a source of caution in our self-examination – “*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*” (Jer. 17:9)

Anything that is commonplace or familiar tends to lose our sense of wonderment, joy and excitement – no matter how great or precious its intrinsic value may be. This is a typical behavior of the flesh nature and is demonstrated time and time again, especially in the Bible itself. The Children of Israel bore this lesson for us: Their familiarity with the miracles of Yahweh during the wilderness wanderings; their tiring of the natural bread from heaven; their lack of appreciation for the blessings of God when they later lived comfortably in the Land; the rejection of Christ by his own fellow countrymen of Nazareth, etc., etc.

The 400th Anniversary of the King James Version marks no special weight; it is a number like any other number. But it does give us time to pause and briefly reflect upon the historical and providential circumstances that led to it and to consider our own attitude towards the Bible, no matter what version/translation we may use (though we strongly endorse the thoughts expressed in the previous article). Do we *hunger and thirst* after God’s Word that is freely accessible in our own language with an unquenchable desire, or do we view our reading of its contents as a matter of duty, or do we not give much thought to it one way or another?

A Brief History of the Struggle

As modern day believers, living in a society that allows freedom of worship devoid of persecution or loss of property or life from state run influences, it is hard for us to truly appreciate (though we understand it from a point of historical fact) the absolute control that Roman Catholicism had over the minds and lives of the people in Western Society for the 1,260 year time period – a “wearing out of the saints” that was revealed to the prophet Daniel. Revelation 13 also revealed the unbounded reach of this religious system due to its symbiotic relationship with the Holy Roman Empire (*Beast of the Earth*) – “*he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*”

The power of the pope was absolute, as explicitly claimed by Pope Gregory VII in the eleventh century: “*The pope can be judged by no one; the Roman*



church has never erred and never will err till the end of time; the Roman church was founded by Christ alone; the pope alone can depose and restore bishops; he alone can make new laws, set up new bishoprics, and divide old ones; he alone can translate [transfer] bishops; he alone can call general councils and authorize canon law; he alone can revise his judgments; his legates, even though in inferior orders, have precedence over all bishops; an appeal to the papal courts inhibits judgment by all inferior courts; a duly ordained pope is undoubtedly made a saint by the merits of St. Peter.”

This was the environment that the remnant of true believers were to live under for centuries, and is what the Apocalypse described as “*the patience and the faith of the saints*” Rev. 13:10. That there was always a remnant of true believers there can be no doubt, as there would always exist a witnessing lampstand against theocratic Apostasy and state sponsored blasphemy – Whether it be the non-violent witness of true believers; or the opposition that would arise from both secular and questionable religious influences (the “two witnesses” of Rev. 11:3) that were not appreciative of the stranglehold exercised by the pope and were not opposed to use force against his power when necessary. But such opposition was at a great disadvantage and would not gain real momentum until the time of the Reformation.

The Scriptures were supposedly held up by the “The Church” as the standard of its teachings and actions, but it was not deemed acceptable for layman to be in possession of the Scriptures. The excuse given, as mentioned by Bobrick, was that, “*In Church teaching it was axiomatic that Christ had given the Scriptures to the clergy that they ‘might sweetly minister to the laity and to weaker persons, according to the message of the season, the want of men, and the hunger of their souls.’ But they were not for general consumption.*” But we also understand that knowledge is power, and for common people to have access to the Scriptures would enable them to see the enormity of lies that were being taught them, causing the “Church” to lose the power that it had so carefully gained for itself. We would in fact see this very scenario play out once the Scriptures finally found more general circulation throughout the public starting in the 15th and 16th centuries.

The Church also recognized Tradition as being equal to the authority of the Scriptures. “Tradition” was in reference to the conclusions of Church Councils, pronouncements of the Fathers, decrees of popes, etc. So, if something was not found in the Scriptures, it could be justified by appeal to “Tradition”.

John Wycliffe

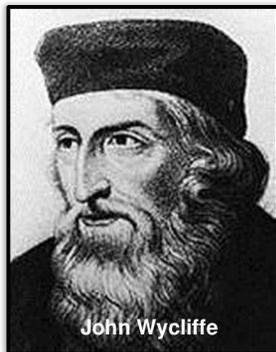
Britain itself was incorporated into the “universal Holy Roman Catholic

Church” by the Synod of Whitby in 644. It would be another 700 years before serious cracks would appear in the Roman monopoly over access to the Scriptures and over religious practice and thought in general. The only available writings of Scripture were found in “Saint” Jerome’s (AD 347-420) Vulgate translation of the Scriptures – a translation that was provided in the common Latin tongue for use of those of the Latin speaking Western portion of the Roman Empire. And again, there was no easy access to these writings by the common people, even if they were able to decipher Latin.

It was from this backdrop of darkness and ignorance that the Englishman Wycliffe (1328–1386) came on the scene. Wycliffe was a teacher, philosopher and lay preacher working at Oxford University. He himself had been ordained for the priesthood, and early on enjoyed a great deal of respect from Church authority, but through his own studies and observations he became a strong critic of many beliefs, practices and the amassed wealth of The Church, and his name would become a source of great irritation and loathing to the Church, even long after his death. We see no evidence that he had a full knowledge of “The Truth”, but his efforts created a turning point in the desire for and availability of the Scriptures, as well as beginning the process that led to full revolt against the power of Rome.

Wycliffe believed that the only source for all authority and truth could only be found in one place – the Bible. It was his conviction that God’s Word should be accessible to read by anyone, in their native tongue. But during this time, the reading of the Bible was rare even among the clergy. It was viewed that it was enough for a priest to know the Ten Commandments, The Lord’s Prayer, the Creed and the “Hail Mary”, along with more familiar stories found in the Scriptures. And as we have already mentioned, due to Church restrictions and practices of reducing the Bible to “pictorial and ceremonial forms of worship” and the fact that the Scriptures were only to be found in the Latin Vulgate – the masses knew virtually nothing. The sermons of the time were mainly based on history, fables and mythology. Bobrick remarks that “Wycliffe faulted the clergy ... for packing their sermons with unscriptural anecdotes and story for entertainment instead of calling the people to reform their lives.” (Not unlike our present time where ignorance of the Bible is fostered by the desire to entertain and be entertained.) **Except for the very few**, on risk of death who had obtained copies of the Word and had engaged in limited efforts at translation, the written Word had no exposure.

Wycliffe, setting out through preaching and tract work to oppose certain Church corruptions, also went about in translating the Scriptures from the Vulgate. By 1380 he had finished a translation into early English, though this



was no easy task. There was no standard English language at this time, as it was made up of various dialects depending on the town and region. Wycliffe’s efforts, taken even further by Tyndale, are credited with helping to standardize and unify the English language.

His efforts against the Church brought criminal charges on him, but due to the politics of the time England had a growing sense of national independence; the state was not comfortable with a foreign influence (Rome) being able to supersede the civil laws of England – therefore, Wycliffe was able to escape much of the persecution that plagued many others like him that came before and after. His followers, who continued to circulate his translation, became known as Lollards (from “lolia” – tares or weeds, in reference to being mingled with the pure grain of truth). They preferred to be called “Christian Brethren” or “true men”. Unfortunately for them, the political landscape swung the wrong direction (being unfairly tied to the growing peasant revolts) and they suffered greatly for their opposition to the Catholic System and for their promotion of Wycliffe’s “unauthorized” version of the Scriptures. *“Thereafter Lollards were at a constant risk of their lives. They met in hidden places, in the deep forests and dells ... in the mountains and moss hags...”*

After the death of Wycliffe, due to the hatred held by the Archbishop of Canterbury (Thomas Arundel) towards the growing spiritual unrest, the number of martyrs who held fast to the Wycliffe translation and his doctrinal opposition to the Church began to grow. But the cat had been let out of the bag so to speak, and there was no turning back the tide of interest in the Bible and the contradictions with Church tradition that it revealed.

Obtaining a Wycliffe manuscript remained a scarce and costly proposition, so there were those of the Lollard sect who would commit large portions to memory, and would be called on to recite the Scriptures at various gatherings. John Foxe, in his Book of Martyrs, recounted that common people would pay whatever they could to obtain the Scriptures in English, *“to taste the sweetness of God’s Holy Word...Some paid more, some less: some gave a load of hay for a few chapters of St. Paul or St. James.”* (Contrast this to what we have already mentioned in regard to how easily the Scriptures can be obtained in our time.) Though there were a few of the openly defiant (and they would pay with their lives), many would read the Scriptures in secret while continuing to attend their local churches.

A Changing World

The fall of Constantinople in 1453 (prophesied in Rev. 9:15-18) not only functioned as judgment upon a third part of Apostate Europe (i.e. the Dragon Power of the East dominated by Eastern Orthodoxy), but led to the availability of early Greek manuscripts of the Scriptures as Greek “Christians” fled the Turkish invasion to western portions of Europe. Such individuals ended up teaching Greek in western European Universities making it possible to get to

the plain meanings of scriptural words and phrases without reliance on Latin versions that had clouded translation efforts.



Gutenberg and his printing press

The learning of the Hebrew language was also becoming more available with the first Hebrew grammar appearing in 1503 and the first Hebrew lexicon in 1506. Tie these developments with one of the most profound technological leaps in history - the invention of the mechanized printing press (1450), coupled with the rise of the Renaissance spirit of learning and investigation - the Catholic system was quickly losing its ability to suppress access to the Scriptures. John Foxe would state, *“God hath opened the press to preach, whose voice the pope is unable to stop with all the puissance of his triple crown.”*

William Tyndale

While Martin Luther (1483-1546) was opposing Catholic interests in Germany and helping to fuel the beginnings of a Protestant Reformation on the European Continent (and himself providing a translation of the Scriptures into German), events were unfolding in England that were to dramatically loosen the bonds of Catholic oppression permanently. The infamous Henry VIII was now reigning in England and he was a fierce supporter of the Pope and the cause of Catholicism, and was intensely opposed to the Protestant efforts of Martin Luther on the continent as well as the rumblings taking place within his own kingdom.

With this backdrop came William Tyndale - the man largely credited for the English Bible that we have today. Tyndale (1494 - 1536) had grown up in a region of England that had been very sympathetic with Lollard views. He himself became extremely proficient in Latin, Greek and Hebrew and consumed the writings of Luther, Melancthon and Zwingli who were prominent in the reformation movement on the European continent. Though ordained to the priesthood in 1521, he chose not to pursue an advanced divinity degree and became a domestic tutor and would preach reformation ideas in the public common places.

Tyndale's outspoken nature garnered the strong support of those impressed with his scriptural knowledge and reforming ideas, but also put him in heated and dangerous opposition to clerical authority. Like Wycliffe, Tyndale ferociously defended the Scriptures as the ultimate authority and felt that the common people needed an accessible translation that was plain to understand. He wrote, *“that it was impossible to establish the lay-people in any truth, except the Scripture were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue, that*

they might see the process, order, and meaning of the text.” This would become his life's work.

But the timing of this work would not be good for Tyndale's personal wellbeing. Opposition to Reformation ideals, as were being spread by Luther, was fervent among those of Henry's court. Henry himself had become involved in written tracts and condemnations on Luther's anti-Catholic teachings. Henry had even promised the pope that he would burn all copies of any “untrue translations” (i.e., the Wycliffe translation in mind). This environment made it virtually impossible for Tyndale to work towards a more complete translation of the Scriptures, so he fled to Germany where the Reformation ideals were not under as much threat.

Tyndale would be the first to offer an English translation from the Greek and Hebrew texts and would be the first to take advantage of the printing press, allowing for a wide distribution of his effort. The first copy of his work (The New Testament) reached England in 1526 and it was immediately embraced by the people and became in high demand, though to the great angst of English authorities, both civil and religious - understanding the threat that this clear and easy to understand translation posed to Catholic Tradition. English shipyards were raided to try to prevent importation, and if copies were found they were burned. *“Between 1526 and 1530 at least eighteen thousand copies of Tyndale's New Testament...were printed, concealed in corn ships and bales of merchandise, and brought into English ports. Many were confiscated; but a substantial number still found their way through clandestine cells of sympathetic reformers into more appreciative hands.”* (Bobrick).

As the English government could not prevent exportation of Tyndale's work they attempted to influence foreign officials, they tried buying copies to be destroyed before they could reach England, and they also sent out secret agents to locate Tyndale which would eventually be his undoing.

In 1530 Tyndale's translation of the Hebrew Pentateuch (Genesis - Deuteronomy) was printed. Each book had its own prologue and title page, allowing them to be sold separately (we would imagine for affordability purposes).

An important distinction to be made

LET IT HERE BE COMPLETELY UNDERSTOOD. As mentioned in the previous article, much of what we now have in our Authorized/King James Version is directly from Tyndale's translation efforts - Over 80% in the N.T and over 70% in the old. The mistake is often made that the English form of grammar, phraseology and even words of Tyndale's time is what influenced his translation - therefore giving rise to the argument that this form of language is “archaic” and not in keeping with the original Greek and Hebrew texts. Actually the opposite is true. Tyndale went to such great effort to remain true to the original texts it was the Hebrew and Greek idioms that either matched or

influenced the sentence structure of the English language of that time. We here quote at length from Benson Bobrick's work to emphasize this important point, especially as we see many contemporary translations introduce very casual forms of speech and sentence structure that in fact does not truly reflect the original forms.

"His fidelity to the original also gave rise to the quintessential "noun + of + noun" construction of English biblical prose. Instead of "Moses' book," we have "the book of Moses"; instead of "a strong man," "a man of strength." This extended to the way superlatives were expressed: instead of "the holiest place" or "the best song," Hebrew had "the holy of holies" and "the song of songs." This imparted to English a certain rhythmic sonority it had not formerly possessed. Indeed, there was something in the pattern that completely captivated the English ear, and directed the language to a form of eloquence that became its paradigm... Tyndale also boldly adopted a number of Hebrew words and compounds, such as "mercy seat," which English has kept, as well as various Hebraic turns of phrase – among them, "to die the death," "the Lord's anointed," "the gate of heaven," "a man after his own heart," "the living God," "sick unto death," "flowing with milk and honey," "to fall by the sword," "as the Lord liveth," "a stranger in a strange land," "to bring the head down to the grave," and "apple of his eye." It is said that he also introduced into English the adjective "beautiful," and was the first to use the name "Jehovah" for the Lord." (p. 119)

There are many more phrases and words of special interest that could be mentioned, but we should add here that Tyndale chose not to use the word "church" in his translations, but rather the word "congregation", understanding that "church" was in reference to a place of worship and had also come to represent "the organized body of the clergy". "Congregation" had been used in the Septuagint and other translation efforts, and it was understood that the original word "ekklesia" was indicative of a "properly constituted assembly" – or we as Christadelphians understand, "called out ones". Unfortunately this was viewed as too extreme of a translation change, as were several other Tyndale-isms, and we see some of these lost in the later transition to the KJV.

During this time, other prominent Protesters were catching the fire from Henry's top counselor and Tyndale's arch rival – Sir Thomas More. One of those who was arrested, and burned at the stake (among many) in 1532 was a man names James Bainham. In his last words before his death he stated, "I came



The death of William Tyndale

hither, good people, accused and condemned for an heretic, Sir Thomas More being my accuser and my judge. And these be the articles that I die for. First, I say it is lawful for every man and woman to have God's book in their mother tongue. Second, that the Bishop of Rome is Antichrist, and that I know of no other keys of heaven's gates but only the preaching of the Law and the Gospel; third, that there is no other purgatory but the purgatory of Christ's blood."

After years of being hunted by church agents and assassins, and moving from town to town, Tyndale was finally captured in 1535 and jailed just outside of Brussels, and the following year strangled and burned at the stake. Before passing out, he cried out, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes."

The tables turn

In a fitting twist of irony, More himself was beheaded in the same year by Henry VIII for not supporting the king's divorce and subsequent remarriage to Anne Boleyn. Boleyn herself had Protestant leanings and was influential in Henry becoming more receptive to Tyndale's translation. She had received a gilded copy of Tyndale's translation of the New Testament in 1534, with her coat of arms imprinted on the title page, and with *Anna Regina Angliae* stamped on the spine.

Henry's perpetual problem of not being able to produce a male heir, and his scandalous attempts at a solution, and the Popes refusal to approve of his attempts through divorce, proved to be an ironic but providential turning point in history and for the acceptance of an English translation of the Bible for common ownership and use as well as the furtherance of the Protester cause in general. Henry, once a vivacious supporter of the Pope had now soured in his views of the papacy due to its unwillingness to support his marriage ambitions. Not due to any religious conversion or noble motivation, Henry began to gravitate towards the Scriptures in an attempt to justify his own position in contrast with Church tradition. As the breach between Henry and Rome grew, with Henry being excommunicated; in a political rather than religious move, in 1534 the Church of England officially separated from the Church of Rome, though Henry himself still held to Catholic doctrines in general. This breach opened the flood gates for more open acceptance of the Scriptures and also of the Protestor movement.

The English authorities had taken an 180^o turn in regard to the openness of the English Bible. There was an exuberance and joy that overtook the land. As one biographer observed, "It was wonderful to see with what joy the book of God was received, not only among the learned sort and those that were noted for lovers of the reformation, but generally all England over among all the vulgar and the common people; with what greediness God's word was read, and what resort to places where the reading of it was. Everybody that could bought the book and busily read it; or got others to read it to them, if they could not themselves; and divers among the elderly learned to read on purpose. And

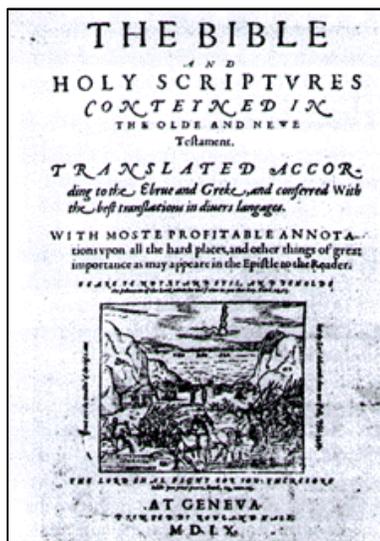
even little boys flocked among the rest to hear portions of the Holy Scriptures read.”

The struggle would continue

In 1539 the “Great Bible” (named because of its size) was made available. Myles Coverdale was responsible for overseeing its compilation – which heavily relied on the work of Tyndale. It would be the prominent version used for the next 30 years.

The struggle for the Bible to break free in a permanent way would linger on for decades to come, while other translations would continue to come off the presses. Queen Mary (“Bloody Mary”) would rise to the English throne after the short reign of Henry’s son, King Edward VI. Hundreds of reformers would be burnt at the stake under her short but brutal reign in her attempts to pull England back into the Catholic realm. Translators such as John Rogers and Thomas Cranmer would die due to their interest in providing the scriptures in the English language.

Geneva, Switzerland became a safe haven for many of the reformers and it was from there that the Geneva Bible was first published in 1560. It was the



first to provide verse numbers to accompany each chapter, as well as providing marginal notes and extensive references making it known as the first English study Bible. It retained 90% of Tyndale’s translation work and would be the most popular Bible for the next 100 years, even more popular than the King James Version in its early years of publication. It was truly viewed as the “Bible of the Protestant Reformation” with marginal notes identifying the Pope and Catholic System as “anti-christ”.

With the ascension of Queen Elizabeth to the throne, a more tolerant environment prevailed regarding the Protestant spirit as well as the publishing of the Geneva Bible – though authorities were not comfortable with its zealous and what would be viewed as “extreme” opposition to many of the Catholic doctrines and ideals that carried over into the Church of England. When King James I rose to power, he was approached by Church of England leaders who desired a less “controversial” translation that would be free of the explicit, Reformer minded marginal notes (as found in the Geneva) and that would provide references for word clarification and cross referencing only. This is what would become known as the King James Version.

Many more translations would follow the King James Version, with an ever increasing array of choices and styles within just the past few decades. But it should be perceived that up to the time of the KJV, what an immense struggle was fought to secure what is so easily procured today! One Christadelphian booklet called “The Cry of the Prophets” (published by the *Bible Magazine*) asks and answers the question: “How much did our Bible cost? The price we may pay for a copy today in no way reflects the priceless heritage of the English Bible!”

Conclusion

So we ask again: How much do we appreciate the immeasurable blessing that is the Holy Scriptures? How much would we be willing to pay for it, not only monetarily but in our desire, our time, our lives? Would we suffer persecution or die for the privilege of having it in our possession or for its promotion? What would we be willing to endure for The Truth that is found in its pages; The Truth that many readers of its contents do not comprehend? Many throughout the centuries have been denied access to the glorious light that shines from it. **Many died fighting for it, without having a true understanding of the Abrahamic Hope that it contained.** We now have it within arm’s reach at any time, if not constantly under the keystrokes of our fingertips at our computer keyboard. What do we do with the message it contains, considering the great price paid by our own Pioneering brethren to unlock the mist and superstition that surrounded the Scriptures – though long freed from Catholic suppression?

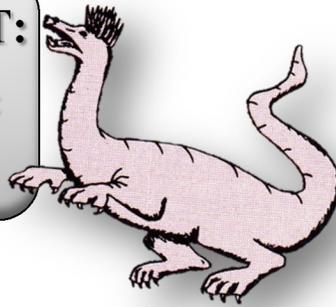
How do we apply *this pearl of great price*? Is it truly the center of our lives? “Therefore shall ye lay up these My words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up” (Deut. 11:18,19).

Let us truly appreciate what we have, and the great providence of the Divine Hand to provide us with His Inspired Word to:

- *make us wise unto salvation* (2nd Peter 3:2; Rom. 1:16; 15:4)
- *to provide us with doctrine* (Ephesians 5:17)
- *for reproof* - proof or evidence (Heb. 11:1; Rom. 10:17; 1st Thess. 5:21)
- *for correction* – According to Thayer’s this indicates *restoration to an upright state* (Rom. 5:12; Eph. 2:1,12; Prov. 14:12; Heb. 4:12)
- *for instruction in righteousness* (Ps. 19:7; Ps. 119:105,144; 1st Cor. 15:34)
- *that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

THE FOURTH BEAST: ITS DEVELOPMENT & DESTRUCTION

The Fundamentals of Prophecy



THE seventh chapter of Daniel begins with the account of Daniel's visions and revelations from Yahweh, and these continue through the rest of the book. The prophet, through a dream, sees a vision of four beasts arising out of the Mediterranean Sea. They are a lion, a bear, a leopard and a fourth unnamed beast. These beasts appear individually, with each conquering the one that came before, while absorbing aspects of the beast it has just overpowered. The Fourth Beast is unique from the rest of the beasts, and yet it has assimilated attributes from all the others. This Beast has ten horns, with three of these horns ultimately being plucked up and replaced by a dominating Little Horn. This Little Horn has the eyes of a man and a mouth that speaks great things.

The vision abruptly changes, and thrones of judgment are set up to judge the nations. Divine judges sit upon these thrones, directed by one who is called the Ancient of Days. There are those that stand ready to execute the will of these judges, illustrated by a fiery stream that issues forth. The Fourth Beast is totally destroyed by this fiery stream, while the lives of the other beasts are prolonged. A new vision is then revealed to Daniel. He sees one who is like unto the Son of Man being presented to the Ancient of Days by the angelic host. The Son is given power over the nations to determine their fate and to establish the Kingdom of God.

The vision ends, and Daniel is left confused and greatly troubled. He approaches one of the angels that he saw standing by and questions the angel, for Daniel desired a clearer understanding of the Fourth Beast and the significance of its ten horns and the Little Horn power. Daniel sees that the Little Horn makes war with the saints and for a time has the upper hand until the Ancient of Days appears, judgments are issued, and the Redeemed possess the kingdom. The prophet, in the latter verses of chapter 7, is given specific answers, but a full understanding will come only after he has contemplated the matter in his heart.

With this summary of the chapter, let us now review it in detail. The timeframe of the vision was the first year of Belshazzar's reign over Babylon and approximately 19 years before his overthrow by Darius and Cyrus. Babylon's seventy years of rule prophesied by Jeremiah (25:11-12; 29:10) culminated with Belshazzar's reign, marking the close of Nebuchadnezzar's dynasty. Daniel would have been quite familiar with the seventy year period allotted to Babylon and no doubt anxiously looked forward to the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the conquest of the nation by its successor.

We read in Daniel 7:2, "...the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea." The winds refer to a mobilized army, and the four winds are four world powers vying for domination. Brother John Thomas writes in the *Exposition of Daniel*, "The winds were not all blowing at once, but successively and at long intervals, each tempest resulting in a change in the constitution and government of the kingdom of Babylon, as represented by beasts." The four beasts, therefore, represent successive phases through which the Kingdom of Men was to pass, caused by war in the Mediterranean countries. The four beasts correspond to the four metals of Nebuchadnezzar's image, denoting the same powers: **Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.**

The Lion Phase

Let's consider the Lion phase of the Kingdom of Men. Jeremiah reveals that the powers of Nineveh and Babylon, the Chaldean empires, were represented by lions (Jeremiah 4:6-7). The prophet also records, "*Israel is a scattered sheep; the Lions have driven them away: first the king of Assyria had devoured him; and last this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had broken his bones*" (Jer. 50:17). The Assyrian power was shown to Daniel as a lion with the wings of an eagle. Its outstretched wings refer to the scope and vastness of the empire at its peak. God punished the nation of Assyria, under Essarhaddon, for its persecution and scattering of the ten tribes (Israel) by transferring control to Babylon. This event is portrayed as the eagle's wings being plucked, and this was by the Merodach-Baladan dynasty.



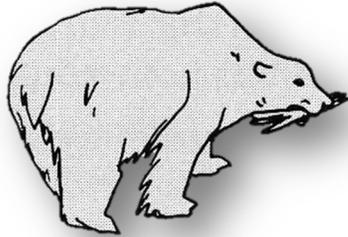
The lion was then caused to stand upright like a man and was given a man's heart. In the *Exposition of Daniel*, Brother Thomas points out that, "... the Lion-Man became the symbol of the kingdom of Babylon so



long as the government continued in the family of Nebuchadnezzar; which with all its faults was more human than that which it succeeded.” This heart of man is illustrated as well by Nebuchadnezzar’s disposition towards God, evident in Daniel 4:34, “...I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured Him...”

The Bear Phase

The dynasty of the Bear overthrows the Lion dominion, and the Medo-Persians under Darius take control of the Babylonian kingdom in 542 B.C. Darius and Cyrus were allies in the conquest of the Chaldean kingdom. The ruthlessness of the conquerors is related in the 13th chapter of Isaiah, verses 16-18. The Medo-Persians, like the bear, were crafty and greedy for prey, expanding their territory well beyond that of the Babylonians. Their dominion extended from India to Ethiopia, over a hundred and twenty-seven provinces.



The Bear raised itself on one side, signifying that one side was higher than the other. This referred to the Persians ascension to power under Cyrus, approximately two years after Darius. The Ram of Daniel 8, with horns of different heights, denotes as well the Persians rise to power after the Medes. The Bear also had *“three ribs in the mouth of it, between the teeth of it.”* There

were three powerful contenders for control in the Medo-Persian Empire when Cyrus came to the throne; they were the strong Babylonia, the wealthy Lydia, and the culturally significant Egypt. Their failure to work in concert gave Cyrus the advantage; he dominated each of these three powers until they were merely bones between the teeth of the Medo-Persian bear. The LORD’s angelic host who are orchestrating His plan instruct the Bear to arise and devour much flesh. The influence of the Medo-Persian dynasty was evident from Greece to India and south to Egypt.

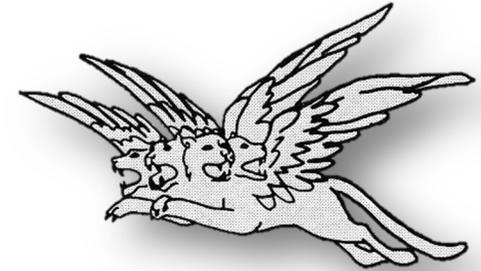
The Persians represented themselves in Daniel’s time by the symbol of the ram, whereas Yahweh uses the designation of the bear in the Image of the latter-days. The latter-day representation of Persia is the bear, and interestingly a close ally, Russia, has been known throughout history as the bear. Ezekiel 38:5 tells us that Persia (Iran) will indeed be a constituent of Gog’s (Russia’s) confederacy that will soon invade the Middle East.

The Leopard Phase

A four-headed leopard with four wings of a fowl follows the Bear. The Leopard corresponds to the brazen part of Nebuchadnezzar’s Image as well as the Goat in Daniel 8, with four horns pointing to the four winds. The Grecian empire succeeded the Medo-Persian, so the Leopard is therefore representative of Alexander the Great’s dominion and those of his four successors. Brother

Thomas in *Elpis Israel* relates that *“the Leopard-dominion was more extended than its predecessors; for it embraced all that belonged to the Lion and the Bear, with the addition of that which had been established by Philip of Macedon, the predecessor of Alexander the Great. It bore rule over all the earth, or Image-territory, thus far subjugated to civilization, such as it was at that era of the world.”*

The four wings of the Leopard denoted the location of the Macedonian heads in relation to the Holy Land. An extended period of war followed Alexander’s death, leading to the establishment by Alexander’s main generals of four great kingdoms or heads of the Grecian Leopard. The first head was the kingdom of the South, referred to in Daniel 11, incorporating Egypt, Libya, Arabia, Coele-Syria, and Palestine, ruled by the Ptolemies. The second head was the kingdom of the North-West, which involved such areas as Thrace and Bithynia, Thracio-Macedonian, controlled by Lysimachus.



The third head, noted the King of the North in Daniel 11, was the North-East Kingdom. It related to the remainder of Asia, beyond the Euphrates to the Indus River. This was the Assyro-Macedonian Kingdom established by the Seleucidae. We will see the King of the North, today Russia and her allies, enter upon the global stage once again in these last days (Daniel 11:40-45) to enact and experience the prophecies of Ezekiel 38 and 39. The fourth head was the Kingdom of the West, which included Macedonia and Greece, controlled by Cassander. There were only two of the four heads of the Leopard and the four horns of the Goat. Brother Thomas writes in the *Exposition of Daniel*, *“The reason of this is, that the prophecy was not delivered to prefigure the history of the Gentiles; but to foreshow how the international policy of some of them in its bearing upon Judah, the Holy Land, and the saints, would at length create such a situation of affairs in the end, as would favor the execution of the divine purpose of demolishing the powers of the Gentiles in the establishing of the Kingdom of God.”*

Alexander’s dominion corresponds with the belly of Nebuchadnezzar’s Image and the two heads with the two brazen thighs, connected to the iron Roman leg. The brass and iron appendages of the Image from the thigh to the ankle represent the fourth manifestation in its Greco-Roman form. The two heads and two thighs stand for the Kingdom of the South and the Kingdom of the North. These, in conjunction with the Little Horn power of the Goat or the eastern aspect of the Fourth Beast, are the focus of Daniel 11:5-45.

The Fourth Beast

The origin of the Fourth Beast is the Mediterranean area, like the other beasts. Daniel, in chapter 7, describes this unique Beast as dreadful, terrible, and exceedingly strong, with great iron teeth. It is characterized by an immense cruelty, extraordinary power, fierce appearance, and incomparable avarice, more diverse from the beasts that preceded it. This Fourth Beast is a symbol for political and ecclesiastical Rome. It incorporates all the terrifying attributes of

the previous beasts (as evidenced by Revelation 13:1-2) and adds to their fierceness. The Fourth Beast corresponds with the iron legs and feet and toes of iron and clay as portrayed in Nebuchadnezzar's Image.

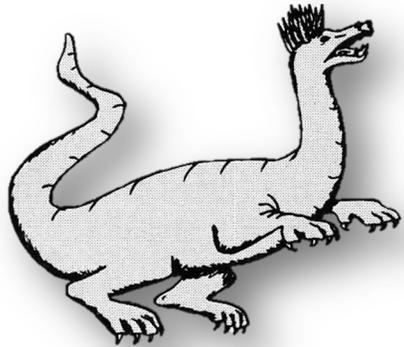
The adjectives Daniel used to describe the Fourth Beast are quite significant. The term *dreadful*, for example, is "dechal" in the Chaldee language, meaning "to crawl." This is reflective of the crocodile, described by Isaiah in chapter 27:1 as the

"*dragon of the sea.*" Dragon refers to the crocodile and the city denotes the Nile. The dragon symbol is also found in the Apocalypse, chapters 12 and 13. The military power of Rome is typified by the dragon, and from the time of Constantine forward, Constantinople became its military center of power.

Terrible means strong-joined, burly, and mighty (Dan. 2:31), while the *strong exceedingly* associates the Fourth Beast with the iron of the Image. Daniel 2:40 speaks of this same empire that would be "*strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.*" This is the Roman Empire; its ruler wore a crown of iron and its conquered multitudes experienced an iron yoke.

The great iron teeth also connect the Fourth Beast with the fourth metal of the Image of Daniel 2. The prophet later describes the Beast as having nails of brass. Thus the iron and brass of the Beast relate it to the band of iron and brass of Nebuchadnezzar's dream recorded in Daniel 4:13-15.

The voracious Fourth Beast, according to the prophet, "*devoured and brake in pieces.*" This is a description of Rome's appetite for conquest and drive to expand its territories, leaving its victims helpless and shattered. Other than the Eastern part of Persia, the dominions of the three previous empires were ultimately brought under Rome's rule. The next statement in Daniel 7:7, "*and stamped the residue with the feet of it*", seems to imply a lapse of time, after



which the Fourth Beast will stamp the residue of what was left of the previous beasts. Since Persia was not earlier conquered, the phrase signifies a later period when Persia will be dominated by the Fourth Beast. The Beast in Revelation 13:2 has "the feet of a bear", highlighting the fact that it will be the Russian bear that will be the engine of the Fourth Beast in Persia to satisfy Daniel's prophecy (Ezekiel 38:5,7).

The Fourth Beast is said to have ten horns, which connects it with the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's Image, reflecting the divided nature of the Roman Empire. As Daniel considered the meaning of the ten horns, an eleventh, a "Little Horn", came up among them. Its significance grew, and it subdued three of the ten, including their territories in its own dominion. This conquest made it imperial, so it was an empership among the seven kingdoms, the eighth power. It was a unique entity in that it had the eyes and mouth of a man, associating it with ecclesiastical power.



It denoted the Roman Catholic System.

The Roman Empire was initially divided into East and West by Constantine in 330AD, as portrayed in the legs of the Image. He set-up the military and civil arm of Rome in Constantinople and the Church headquarters continued in Rome. The Eastern church and Western church split in the 11th



Constantine

century, resulting in the Greek and Roman churches, the brass and iron of Daniel 4:15 and 7:19. The Western portion of the Roman Empire suffered the impact of the invading hordes, and these barbaric powers established themselves as the ten horns or kingdoms of Western Europe. The Goths conquered Rome, and the control of the Bishop of Rome, the Pope, was greatly threatened.

The Pope sought the help of Justinian, the Emperor in Constantinople. Justinian defeated the Goths, and in 533 AD declared to Bishop of Rome to be the Universal Bishop. This continued support



Justinian

caused the papacy to flourish, and Gregory 1 rose to power in 590 AD, resulting in Western Europe recognizing the Pope as the sole head of the Church. Emperor Phocas of Constantinople confirmed Justinian's decree (608-610), making the Pope the head of all the churches. Constantinople's power waned over time and the Pope turned to the Franks under Pepin for help. Pepin conquered the three Kingdoms of Italy: the Exarchate of Ravenna, the Lombard Kingdom, and the State of Rome. This was confirmed by Pepin's son, Charlemagne, so that these three horns had been "plucked up by the roots", giving the papacy political and temporal power.



Charlemagne

The Holy Roman Empire was established under Charlemagne in 800 AD; this was the Beast of the Earth, the two-horned beast that spake as a dragon in Revelation 13: 11. The ecclesiastical power was manifested in the Pope, and the military and political in the Emperor. Papal power, under Charlemagne, was expanded in such acts as his uprooting of three of the primary, independent horns or kingdoms: the Heruli, the Ostrogoths, and the Vandals. This "Little Horn" which grew to full stature under Charlemagne had eyes that covered the earth, striving to spread its influence as at this very day. Its mouth spoke and does speak "great things" or blasphemies against the Deity (Rev. 13: 5-6). The day of Yahweh is fast approaching when these eyes will be

blinded and the tongue of the wicked will be silenced (Isa. 42:13).

The "Ancient of Days" - עֵתִיק יוֹמִין

Daniel 7:9 introduces the Ancient of Days, who is said to sit, and one like unto the Son of Man is brought to Him, after which the Son of Man is said to come. Christ, of course, had not come in the flesh at the time the prophecy was delivered to Daniel. Brother Thomas in the *Exposition of Daniel* explains that the Son of Man "has since been born, or manifested, and gone into a far country, where the manifested Son has appeared in the presence of the Ancient of Days, or the Father, for the purpose of receiving from him 'dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages, should serve him; and all rulers obey him'" (Dan. 7:13-14,27; Luke 19:12,15).

The Ancient of Days in Daniel 7 is a representation of God and Christ through the principle of God manifestation. It can also encompass the Redeemed. The Father entrusts his authority to the Son and soon the Ancient of

Days (Christ) will return to seize power and authority to take the dominion, glory, and kingdom, which has been promised to him. Christ as the Ancient of Days will sit in Jerusalem judging the nations (Rev. 14:14-16; Joel 3:11-16; Micah 4:3; Ezek. 38:18-23). After the Lord's destruction of the Gogian host, there will be a quiet period during which the nations will receive an ultimatum to submit to the Righteous King (Isa. 14:32; Psa. 10:10-12).

The recorded description of the Ancient of Days refers to His garment, which was white as snow and His hair like pure wool with His throne like a fiery flame and His wheels as burning fire. Compare this to the parallel vision of the Son of Man in the Apocalypse, chapter 1:12-18. The snow white garment and the hair like pure wool characterizes His righteousness, reflecting our need as covenanted to maintain righteousness and to keep our garments unspotted from the world (Rev. 3:4-5,14-18; Rom. 13:14; Gal. 3:26-28; James 1:27; Isa. 61:10) that we might ultimately put on the garment of immortality (2nd Cor. 5:1-3; Zech.3:4). The fiery flame refers to the Spirit's consuming power which shall soon be evident as the Lord executes Yahweh's judgments in the earth (Psa. 149:5-9; Isa. 30:27-28). The wheels of fire signify the activity of judgment that will be leveled against the nations (Rev. 4:5; Isa. 9:7). See the prophet Ezekiel's description of the Cherubim (a symbol for the Redeemed) in chapters 1 and 10.

The fiery stream of judgment will issue from the Righteous Judge (Psa. 104:4; Psa. 50:1-3), and the "ten thousand times ten thousand" (the Redeemed) stood ready to testify against their wicked persecutors. The books of record concerning the nations are opened. The notable horn, the papal system, and all the nations that had associated therewith will be judged. Daniel sees the Fourth Beast slain and his body consumed by the burning flame. The Fourth Beast, with its political and ecclesiastical aspects fully developed at the return of Christ, will correspond with the Western and Eastern legs and feet of Nebuchadnezzar's Image. The Russian-Catholic alliance, the Fourth Beast, will be destroyed, but the nations that had been subject to it will experience an extended life and liberation and will be invited to serve Christ (Isa. 60:12). The Lord's rule will spread throughout the earth, as denoted by the Stone that strikes the Image, grinds to powder, and then grows into a great mountain (Dan. 2:34-36). The "season and time" of Daniel 7:12 clearly reveals that the Kingdom of God on earth will be 1000 years (two times of 360 years each plus a set time or gestation period of 280 years), at which time it shall be delivered up to the Deity (1st Cor. 15:24-28).

In verses 13 and 14 of Daniel 7, we have a depiction of Christ's ascension into heaven (1st Pet. 3:21-22; Acts 1:9-11), the cloud received him, and Christ is brought before the Ancient of Days, Yahweh in this case, upon His throne. Dominion was given unto Christ "and glory, and the kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him." It would be an everlasting dominion and a Kingdom that would never be destroyed (Dan. 2:44; Rev. 11:15; Psa. 145:13).

The Prophecy Explained to Daniel

The prophet was puzzled by what he saw and was greatly distressed because he couldn't understand what he had seen. He approached one of the angels that stood by, probably there as an agent to share the vision, and asked him the "Truth" or meaning of the vision. Daniel's desire to serve the Lord completely and to understand Yahweh's every word was evident in his emotional response. The same was true of other faithful servants of Yahweh, such as the apostle John in Revelation 5:4, "And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon." This should be our disposition, intently focused on the things of the Spirit and desirous of understanding and following the Deity's every word (2nd Sam. 22:31; Psa. 119:104-106, 160).

In Daniel 7:13-14, the angel gives the prophet an explanation of who the four beasts represent, four kings or dynasties specifically related to God's purpose in the earth. These four kingdoms are collectively one kingdom, the kingdom of men or the kingdom of sin, and it shall be taken by the Lord Jesus Christ and the Saints of the Most High, the Redeemed. Daniel's desire to understand isn't satisfied with this brief explanation, and he particularly seeks more information about the Fourth Beast in Daniel 7:19-22.

The Fourth Beast, diverse from all the others, dreadful with iron teeth and nails of brass, left such a profound impact on the prophet's mind that he had to know more. The information already revealed to Daniel is reiterated in Daniel 7:19-22. The Fourth Beast, as Daniel views it, is soon to be subjected to Yahweh's judgment, implying a reappearance of the beast as it had previously existed--political and military power in league with religion. The Papacy has spread its influence throughout Europe and rapidly the Western (Roman Catholic) and Eastern (Russian Orthodox) churches are coming back together. Russia is more and more asserting itself on the world stage and soon will say, "I will go up to the land of unwalled villages...to them that are at rest, that dwell safely...to take a spoil and to take a prey..." (Ezekiel 38:9-12).



The Catholic System, the Little Horn "whose look was more stout than his fellows" became extremely powerful over time, with the Pope claiming to be God upon earth and saying he was infallible (2nd Thess. 2:3-10). This "same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them..." The saints in this context are the believers who the beast had caused to suffer. Brother Thomas writes in *Elpis Israel*, that Daniel "saw a revelation in human affairs that completely reversed everything that had previously existed. Instead of the 'saints' being worn out any longer, he saw the power of judgment given to them to take away the dominion of the Little Horn (Dan. 7:21-22), to slay the beast,

and to destroy his body with the burning flame, so that nothing represented by the symbol should be left."

The angel, while repeating much of what was previously said of the Fourth Beast, gives additional and more specific information about the Beast in Daniel 7:23-27, specifically as to its future manifestation. He tells the prophet that the Fourth Beast will be the fourth kingdom upon earth and that it will be quite different from the other kingdoms. It is a confederacy of nations portrayed by the ten horns. The Roman Empire, at its earlier demise, was divided among ten nations, which are reflective of the powers of Europe divided. Politically, Rome was utterly defunct. The power that arises out of this is the Holy Roman Empire. The horns in the Revelation, signify two states: in the first instance as being subject to the crowned heads, which were the different types of government that ruled over pagan Rome. Later, the horns or powers are shown as crowned or exercising independent rule (Rev. 12:3; 13:1). The first symbol is all nations dominated by a united European empire; the second symbol is the European nations no longer dominated by political Rome but tied together by religion, as it will be at the return of Christ.



Catholicism has taken upon itself the authority to "change times and laws," meaning to try to change the course of history, which is the Deity's right alone. For a period of time, the Little Horn prevailed against the saints, the faithful. This extended for "a time and times and the dividing of time" or 1260 years. There were a number of Papal decrees that advanced the power and control of the Papacy. Note specifically that of Justinian, the Emperor of Constantinople, in 529-533 AD, proclaiming the bishop of Rome as the Universal Bishop (Pope). The Catholic power 1260 years later, 1789-1793, was curtailed by the National Assembly of Revolutionary France. Phocas' decree of 608-610 AD made the Pope the head of all the churches, but 1260 years later in 1868-1870, Pope Pius lost temporal power at the hands of Garibaldi.

Judgment, Daniel 7:26 tells us, is soon to come to pass, and the dominion of the Harlot and her suitors will soon be taken away; it will be consumed and destroyed unto the end. This phrase, "unto the end," denotes the time from 1870 to Christ's return and the Gogian (Russia and her allies) events recorded by the prophet Ezekiel in chapters 38 and 39. Daniel 7:27 is a fitting summary to the chapter, as the Fourth Beast power relinquishes all to the Multitudinous Christ. "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the People of the saints of the Most High, Whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

Sid Strickland

“ETREMISM”

Editorial Comment

THE following information was extracted from the Wikipedia website. The underline highlights are provided by the author of this Sanctuary Keeper article.

Extremism is a term used to describe the actions or ideologies of individuals or groups outside the perceived political center of a society; or otherwise claimed to violate common moral standards. In different countries at different times were many different definitions of "extremism". Dr. Peter T. Coleman and Dr. Andrea Bartoli give these short observations of definitions:

“Extremism is a complex phenomenon, although its complexity is often hard to see. Most simply, it can be defined as activities (beliefs, attitudes, feelings, actions, strategies) of a character far removed from the ordinary. In conflict settings it manifests as a severe form of conflict engagement. However, the labeling of activities, people, and groups as “extremist”, and the defining of what is “ordinary” in any setting is always a subjective and political matter. Thus, we suggest that any discussion of extremism be mindful of the following:

- Typically, the same extremist act will be viewed by some as just and moral (such as pro-social “freedom fighting”), and by others as unjust and immoral (antisocial “terrorism”) depending on the observer’s values, politics, moral scope, and the nature of their relationship with the actor.
- In addition, one’s sense of the moral or immoral nature of a given act of extremism may change as conditions (leadership, world opinion, crises, historical accounts, etc.) change. Thus, the current and historical context of extremist acts shapes our view of them.
- Ultimately, the core problem that extremism presents in situations of protracted conflict is less the severity of the activities (although violence, trauma, and escalation are obvious concerns) but more so the closed, fixed, and intolerant nature of extremist attitudes, and their subsequent imperviousness to change.”

Using these definitions and applying them to the Biblical personalities, I think that there are several godly individuals that those around them would call extremists. Of course, the greatest example of this statement is Christ himself. Christ actions were definitely outside the perceived political center of a society. His activities, beliefs, attitudes, feelings, actions, strategies of His character were far removed from the ordinary. His beliefs were fixed and He was intolerant of many things and He did not try to change God’s Plan and Purpose.

Therefore, according to the definitions above, He would be a classic extremist. He always did His Father’s will regardless of the suffering that would cause Him. Other godly individuals that I can think of that would also be classified as extremists, per the above definitions, would be the apostle Paul, Joseph, Daniel and many others.

Does the Bible address this subject of extremism? I think it not only addresses this subject but expects God’s children to act as extremists as that word is defined by humanity. Please consider these verses.

- **1st Corinthians 10:31** – *Do all to the glory of God.*
- **Mark 12:30** - *And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.*
- **1st Chronicles 16:15** - *Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations;*
- **1st Corinthians 15:58** - *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*
- **Psalms 69:9/John 2:17** – *The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.*

Our character, like our Master’s, should be far removed from the ordinary. We should be intolerant of things that oppose God’s Truth. Our lives should always be outside the perceived political center of any society. We cannot be subject to the winds of change in regard to false doctrines and immoral activities that God condemns. These actions will make us extremists in the eyes of the world. The one Truth, in and of itself, would also fall under the definitions above. Were the children of Israel extremists when they killed every man, woman and child of the Canaanite nations that were occupying the land that God had given them? Was Christ an extremist when he cast out the money changers from God’s dwelling place? These individuals were doing the will of Yahweh.

We could look at this situation in regard to the Father. Was He an extremist when He caused His judgments to fall on the Gentile/heathen nations and also on His chosen nation of Israel? Or was He just and righteous in destroying these individuals who did not choose to follow His will? Are we extremists, in the eyes of the world, when our stand on conscientious objection is put to the test?

Any perceived problems of extremism within the Christadelphian Body are usually not considered an issue when our basic beliefs are contrasted with those of the other religions in the world. In this author’s opinion, this charge of extremism arises when there are differences of views within the Body. This will be especially regarding issues of fellowship and prophecy! Each brother/sister believes that they are in the right. We would do good to remember the words of one of the definitions above - The labeling of activities, people, and groups as “extremist”, and the defining of what is “ordinary” in any

setting is always a subjective and political matter. In my mind, the only cure for the subjective aspect of this issue is to compare all things to the Word of God. In the arena of fellowship, there are definitive actions that are detailed in God's Word regarding those who we are to fellowship around the Table of the Lord and those who we are not to fellowship around the Lord's Table. There are also many directives regarding those individuals who we associate with and befriend in the world. In the arena of prophecy, there are many, many differences of opinion on latter day events and even events that have already been historically fulfilled. Should this label of "extremist" be applied to either side? The prophetic differences between brethren should always be laid side by side with the inspired Word and determination should be made of the truth of the matter.

If the actions of the brotherhood or an individual brother/sister are in accordance with the commandments of God, then those actions should not be considered as extreme as that definition is used in today's vernacular. If we take that approach and do not label the actions of our brethren as extreme unless they are in opposition to the Word of God, then the only other aspect in one's life that we could label as extreme is that of one's motives and objectives that lie behind our actions. Since we cannot judge one's motives then that aspect of our relationships should not be labeled as extreme either.

All of us fall short of the glory of God and we do not always live up to our high and holy calling. If a brother sins against another or against God, then should we label that brother as an *extremist*? If one uses the aspect of sinning as the foundation for the label of *extremist*, then we are all extremists. If one has different prophetic views than another, does that make either side an *extremist*? This *extremist* label may be used against the brother that is more vocal or more consistent in their proclamations of their beliefs. The *extremist* label is used in the matter of fellowship when one believes that there are certain commandments that must be followed, which may include exclusion at some time in the process, and others do not place as much emphasis on these same matters. Both sides will often claim the other is acting in an extreme manner. However, all actions must be contrasted with what God requires of us. If any individual is following the commandments of God, regardless of how unpopular that may be, then they are definitely not acting in an extreme manner. If a brother/sister are not following the commandments of God, if they are teaching false doctrines or if they are acting in an immoral manner that has been condemned by God, then they are the "extremists". The individuals who are acting in the manner just described are those who are in opposition to the expected behavior that God has required.

Of course, in all matters, we must be about our Father's will. All of our actions must be completed with the character and attitude of Christ as our example. Are we following the example of Christ by labeling some as extremists when they may in reality be following the commandments of Yahweh? We should always ask ourselves – Is it the actions of these

individuals that we think are extreme or is it their attitude? If we can use the definitions of extremism that have been manufactured by humanity against our brethren, we should remember that the brotherhood has specific responsibilities to God and towards our brethren in regard to these perceived extreme actions. This is a statement that each of God's children must continue to think about and let the Word of God provide us direction and guidance in order to help those who we classify as "extremists". Are these brethren "extremists" in the eyes of Yahweh or in the eyes of mankind?

All of us can assuredly admit that we must keep our lives in balance and be in tune with the Word of God. We cannot over emphasize one aspect of the Truth and ignore others. But, of course, all of us will do this to some degree and at some time in our spiritual probation. We cannot preach the prophetic picture and leave out doctrine and walk. Nor, can we always preach walk and doctrine and leave out the prophetic picture. We cannot love our neighbor to the exclusion of loving God first. We cannot insist on loving our brother in a "phileo" aspect and ignore the "agape" aspect of the love that is required from us. We cannot tolerate false doctrine or immorality and ignore the commandments to discern good and evil. We must remain separate from all that is opposed to the will of God. If any brother or sister are doing any of these things noted above, then they are not in total obedience to the commandments of God and may be labeled as an extremist as defined above. But, again, this whole matter must be put alongside the Word of God and determination made that a brother is acting outside the entire counsel of Yahweh. If they are, then it should be our responsibility to help that brother obtain a more balanced way of life.

Let us remain steadfast, always striving to do the will of our heavenly Father and develop the mind of Christ. Let us also refrain from using the label of "extremist". The brother or sister that you are calling an extremist may actually be following the commandments of the Lord that you are not willing to follow.

B. Henderson

In this spiritual warfare, whose weapons are neither lead, nor steel but more effective than either for putting to flight the alien, there are neither truce, armistice, neutrality, nor peace. He that is not with us is against us; and he that gathereth not with us scattereth abroad...I, for one, know no man in this warfare as a brother and a friend who is neutral or not gathering. A man who is neutral stands by with arms folded and sees the enemy crushing me to death! He believes in the cause I am fighting for, but he calmly views my destruction without any sign of help. Is such a man my friend and brother? Is he not rather a sympathizer with the enemy? If he helped me, we might prove too strong for the foe; the enemy, knowing this, cannot look upon neutrals in any other light than as his friends. And this is just where Christ puts all neutrals in the good fight of faith. – John Thomas

THE RETURN OF CHRIST

Fundamental Considerations

“Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead” (Acts 17:31).

It is our fundamental belief that Christ is now in heaven at the right hand of the Father. We also believe that if Acts 17:31 is to be fulfilled, it will require a literal and bodily return of Christ to the earth.

Within the New Testament is found numerous prophecies of the return of Christ to the earth. *“Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven” (Acts. 1:11).*

The Apostle Paul provides us with the following proclamation: *“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first” (1st Thess. 4:16).*

It is here that Paul clearly illustrates the return of Christ and calls our attention to the resurrection of those in Christ who have been touched by death. Further evidence of this fact is found in the book of Isaiah. *“Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead” (Isa. 26:19).*

Now before it is definitely determined who is to be associated with the Lord, they must all appear before the judgment. *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (1st Cor. 5:10).*

We know the ultimate result of those who are rejected. It is no secret and is in no way a pleasant thought to consider. It is of the utmost seriousness as this judgment will be final with no appeals, and therefore no second chances. Therefore, let us take a brief moment to consider the privileges of those who are **not** rejected and therefore accounted worthy of the great prize? The benefits will include:

- Immortality
- A life free from pain, sorrow, and sickness
- A life free from the fear of death

- A life that knows no end
“But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint” (Isa. 40:31).

After the judgment has taken place, Christ and the saints who have been found worthy of immortality will begin their victories march to the chosen city of Jerusalem. The city of Jerusalem will become:

- The capital of the world
- The site of the magnificent temple of Ezekiel’s prophecy
- The location where Christ will be enthroned to reign gloriously
“Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King” (Psa. 48:2).

After Christ has been established in Jerusalem, as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the first nation to come under his rulership will be Israel. *“And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem” (Micah 4:8).* Since the daughter of Zion is to be the first dominion in the Kingdom, the Jews must continue their migration to the Promised Land. It is in the book of Matthew that we are instructed that the apostles will have a key role over the regathered nation of Israel. *“Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matt. 19:28).*

When the kingdom shall have reached this stage, it might be referred to as in the development or transition stage. All of the various modifications and final measures will not happen overnight but instead; God’s plan and purpose will continue to grow until it encompasses the entire earth.

While the apostles will rule over Israel, it would appear that other saints will be dispatched to assist in bringing the rest of the nations under the righteous rulership of the Son of God. Ultimately every portion of the earth’s surface will come under the direct control of Christ and the saints. *“But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord” (Num. 14:21).*

With Christ again in the earth, the supreme blessings of God will be revealed in extraordinary abundance as described in the book of Psalms. *“He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth” (Psa. 72:6).*

The subjects or inhabitants of the earth will no longer be allowed to choose whether or not they wish to serve God, for **ALL** will be forced to comply with the divine requirements. *“Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt*

break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Psa. 2:8, 9).

Even of the saints, who are to rule with Christ, it is declared:

"Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two edged sword in their hand; To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; To execute upon them the judgment written: this honor have all his saints. Praise ye the Lord" (Psa. 149: 6-9).

Though the rule of Christ and the saints will be firm and unyielding – as with a rod of iron— yet it will result in the ultimate happiness and good of all mankind. The Kingdom Age will consist of numerous beauties and wonders unlike anything witnessed before. *"And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest"* (Heb. 8:11).

The beautiful conditions will not be isolated to only those in Israel but will extend to all subjects of the kingdom. Consequently, if the people gather in discussion groups, they will not be talking of subjects that appeal to the fleshly or worldly mind, but they will be discussing more righteous subjects which reflect the wonderful glory of God. The activities and undertakings will no longer be designed for the pleasure and glory of man, but all matters will be to the honor and glory of God.

The kingdom will consist of a very righteous rule that will result in all social, political, and economic problems being resolved. The intense environment of anxiety that has tormented mankind down through the ages will at last be removed. *"But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it"* (Micah 4:4).

The grand and glorious institution of the feast of tabernacles will also serve as a reminder to the people of their duty to God. *"And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles"* (Zech. 14:16).

There will also be physical changes in the earth itself. The curse will be abolished, and an age of supreme splendor will be shepherded in. *"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes"* (Isa. 35:1,7).

The mortal subjects will not have to work so relentlessly with the soil, for the earth will yield growth much more graciously. The historic transformations that will take place in that day will be so massive and broad that even the beasts of the field will be affected. *"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea"* (Isa. 11:6,7,9).

The extreme splendor and serenity of that soon coming day is far beyond the comprehension of our mortal minds. Nevertheless, there should be no doubt or reservation that the literal return of Christ is at the door. His return to earth to re-establish God's kingdom should never be a distant thought but instead at the forefront of our minds and conversations.

We are not humanly capable to comprehend many of the horrific but necessary events that will take place at the return of Christ, however, it should never discourage our hope of hearing those words of commendation, *"well done thou good and faithful servant."* The ultimate reward of course will be immortality and reigning with Christ during his thousand year rule, followed by, the kingdom being delivered up to God, even the Father, *"that God may be all in all."*

Joel Thomas

"There is nothing that will destroy faith and works of faith more devastatingly than lethargy, indifference, and a careless insensibility toward obligations and responsibilities. "All things [including the trials, difficulties and set-backs] work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28). Yahweh permits reversals and calamitous circumstances to hinder His saints, that their faith might be tried and their dedication and determination be made manifest. The same principle applies to the people of God in every age. None have been promised an armchair ride to the kingdom. It is "through much pressure" [*Gr., thlipsis*] that we "must" enter into "the kingdom of God" (Acts. 14:22). Haggai and Zechariah expounded these spiritual ideals to the people with great vigor and in a spirit of commitment. Their efforts were rewarded. The people responded, renewed in faith. This is a lesson for Yahweh's people in every generation."

Christadelphian Expositor: Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, p. 52

THE OBJECT OF PROPHECY

“**W**E have also the prophetic word more sure, *to which ye do well to take heed* as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until its day dawn, and a light-bearer arise in your hearts” (2nd Peter 1:19 -21; 3:17). These are “wholesome words,” and the literal rendering of the original. The prophetic word is sure, and the things Peter, James, and John had witnessed on the Mount of Transfiguration confirmed it or made it surer. Thus made doubly sure, it became *a shining light*, not a feeble, invisible light, such as pure hydrogen burning in day brightness, but a light blazing as the sun in a place otherwise dark, dark as Egyptian night with blackness. We need not wonder at the sure prophetic word being radiant with brightness; for Jehovah who gave it is light, the Light of the Universe, “in whom is no darkness at all.” It is “a light that shineth in a dark place.” The heart of man is this dark place. The word *ughmeres* signifies not only dark, but “squalid and filthy.” This is a man’s mental and moral condition, squalid, filthy, and dark by nature – a condition before God, if not in the estimation of his fellow-men, in which he continues hopelessly until the sure word, termed by Paul, “*the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, shines into him*” (2nd Cor. 4:4).

Consider the savage, the semi-barbarian, and the “civilized” man. Not to go beyond “Christendom” for examples, contemplate the man of letters, philosophy, politics, and “religion,” not to mention the thoughtless multitude, whose minds embrace no other topics than such as arise spontaneously from their “fleshly lusts that war against the soul.” Converse with these several classes of mankind upon “Moses and the prophets,” the apostolic testimony, the mission of Messiah, the future of nations, the destiny of the earth and man upon it, &c., and you will find that “darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people;” and as the necessary consequence of this universal ignorance, or blindness of heart to the sure prophetic word, their works are evil and that continually.

Now to this sure prophetic word or glorious gospel light (for the gospel is still almost wholly a matter of prophecy) the apostle says, “ye do well to take heed to it.” Surely he is an authority in the case, and one whose exhortation should be respectfully entertained. Would he tell us to take heed to the sure prophetic word if it were unintelligible? Can we take heed to a thing we do not and cannot understand? *Prosechontes*, rendered giving or taking heed, signifies *having in addition to*. This is its derivative signification, and imports that we should have the sure word of prophecy added to our mind; but can this addition be accomplished unless we apply our minds to the word or give heed to it? And

what would be the use of studying it if it were essentially enigmatical and insusceptible of rational interpretation? On the contrary, we conclude from the terms of the apostle’s exhortation, that it is clear, worthy of diligent study, reasonable, and improving.

But Peter’s exhortation was not confined to his contemporaries. What he said to them he says to us. You do well to give heed to it “*until its day dawn*.” The common version has it, “until the day dawn;” but this is not the translation of *heos ou hemera diaugasee*. *Ou* is the relative to its antecedent *luckno*, which is synonymous with “the Word” – *ou hemera, whose day*; that is, the light’s day, or the Word’s day – the Day testified of in the light-imparting word of prophecy, in which God will rule the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ, whom he raised up from the dead for that very purpose (Acts 17:31). This is the day spoken of by Moses and the prophets – “the acceptable year of the Lord,” the year-day or age to come, of a thousand years’ duration (which with the Lord are but as one day, says Peter – Peter 3:8), “the rest which remains for the people of God” – the day when His King shall come in his kingdom and glory: this is *the* day (Ezek. 39:8) which succeeds “*to-day*,” coeval with the Gentile governments; the gospel-day when Christ shall sit upon his Father’s throne in Zion, and “govern the nations upon earth” (Psalm 67:4; 22:27-28).

This day has not yet dawned. We are in “the evening time of to-day,” when it shall be light – (Heb. 3:13; 4:7; Luke 23:43; Zech. 14:7). We are of “to-day,” which is “a cloudy and dark day” – a day of ignorance, superstition, and foolishness; but when *to-morrow* comes, the day after “to-day,” these things will be abolished to the ends of the earth, and we shall no more need the prophetic word to give us light. But till then, the “heirs of the kingdom” can no more do without the shining light of prophecy, than mankind can do without the shining brightness of the firmament. Blot out the light of heaven, and confusion and death would soon pervade the world. The “children of the day” (1st Thess. 5:5) must have daylight, or they would become sickly, and pine away, and die. *They* respond to the apostle’s exhortation, and apply their minds to the sure prophetic word, that in keeping their minds actively engaged upon it, a *light-bearer* may spring up in their hearts, making their paths “as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” The way of the wicked is not so. It is darkness, and they know not at what they stumble – (Prov. 4:18,19).

We remark, in conclusion, that prophecy is so intelligible that those who take heed, or apply their minds to it, can tell assuredly what shall come to pass before it happens. This was the case with those to whom Peter wrote. After writing about the coming of the Lord to slay his murderers, and to burn up the city (his second *coming*, not his second *appearing* at his third coming) in which he discoursed also of the passing-away of the heavens and the earth, constituted by the old Mosaic covenant then in existence, but since vanished away – he concludes by saying to them, “*seeing ye know these things before, beware, &c.*”

They knew what was coming upon Jerusalem and the State; for they were observant of the signs of the times given by the Lord in his prophecy on Mount Olivet. Their presence enabled them to eschew “the error of the wicked,” who scoffed at the idea of the Lord’s coming to punish his enemies. It enabled them to be steadfast; and at length to escape “the judgment and fiery indignation which devoured the adversaries.” To deny that we can know beforehand what is to come to pass, is to affirm that we cannot understand the gospel; for the gospel is glad tidings of what is to be to all nations and to the saints. It is the report of good things promised. A promise is a prediction, and a prediction is prophecy. The gospel is a great prophecy of what God intends to do; and they who intelligently believe it, know before hand what is to be done. The little that has been fulfilled in Jesus is an assurance to the believer that what remains will certainly be accomplished. He foresees the crushing-down of the thrones, the abolition of all kingdoms, empires, and republics, the setting-up of a divine kingdom in Israel’s land, the blessedness of all nations under the government of Messiah and his brethren, and the will of God done on the earth as it is in heaven; with many more great and glorious things too numerous to mention at the present time.

John Thomas, Herald of the Kingdom, 1852

THE WORLD IN TURMOIL

“We live in a world that is undergoing a very major shakeup. As I have said, the entire region around us is in a state of instability, and is undergoing a political and security earthquake of which we have not seen the end.”

“In this situation, more than ever, we need to ensure that we have solid security foundations upon which to defend the State of Israel.”

Quoted from recent comments made by Benjamin Netanyahu



AS we make final preparations to publish this issue of the S.K., we do so under the backdrop of a world seeming to spiral out of control. Confusion and turmoil is seen in all layers of this world – political, militarily, financially, naturally and culturally; as Christ aptly described – “*the sea and waves roaring.*” With every passing day circumstances become more

remarkable in regard to their significance to end time circumstances and as to the emotional strain they are having on the people of this world. But while the world frets, we are to watch with great and joyous expectation for those things coming on the earth.

Though we probably have no new information to add to the constant stream of developments, as most all of us are keeping a constant eye on world events, it is worth reviewing where things currently stand. We do have to keep in mind that the seas and waves of men have always been at unrest, but as we recognize where we stand in relation to God’s 7,000 year plan time-line, we watch a world in growing turbulence with keen interest and great expectation.

The Middle East

The civil unrest that suddenly began in Tunisia quickly spread to Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, Lebanon, Syria, Libya, Jordan, Saudi Arabia; and what has been little reported – inside Iran itself. Though the mainstream media touts these developments as a “wonderful move towards democracy”, many analysts of the world understand that only further turmoil and oppression can result. And it would seem that the Iranian leadership itself is helping to spark the turmoil in order to gain political and religious advantage against several countries that were not themselves friendly to Iranian ambitions.



This sudden explosion of unrest and rebellion is something that should be of no surprise, as discontent has been building for years. Many of the leaders of these countries have had to expend a great deal of energy and money to keep open rebellion suppressed – and they have done so in a brutal fashion whenever necessary. Unemployment and poverty levels have been extremely high, while opportunities have been limited and almost nonexistent – fueling a tempestuous degree of frustration.

Despite the explosive nature of what we see unfolding in the Middle East, it is important that we keep things in their proper perspective and not jump to immediate conclusions. We cannot dismiss something of this magnitude as having no significance, but there is a bigger picture and a longer term outcome that needs to be kept in view. Some brethren immediately concluded that the *Muslim Brotherhood* was about to take over many of the countries where the turmoil was taking place to lead a final assault against Israel. Though we do not dismiss the possibility of another Arab/Israeli conflict (especially in relation to Israel and the immediate threats posed by Hezbollah and Hamas), it is

important to understand that certain Middle Eastern countries have clear prophesied roles that they will play in latter-day events, as revealed to us in the Scriptures – facts that should not be lost sight of in the present turmoil.

The Egyptian uprising is of special interest as it had many of us looking to Isaiah 19, where we read that the “*Egyptians will fight every one against his brother*” (vs. 2) as a precursor to being ruled by a “*cruel lord*” (vs. 4). It is this writer’s conviction that the “*cruel lord*” is in reference to the fact that Egypt will eventually be conquered by the “*King of the North*” of Daniel 11 (vv. 42,43), (i.e. the Gogian/ or Russian Confederacy “at the time of the end”.) The Egyptian crisis is certainly not a settled matter, and as various interests position for control in this new Egypt, we can be assured that a great deal of internal turmoil is yet to come. We have seen a marked decline in Egyptian relations with Israel, and as there was once great enmity between the Mubarak regime and Iran, Iran has been able to quickly take advantage of the confusion – now having free access through the Suez to port its naval ships in Syria.

The Libyan situation, as of this writing, has created as much confusion and unrest in the world as it has within Libya itself. As a major supplier of high quality crude to Europe, the cutting off of this supply for the time being has sent world oil prices skyrocketing. **Who has been able to take advantage of this situation? – Russia**, as Europe has looked to Russia to fill the need. **Who has gained geo-political advantage as the NATO alliance has shown grave weakness and infighting in trying to figure out how to affectively deal with the situation? – Russia**, as NATO has been a major roadblock to expanding Russian power and influence. (Germany refused to take any part in this military action – a major blow to NATO unity and power.) Who was the first country to call for an immediate end to the NATO air operation? – **Again, Russia**. Putin was the first and most vocal to demand the immediate end of the air strikes. As this was not a realistic request, it was clearly a move to make the Arab league understand that they had a sympathetic “friend” in Russia. Yet, at the same time Medvedev was supportive of the NATO action - Another demonstration of Russia’s crafty ability to play both sides of the fence.

Brethren, with all of the confusion, panic and drama that we see transpiring in the Middle East, do not lose sight of how Russia coolly plays the much larger geo-political chess game to their advantage. Whoever comes out on top in Libya, we know that Ezekiel 38:5 and Daniel 11:43 clearly



outlines this country (along with Iran, Ethiopia, France, Germany, etc.) as being allied with the Russian Confederacy when it comes against Israel.

The spirit of uprising in Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain for the present seem to be more under control – though still extremely tense. Saudi Arabia has been put into direct conflict with Iran as Iran has been heavily involved in stirring the uprising in Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia has sent troops into Bahrain to help secure their monarchy. Both Jordan and Saudi Arabia have been very proactive in squelching dissent in their own countries, as they have very refined internal security and intelligence resources. It is our belief that both Jordan and Saudi Arabia will remain more in line with the interests of the West or “Tarshish” powers in these last days. Arabian peninsula and major oil producing countries such as Saudi Arabia, Dubai, United Emirates and Bahrain identify with the territories of “Sheba and Dedan”, and will in fact be allied with the Tarshish powers in opposition to the military and political moves of the Russian Confederacy of Ezekiel 38. Jordan, in our view, will act as a place of refuge for some of those of Israel who will flee invading forces of Gog (Isaiah 16:4).

Israel

Where does Israel stand in relation to the extreme turmoil of the region? – very carefully for the time being. The Netanyahu quote we provided at the beginning of this article shows the great concern that Israel has. Israel has been very careful not to give any appearance of involvement with the various uprisings throughout the region, as this would involve immediate accusations of “Zionist meddling”. Though, Israel still is a source of hatred in the general uprising fervor. Israel cannot win for losing.

With intensifying efforts by both Hamas and Hezbollah against Israel, and as Iran steps up efforts to supply these forces with armaments for use against Israel – it would seem that something will have to give in the near future. Israel has begun to deploy its long anticipated missile shield system (“Iron Dome”) in preparation for upcoming challenges. Connecting this with Netanyahu’s comments regarding their self-defense, we understand that Israel has yet to learn the very hard but critical lesson that their protection is not to be gained by their own ingenuity or might, but by the saving arm of Yahweh.

Very interesting developments continue to transpire in relation to Israel’s energy situation, which we believe will play heavily into the “latter day” crisis. It is now being projected that Israel has the third largest oil shale deposits in the world (behind China and the U.S.) It is estimated that 15% of Israel is underlain with these deposits.



And, with new technological breakthroughs, this could make Israel one of the largest oil producers in the world. **Current estimates would have Israel's supplies at 250 billion barrels**, compared to Saudi Arabia's 260 billion barrels of proven crude oil reserves. The "spoil" that makes Israel so attractive to the Gogian invader is becoming more and more of a reality with each passing day. With a middle-east in constant turmoil, will more of the world begrudgingly look to Israel as a solution to their energy needs? Will not countries such as Russia look at Israel as an unacceptable competitor in the energy markets, and a vital key that must be controlled to achieve geo-political dominance?

The United States

The prophetic implications that surrounded the election of a new U.S. administration in 2008 are quickly being answered before our eyes. Once considered the world's lone "super power", the United States continues to crumble from within financially and culturally, while also promoting a foreign policy that is extremely inconsistent and weak. The United States has taken great pains to not be perceived as a leader, and has not acted in its best national interest as it desires to take a back seat to Europe and the United Nations, while at the same time abandoning an unwavering support of Israel. This is undoing decades of American efforts to drive world direction to the advantage of the U.S. No longer is it a stabilizing balance in the world, which has in fact released a whole host of unrest and strife in the process – chiefly the unrest we see in the Middle East, as well as a Europe no longer able to depend on American leadership, and the continued rise of the Russian Bear to fill the vacuum. While Great Britain followed a path of weakness and appeasement in the 1930's (the "superpower" of their day), leading to the ruinous events of World War II, so too has the changed U.S. posture and standing in the world opened the door to competing geo-political interests that will bring this earth to the "great and terrible day of the LORD."

The Natural Creation in distress

Yahweh's control over the mighty forces of His creation has certainly been on display in recent weeks. The end of February saw the 6.3 earthquake in New Zealand as only a foretaste of the following 9.0 Japanese earthquake and catastrophic tsunami. And if that wasn't bad enough, the ongoing nuclear disaster left in its wake. Though natural disaster is nothing new to this earth, we are once again reminded as to the immeasurable forces at the disposal of the Almighty, and how the technologies of man can be so very easily disrupted and turned against him. And with the level and frequency of disaster, we are seeing that such only compounds the fear and tension that is gripping the inhabitants of this earth, in addition to the financial and geo-political turmoil that is warning men that there is nothing secure or permanent in relation to the flesh. And such is only a foretaste of the cataclysmic forces that will be unleashed upon the inhabitants of this earth at Christ's appearing.

Such natural shakings symbolize the "political and security earthquake" (referenced by Netanyahu) that is not only shaking the Middle East, but the world over. Truly we see an increasing "*distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and waves roaring.*" As Brethren of Christ, we should have no allusions that things are to improve before the Advent of our Lord. How much more deterioration are we to see and to what degree of personal discomfort may we ourselves experience before being called away to Judgment? - This is something that we do not know. What we do know is the return of the Master is imminent, and the signs we see all around us can be used to our advantage in preparing our hearts for the call to Judgment. We are truly "*on the verge of great change*" (see opening article). And apart from our own relation to that change (whether positive or negative), with the ascendancy of Zion's victorious King and the glorification of Yahweh's Name – how wonderful will that change be! S.K.

EDITORIAL FLYLEAF

Unity Agreement 08 Update

We recently became aware of a video production that appears on the "Unity Agreement 2008" website. The video features four prominent leaders of the effort in what is called an "Informational Discussion" of the benefits of the implementation of the UA08 Agreement among various Amended and Unamended ecclesias. Shown seated at a table are Ian McPhee and Doug Finlay of the Guelph ecclesia (Unamended), and Al Hussey of Niagara and Ken Curry of Toronto-East of the Amended fellowship.

The presentation (which can be viewed at <http://ua08.com/videos/>) was filmed in November of 2010 and attempts to put a positive spin on the UA08/NASU effort, despite the great deal of division and opposition that it has in fact created – especially among the Amended of Ontario. As the NASU effort is the basis of the UA08 agreement, it is claimed that most in North America approved of the original NASU effort, with no acknowledgment that in fact many ecclesias (at least on the Unamended side) flatly rejected the NASU document as a basis of fellowship between the Amended and Unamended communities. The opposition to the UA08 ecclesias and the disfellowship of them (especially among the opposing Unamended ecclesias) is dismissed as being "*done so in ignorance*" and based upon "*a false notion.*"

The same sales pitch of the scriptural command for "unity" is put forward – "unity as a "scriptural imperative" as they put it - while denying that real differences do exist among the two fellowships. It is claimed that the NASU actually "*exposed the fact that we have a commonality of understanding on the things that are essential for salvation.*" *Continued on back inside cover...*