

# THE SANCTUARY-KEEPER

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



Vol. 17

3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter – 2007

No. 3

## *The Power of Ephesians*

A Summary of Doctrinal Principles

ALSO:

*Suppose - Who is a Christadelphian? - The Inheritance  
of the Covenant Promises - The Final Scattering of  
Israel, Part I - The Priesthood of Christ -  
The Continual Controversy Surrounding J.J. Andrew -  
Standing or Drifting, Which?*

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## THE POWER OF EPHESIANS

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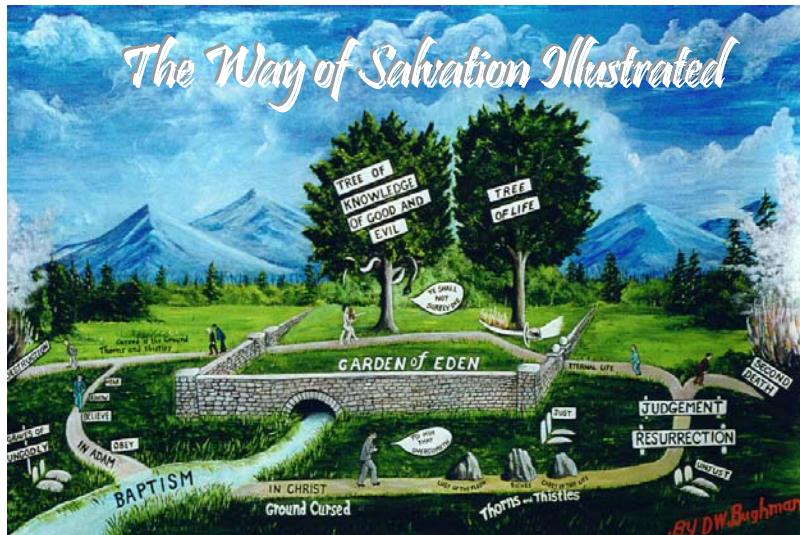
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“Standing or Drifting – Which?”

### **“THE BONDAGE OF CORRUPTION AND DELIVERANCE”**

All men are in Adam naturally – held in the bondage of corruption on account of descent from a condemned progenitor – and should they die in that condition they will be for ever held in the power of the grave; death's dominion over them will be complete and unending. “They shall sleep a perpetual sleep and not awake.” But should they hear the gospel of the kingdom of God and learn the things which tell about the Lord Jesus Christ and thereupon be baptized they pass from under Adam and from the condemnation of death into Christ and become new creatures. Being made free in this manner from the law of sin and death, they become the servants of righteousness, and as such, during the remainder of their life, they are bound to serve Christ. If they are obedient servants they will, on Christ's coming again, receive eternal life, become like He is, a glorious spirit man, incorruptible and powerful, full of knowledge and beauty. If disobedient servants they will at the same time as the obedient ones receive the reward, receive the fruit of their wickedness, which is the second death or everlasting destruction – complete obliteration from the universe of God.

*The Christadelphian Advocate, 1887 (emphasis added)*



#### THE ORIGIN AND EXTENT OF THE KINGDOM OF MEN

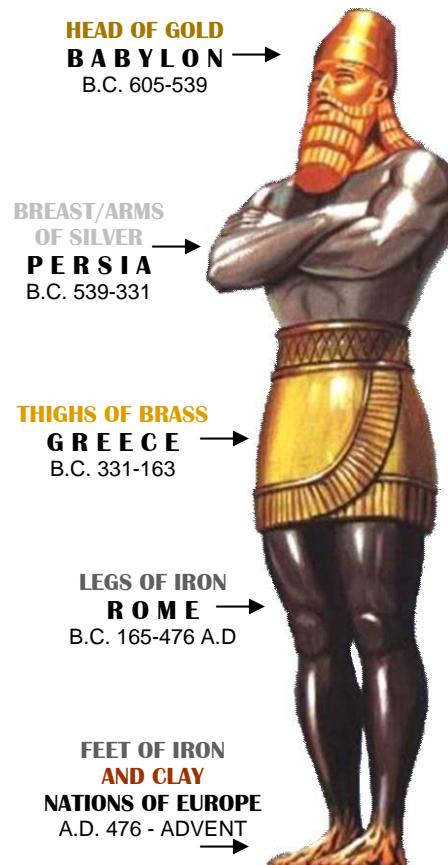
In taking a general survey of the contents of the Book of Daniel, it may be seen that two great powers are the principal subjects of its predictions. The one is styled the KINGDOM OF MEN (Dan. 4:17) and the other the KINGDOM OF GOD (Dan. 2:44; 4:3; 7:27)...It will be seen that the Kingdom of men has been diversified in its constitution, extent and throne since its foundation by Nimrod to the present time. It has nevertheless been the same Nimroudian kingdom with Babylon and Assyria for its characteristics. (Exposition of Daniel, pp. 7,8)

#### THE FEET OF THE IMAGE

While the head, breast, arms, belly, thighs, legs and toes have all existed, the feet have not yet been formed; so that it has hitherto been impossible for the colossal image to stand erect as Nebuchadnezzar saw it in his dream...It is therefore, the mission of the Autocrat (of Russia) to form the feet and set up the image before the world in all its excellent brightness and terribleness of form; that all men subject to the kingdom of Babylon may worship the work of its creator's power. (Exposition of Daniel, p. 87)

#### THE DESTRUCTION OF THE IMAGE

The Russian Autocracy in its plenitude and on the verge of dissolution is the image of Nebuchadnezzar standing upon the mountains of Israel, ready to be smitten by the Stone. When Russia makes its grand move for the building up of its Image-empire, then let the reader know that the end of all things as present constituted, is at hand. (Elpis Israel, preface)



## STANDING OR DRIFTING – WHICH?

In the early days of the Truth (since revived by Dr. Thomas) Christadelphians proclaimed the saving knowledge of Jehovah *with an assurance born of conviction*. They were united in mind and purpose and prided themselves upon the fact they could always give a "Thus saith the LORD," for what they believed and taught.

Today there is indecision and a growing sentiment that the old ways were wrong, and the line of demarcation is gradually being removed. So many are boasting of "Their Liberty in Christ" and this professed liberty seems to give them license to put any construction they choose upon the Scriptures, irrespective of first principle foundations. It would seem that the revelation God has given us in regard to salvation should be so understandable (and I believe it is) that we can come to definite conclusions, and as a body, have a foundation for our teachings that are unassailable.

Our writers in times past have written very lucidly of God's plan of salvation. Dr. Thomas was very explicit when he wrote of the "Things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ." Most Christadelphians understand the things concerning the Kingdom of God, but when it comes to the things concerning the Name (the things that are necessary to be believed and acted upon, in order to obtain a place in the kingdom) there is a great divergence of opinion.

The Christadelphians (as a body, or organization) came into existence through the efforts of Dr. Thomas. They believed he rescued the Truth from the superstitions of Christendom (so-called) and that his teachings were founded upon the Word of God. If the time has come when we have lost confidence in his interpretations – well that is the privilege of anyone, *but do not let us tack any teachings on to the name that do not belong there*. Let us promulgate them under some other name. Let us be fair.

The *name* of Christadelphian will not save anyone! If the teachings of Christadelphians are not in accord with the teachings of Christ, then the name must suffer. *Why the agitation to change the teachings and retain the name?* When it comes to the saving knowledge, I believe we owe this knowledge to a great extent to the labours of Dr. Thomas. The good man was not inspired, and he certainly was human and made mistakes, and upon matters of prophecy time has shown that in some cases he was mistaken, but time has also shown that in many cases he was right, and remarkably so.

There is a tendency among us to belittle the knowledge we have gained through our early writers, and we are being exhorted to get our neck out of the yoke of such bondage. As a Christadelphian we never considered our neck under any yoke of bondage of man, for we always believed, and still do, that the saving knowledge as originally taught by them is the gospel that saves. The one-ness of mind and unity of faith is being destroyed.

H. Ernest Hardy, *Christadelphian Advocate*, 1931

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**SANCTUARY – KEEPER**  
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*“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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## SUPPOSE

**S**upposing you are sitting quietly by the fireside at night, the labours of the day completed, and you think of going to bed, how shall you feel if all of a sudden, a beautiful and dignified visitor present himself with the intimation that “the Master is come and calleth for thee?” It will all depend upon the disposal you have been making of your time and your money and your strength. What sort of day have you been spending? You have been exceedingly troubled, and taken up with business or the house. You have been very angry with somebody. You have neglected your reading. You thought something else more important than the meeting. You have not been thinking about Christ at all; have not been doing anything for him – how shall you feel? Very much abashed, very much frightened – paralyzed with consternation.

But let us suppose the case stands the other way. You are depressed with sorrow. You have had a hard fight. You have been harassed in a variety of ways; but you have done your duty. You have snatched your reading amidst the pressure of life’s duties; you have given your countenance to the work done for Christ. You have preferred his assemblies to private or worldly pleasure. You have done what you could to promote his service in the proclamation of the truth, the visitation and comfort of the lambs of his flock, and in the relief of his poor. You are sad with a sadness the world does not understand. You are grieved at the triumph of Christ’s enemies, the faithlessness and unconcern of those who profess his name, and it may be, at your own shortcomings hindering you in the race. The pressure of individual circumstances bows you down.

Your pocket may be empty, because of what you considered it your duty to do. In tears you pour out your complaint before God, and that messenger comes to you. How shall you feel? You shall feel as no language can express; you will not be filled with ecstasy, because the judgment has to pass, before you know your lot; but you will feel a calm relief from the knowledge that there is nothing in the present state worth living for; and that your inmost desires and highest aspirations are towards the things that are of God. Joy (mixed with fear) will fill your heart, to know that God has taken the work in hand himself.

You go to the judgment-seat, and whom do you meet there? Why the man who, above all others, has been for a lifetime the cherished ideal of your heart – an ideal implanted there by the truth, and which has been growing sharper in outline, dearer to the affections, more real to the assurance, and consciousness as years roll by. You see him after whom your soul longs, in whom you have confided all your hope, and for whom you have risked all your interests. Shall you be afraid now? You will tremble, because a righteous man has a deep sense of the greatness and holiness of God. You will feel in that great presence like Daniel in the presence of the angel. But listen, “Oh man, greatly beloved, be strong, and be of good courage.”

Who would not labour for such a result? It is not too late for us to mend, to become devoted, to throw our soul into the things that belong to Christ. We may rest assured of this, that any man or woman who simply compliments the truth with a nominal adhesion, who is a mere patron of the truth, who does not feel it a privilege of the highest kind to lay themselves on the altar of its service – aye, beneath the wheels of its chariot, if needs be, to be crushed in its onward progress – will be rejected. “If any man love father or mother, sister or brother, house or land more than me, he is not worthy of me.”

*John Butler*

*“The Ambassador of the Coming Age”, December, 1868, pp. 14,15*

**Ps. 15:** – “Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; But he honoureth them that fear the LORD. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. He that putteth not out his money for usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.”

**2 Pet. 1:10.11** – “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

## THE POWER OF EPHESIANS

### A Summary of Doctrinal Principles

**T**he Epistle to The Ephesians is a powerful summary of doctrinal principles regarding salvation. The second chapter addresses a number of vital issues in just twenty-two verses. Some of these issues are:

1. The sad state of man in his natural state.
2. Divine law of condemnation and the grace of God.
3. Process for removing
4. Works before and after baptism.
5. Jew and Gentile – The great divide.
6. Elimination of Jew/Gentile barrier.
7. In Christ and out of Christ – Great divide, Part 2
8. Opportunity for reconciliation to all.

Although we do not intend to deal in detail with all issues, some are particularly relevant to events currently occurring in the Household.

#### The Natural State

Paul describes the sad condition of man in his natural state as being “dead in trespasses and sins.” A surface reading of the text may give the idea that Paul is placing double emphasis on personal sins in the phrase “dead in trespasses and sins.”

Why, we might ask, does Paul seem to repeat himself in the first verse. He might as well have said “dead in sins and sins,” since a trespass is an infraction of God’s law, and sins are acts or thoughts that violate God’s law. The original Greek word for trespass (paraptoma) means “offence, sin, trespass,” and the word for sins (hamartia) means “offence or sin.” One clue to what Paul may have meant can be deduced from how the word hamartia is used elsewhere in Paul’s own letters. In some cases hamartia refers to individual trespasses, and in others it refers to everything to do with our sin flesh nature. In Elpis Israel, Pg. 127, Brother Thomas observed that the word sin is used in two principal acceptations in scripture:

*“The word sin is used in two principal acceptations in the scripture. It signifies in the first place,” the transgression of the law”; and in the next, it represents that physical principle of the animal nature, which is the cause of all its diseases, death, and resolution into dust. It is that in the flesh “which has the power of death”; and it is called sin, because the development, or fixation, of this evil in the flesh, was the result of transgression. Inasmuch as this evil principle pervades every part of the flesh, the animal nature is styled “sinful flesh,” that is, “flesh full of sin”; so that sin, in the sacred style, came to stand for the substance called man.”*

The word hamartia is translated in the latter sense (sin constitution and its power) in Romans 6:18, where it is recorded: “Being then made free from sin ye became servants of righteousness.”

We know we are not free from sin in the sense of not committing sins after baptism, or in any physical way, but we do know we have been freed from the power of our sin condemned nature, in the natural course of its operation, to keep us in the grave forever (to perish), as happens with most of the race. In each of the following verses we see the word sin used not for personal transgressions, but in relation to everything to do with our sin flesh nature.

- **Romans 6:6**, “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.<sup>7</sup> For he that is dead is freed from sin.”
- **Romans 7:23**, “But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.”
- **Romans 8:2**, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup>For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”

The point of these observations is that in verse one of the second chapter of Ephesians Paul is referring to personal sins in the word “trespasses” and to condemned sin nature by the word that was translated “sins.” Since “sins” is plural, it leads us to think of multiple personal transgressions, but this same word is translated in the singular in many cases, as cited above. To conclude that Paul was just double emphasizing our transgressions by the word “sins” we believe is to miss an important point. The quickening process forgives our trespasses, but it also removes us from the condemnation of God’s law resting on our sin stricken nature.

We believe this point is reinforced by verse three, where once again, both personal transgressions (fulfilling the desires of the flesh) and condemnation (by nature the children of wrath) are referenced. Paul makes a similar comment in Colossians 1:21, where he says, “And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.” His point here is that all of us were in an alienated state under God’s law before baptism (due to the condemnation on our nature), and, in addition, were enemies in our minds by wicked works. It is interesting that he does not say “we were alienated because of wicked works”, which would have been easy to say if that was the intended message.

Reflecting on Paul’s words in Ephesians 2: 1-3, it is difficult to conclude he is concerned with nothing more than our personal sins. This relationship of baptism to both nature and transgression has been a point of disagreement amongst Christadelphians for the last 100 years, but it is what scripture teaches, it is what Christadelphians originally believed, and it is what the Unamended community has

historically maintained.

### **Saved by Grace**

The traditional Christadelphian understanding of the phrase “by grace are ye saved” has also been the subject of a recent “redefinition” campaign. These individuals would have us believe the term implies far more than what Christadelphians have historically taught.

The original Christadelphian position was that those in Christ are presently “saved” only in the sense of no longer being under the permanent grasp of Adamic Condemnation and its associated perish death. We have been “saved” (removed) from under that law of condemnation that rested on us before baptism as a result of God’s proclamation in Eden, and brought under The Law of The Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus.

Some are connecting this “saving” with the scriptural statement that our names are recorded in The Book of Life, and then conclude that if our names are not blotted out due to wicked works, we are saved. This assumption would mean that the book we are recorded in at baptism is The Book of Eternal Life, the book listing all those who will be in the Kingdom. A perusal of Revelation 20 will be helpful to a correct understanding of exactly where our names are recorded at baptism.

*“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”* (vs. 12-15)

The vision tells us first that there were a number of books, and then the books were opened. Now these books are not The Book of The Life, as Brother Thomas calls the book in which the names of those entering into the Kingdom appear. These books are those that contain the names of all those who have been in covenant relationship down through the ages. Written in these books are also the works of these individuals. The verse tells us the saints are judged based on the works that appear in the journal. Once a positive judgment is reached, the name of the individual is recorded in The Book of The Life. After the Judgment Seat has reached its conclusion, all those that do not find their name in The Book of The Life are “cast into the lake of fire.”

To say that our baptism places our name in that Holy record containing only those granted eternal life, and then that their name is taken out if unworthy, is not supported by the scripture record. The record does clearly say that our names appear in “the books” from which we are judged, but it does not say that our names appear in The Book of The Life.

Let us briefly review Brother Thomas’ comments in Eureka on this subject. We reproduce them not because we believe he was Divinely inspired on the matter, but only that we could labor long and arduously and still not express the matter as well as he already has. From Eureka, Vol. 1, Pg 361, we read:

*“From these testimonies there would appear to be two scrolls, the one styled A scroll of the Life, and the other THE scroll of the Life. These two scrolls are opened at the setting up of “THE GREAT WHITE THRONE” of judgment, at the epoch of resurrection. Certain things having been written in these scrolls, the resurrected are judged from them. These things are their works. One of these scrolls will present a very unseemly aspect – a sort of EVERY-DAY BOOK OF LIFE, in which names of believers are inscribed with very disreputable mementos appended to each. These will find no admission to “the other scroll which is of the life” – THE LEDGER OF THE LIFE, to which those names may be supposed to be transferred from the Every-Day Book, that are now condemned to obliteration. The dead constituents of the Angel of the ecclesia in Sardis, together with the few undefiled ones there, had all been written in the Every-Day Book of the Life; and their works inscribed under their respective names: and the general record of this scroll is read in the writing penned by John. He shows that the works therein recorded resolved themselves into two classes; the one signalized by the words “thou art dead” after their names, and the other by the sentence, “their garments undefiled.” Now of these classes, the names of the latter alone will be transferred to the Ledger; while the names of the former will be obliterated or excluded. The confession of names in the presence of the Father and in the presence of his messengers, will be read, not from the Every-Day Book, but from the Ledger of the Lamb’s Life, which contains the register of names inscribed there...”*

Our names being recorded in the “books” (Bro.Thomas calls “A Book of Life”) only assures us of resurrection and appearance before The Judgment Seat of Christ, and carries absolutely no implication of any current possession of eternal life. To claim the words “saved by grace” (as applied to our present state) implies more than our being saved (removed from under the Law of Adamic condemnation), forgiven of our personal sins, and assured of resurrection in the “hope” of eternal life, is to return to the errors of the apostate churches, whose leaders are “teachers with itching ears”, always teaching lies and promising things God has not promised to keep their deluded flock under their control.

None of this in any way diminishes the role of God’s great love demonstrated in His grace. God’s grace is the provision of His son, the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world, to open the way for all mankind to obtain salvation. We have to enter into him (God’s grace) as shown in the following proofs:

- **Gal. 1:6**, “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel;...”

- **Rom. 5:15**, “The gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.”
- **Eph. 1:7**, “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. That being justified by his grace, we should be made *heirs according to THE HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE.*”
- **Titus 3:4-8**, “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

To go beyond the scripturally supported position that God's grace has justified us from condemnation, removed us from the power that death holds over almost all the human race (in that they have no hope of resurrection or eternal life) and claim we currently possess eternal life is a delusion of the grandest sort. It certainly sounds like an attempt to make our doctrine more palatable to those in the churches surrounding us.

### Works

What are works? Webster's says works are, “That which is produced or accomplished by exertion or toil; product; also, anything accomplished, act, deed, feat.” The Greek word used for works by Paul in Ephesians 2: 9 is *ergon*, on which Thayer's Greek Dictionary comments, “any product whatever, anything accomplished by hand, art, industry or mind.”

We all readily recognize physical things done, such as assisting an injured person, teaching Sunday School classes or giving exhortations. The Greek word *ergon* adds the mind to the picture, an interesting distinction as far as scripture is concerned, for all the battles we wage with the power of sin start and are won or lost in the mind. Every servant of God who overcomes temptation of the flesh to sin, and instead follows God's commands, has performed a work. We are told, “This is love, that ye obey my commandments.” So any instance of obedience to a command, visible or not, is a product of working or toiling, and is a work of righteousness in God's eyes.

In considering works, we must go back to Ephesians 2:5, where Paul mentions our former state and how we have been quickened from that state, which he clarifies by saying, “by grace are ye saved.” Our elevation to the status of a saint is accomplished through God's grace in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. We can only be removed from condemnation by entering into God's grace, which is Christ Jesus. Paul's point here is all our works before baptism have no bearing on our removal from condemnation. That removal can only be accomplished by entering into grace through Jesus Christ, which is an act of faith. There is nothing we can bring to the table in the form of works to earn our way into God's grace. Only our faith in God

through His son Jesus Christ and baptism into the saving effects of his death can take us into the position of being a saint. But Paul goes on in verse 10 to point out that the purpose of our membership in Christ is to go forward to attain “unto good works.” The whole purpose of our being elevated is that we should now walk in the commandments of God doing the good works for which we have been created in Christ. Titus 2:14 emphasizes this point: “*Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*”

Works before baptism achieve nothing, but after baptism, the whole purpose of our life should be to be “zealous for good works,” a standard we probably all fall short of in God's eyes. In Anastasis, Bro. Thomas makes the following comments on works and righteousness:

*“If a saint has no righteousness of his own, Jesus Christ will refuse to be righteousness for him at the judgment.* He covers naked sinners, that, as saints, they may develop works; that by these works which perfect faith, they may be justified, as Abraham was (James ii. 21-26). Zealots in their frenzy do not perceive the difference between the justification of sinners and the justification of saints. Sinners are ‘justified by faith’ in the obedience of faith, which is baptism; while saints are ‘justified by works’ in the presence of the Righteous Judge ‘at his appearing and his kingdom.’ Hence, these theorists, who have ‘a zeal of God but not according to knowledge,’ in their argument condemn themselves. They declare that they have ‘no righteousness of their own.’ I fear this is the fact;...”

Good works are mentioned in numerous places in scripture as being the hallmark of a saint. Following are three good examples:

- **Hebrews 10:23-25**, “Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.
- **2 Tim 3:15-17**, “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 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.”

The following comments appeared in the June, 1912 issue of The Christadelphian Magazine.

*“But what relation has faith to works? Must we act as well as think? Do as well as believe? Certainly. look at Abraham. At the outset he obeyed God's command, “Get thee out of thy country” (Gen. xii. 1-4; Acts vii. 3-4; Heb. xi. 8. Paul and James are not in antagonism when speaking of the justification of Abraham*

respectively by faith and works (*Rom. iv.; Jas. ii.*). They are speaking of different stages in his career. Abraham was "justified by faith," when he believed God's promise concerning his seed; and "justified by works" when, later, he "offered up Isaac his son upon the altar." "Thou seest," says James, "how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect...Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and NOT by faith only" (*Jas. ii. 22, 26*). "The devils believe and tremble" (verse 19). "What shall we do that we might work the works of God? ... This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (*Jno. vi. 28, 29*). Believe the gospel Jesus preached, and being baptized, "purify your souls in obeying the truth" (*I Peter i. 22*). Thus believers are justified from their past sins; "purged from their old sins" (*2 Pet. i. 9*).

"But this is not the end. "Teach them," said Christ, "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded" (*Matt. xxviii. 20*). "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man... And everyone that heareth . . . and doeth not, shall be likened unto a foolish man" (*Matt. vii. 24, 26*). "Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it" (*Lu. xi. 28*). "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (*Matt. vii. 21*). "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you" (*Jno. xv. 14*). "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?" (*Lu. vi. 46*). So likewise say the apostles: "Be doers of the word, not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (*Jas. i. 22*). Such are "liars" (*I Jno. 2,4*). Christ is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (*Heb. v. 9*). He will "reward every man according to his works" (*Matt. xvi. 27; Rev. ii. 23: xxii. 12*).

The scripture evidence supporting the position that works are vital regarding a saint's chances for salvation is absolutely overwhelming. Why do people want to minimize the role of works? It is the deceitfulness of sin. It is much easier to minimize our responsibility in the area of works and tell ourselves there will be "lots of forgiveness going around on judgment day," as one person I know puts it. "God is love, his mercy is great, we can depend on His forgiving grace. He wants us to all be in the Kingdom."

Yes, God wants us all to be in the Kingdom, but we have to do what He has commanded to get there, and all those instances of obedience are called works. What we should be doing is thoroughly examining ourselves, as scripture recommends, and facing up to the fact we need to be doing the works the Lord has commanded we should do. If we are honest with ourselves, we all will see deficiencies in ourselves, but that is the challenge. We must keep working to do better and ask the Lord for forgiveness for what we have not achieved. Far better to work in this manner today than to face the consequences of our neglect in that great day of the Lord.

And one last caveat. Those of us who emphasize the importance of works are not saying in any way that we can earn salvation through works. We can't earn anything. After we have done all, we are still unprofitable servants. But let us not lose our

salvation because we refuse to face up to the fact scripture requires us to be active and "zealous" in good works, for it is Divinely declared, we will be judged based on the record in the "books."

*Joseph Garvey*

## WHO IS A CHRISTADELPHIAN?

In the January 1870 issue of the Christadelphian, the editor printed a piece penned by J.J. Andrew entitled "Who are the Christadelphians?". It was written in the form of a series of points and from the perspective of a fictional person spanning 1900 years. Our summary and paraphrase will show what it was to be a faithful believer as perceived in 1870 as well as today.

Between 1800 and 1900 years ago a young man of 30 years, who his contemporaries considered fanatical, set about to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. His message included denouncing religious teachers of that age. And though they were learned, pious and devout, he denounced them for teaching the traditions of men instead of the word of God. A few devoted followers, mostly fishermen, believed this Gospel message, which promised that faithful adherence to this doctrine would result in joint rulership with him in a restored kingdom of Israel.

After just some 3 years of speaking to multitudes and convincing only a few he was crucified, but resurrected and later departed to sit on the right hand of his Father - but left his devoted band of followers to continue the crusade. This they did with great zeal and effort but against strong opposition. They gained many converts but were convinced that once they stopped teaching their message would be corrupted, and that fables would be substituted for truths. The strength of opposition and age eventually silenced that faithful band of apostles and history has shown that they were correct in their predictions.

Year after year, and century after century amplified the problem and as a result a corrupt church emerged and a corrupt religion prevailed, obscuring the pure doctrine that was the Gospel message. The prophet Daniel wrote some 500 years before Christ concerning a diverse horn arising out of 10 kings. This horn, he writes, "shall speak great words against the most HIGH and think to change times and laws." Such were the abuses of this prophesied power that remnants of those still believing in the original Gospel message were hunted down, tortured beyond imagination, and then killed in ways that animals wouldn't even kill their prey. Doctrines were so altered that they held no resemblance as to what was originally understood and adherence to them was accomplished by forced obedience.

The 16<sup>th</sup> century saw some attempt at reform but by then the reformers were not

sufficiently acquainted with that Truth that had been departed from. An opposition church was established which was founded on protest against so much of the error as such protestors perceived. From this sprang other churches but most still lacked the knowledge of the original apostolic doctrine. And those who had accomplished so much by separating from the great Apostasy soon slipped back into the darkness from which they had separated from. While on the Isle of Patmos, writing prophetically, the apostle John styled this abusive mother church "the harlot" and those others as daughters of the harlot. It was almost impossible for one ignorant of the Truth to decide which one of these new churches taught the truth, because while they dissented from the mother church in matters of government and order of worship they still followed some very important apostate doctrines - immortal soulism, trinitarianism, and a personal devil to name a few.

Out of this age emerged a student of the Bible who because of circumstance vowed not to rest until he had successfully searched out the truth that was once delivered to the saints. The result of his close, critical and thorough study of both the Old and New Testaments was that the Bible was opposed to the religious teaching of the day, not on minor points only but on essentials as well. This led him to renounce all those that followed apostate religion (both mother and daughters) and obeyed only that set of values...that precious truth...that faith which was once delivered unto the saints. He spoke at great length, he traveled far and wide, he wrote - all for the purpose of placing in the hands of the diligent Bible student the Truth as it is in Jesus. Others, following the lead returned to Apostolic teaching.

Now it can be said that the majority of those who originally followed Jesus were unlearned as the world's standard of learning implies. But by and by they fully grasped, embraced, taught and defended with their lives the Biblical Truth. Similarly, in these latter days, the sacrifice which this embraces is too great to entice the learned and influential members of society. Consequently, those who have been bold enough to take this step comprise many partially educated persons. That is to say, they are not learned in all the arts and sciences and modern languages, philosophy, metaphysics etc. But they can read their Bibles, which, in reality is the only authoritative book on matters divine. Of course, they like their predecessors are considered fanatical, aware that the scriptures speak of this issue: 1 Cor. 1:26 - "*not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called.*" James 2:5, "*but God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the Kingdom.*"

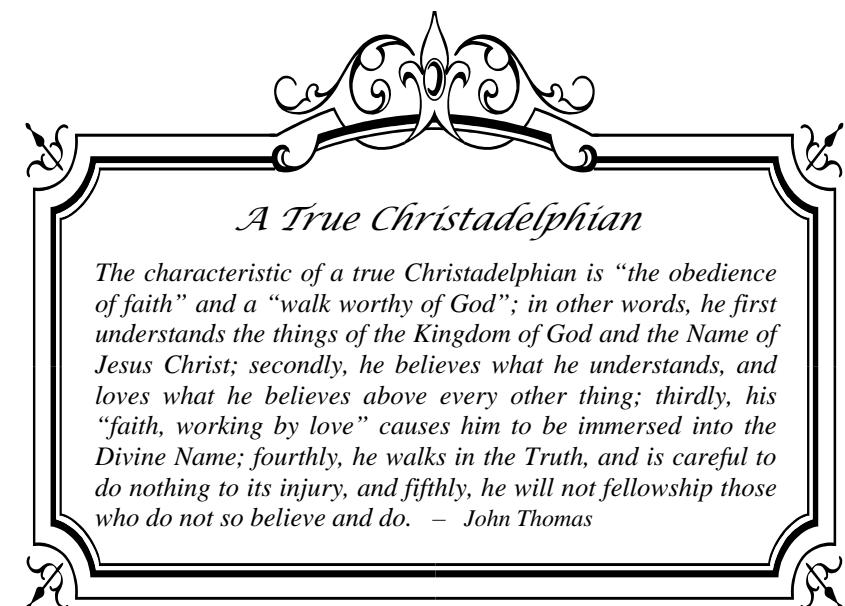
Circumstances dictated a name be applied to these new found possessors of the Apostolic faith and it was concluded that those who believe what Jesus and his apostles taught, and obey their commandments are brethren of Christ or as it is in the Greek "Christos adelphos" - in English it is Christadelphian. Christadelphians deny their leaders are seeking to settle down as paid advocates; they do not wish to rob ordinary churches of their glory at present, but when Christ their older brother and captain of their salvation returns then will they assist him in scattering all apostasy to the four winds, for not until all the ecclesiastical rubbish of Christendom has been

cleared out of the way can the families of the earth be blessed through Abraham's seed. While writers of fiction and others may protest against such a religion as Christadelphianism, believers in the truth must content themselves to speak the truth, write the truth and implore any hearers or readers to search the scriptures to see if these things be true.

In these last days believers may not be faced with violent persecutions but a far more insidious enemy lurks. That enemy may not necessarily be from without. The present day purveyors of humanistic thinking lurk behind almost every door. The valiant efforts of many thousands of believers of the past, in their attempts to resist the literal fiery darts of the wicked are now forgotten. The tireless efforts of John Thomas and Thomas Williams traveling the length and breadth of America and eastern Canada are now forgotten. Instead, to gain the prestige of a world wide church a watered down set of values and a watered down, simplified set of doctrines have emerged. And the support of this diluted religion comes from within.

Who is a Christadelphian? Those who meet regularly to uphold sound doctrine, to remember their slain elder brother and the meaning behind his sacrificial death. Those who believe, teach and apply the gospel of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ., and in so doing contend earnestly for the faith that was communicated to the followers of Jesus some 2,000 years ago. By so doing may we be numbered among those who contended in 1870, as well as all those faithful brethren of Christ - *Christos adelphos* - who have contended throughout the ages.

*Herb Thomas*



## THE INHERITANCE OF THE COVENANT PROMISES

In this edition, we continue our series of articles relating to the inheritance of the divine covenants of old that God has left on record for our study and understanding. In this article, we wish to explore God's new covenant with His Holy nation of Israel.

As we begin our studies, we want to open our minds to this subject by reading from **Jeremiah 31:31-34**. “Behold the days come saith the LORD that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts and will be their God and they shall be My People. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD:’ for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

As we contemplate the meaning and the timing of the fulfillment of these verses in Jeremiah which Paul quotes twice in **Hebrews 8:8-12** and **Hebrews 10:16-17**, we must develop a good understanding of the phrase “The New Covenant”. What is this new covenant and what makes it different from all of the other covenants that are proclaimed in God’s Holy Word? Or, is it really different? Any discussion of this subject of the New Covenant that God will make with Israel must take us back to the initial relationship that the Creator of the earth had with this nation. Many of our readers could turn up a multitude of scriptures that describes the covenants made with the patriarchs of Israel and the sureness of the fulfillment of these glorious promises.

It was these very promises that lead the Apostle Paul to proclaim in the book of **Acts 26:6-7** - “And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: Unto which promises our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope’s sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.” And in **Acts 28:20** - “For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you; because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.”

The Hope of Israel is the golden thread of salvation and promise that has been woven throughout the precious tapestry of the Word of God. It is this very hope that has sustained many God-fearing individuals in their struggles with the flesh and the

evil world and the terrible sins that mankind has perpetuated throughout the ages. It is this hope that constitutes the Joy that is set before us. It is this hope that is centered on the nation of the seed of Abraham in which the gospel message is based upon. Salvation is of the Jews – we are told. In order to receive the salvation promised through this eternal hope, Gentiles must become associated with the commonwealth of Israel and the covenants of promise. We ask the reader to read **Ephesians 2:11-22** to get a better understanding of this spiritual concept of how the Gentile nations can participate in these promises made unto the nation of Israel. They can do this through the man whom God sent to become the peace between these two nations of people, the Jews and the Gentiles. He who hath broken down the middle wall of partition between these two nations hath reconciled both into one Body. The inheritance of the Gentiles depends on the inheritance of the Jewish people. This is true not only in these days of the Kingdom of Men but this truism carries forward and is also applicable to the days of the Kingdom of God. Let us understand the message that the prophets provide in **Jeremiah 16:19** and **Zechariah 8:20-23**.

### **Jeremiah 16:19**

“O LORD, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit.”

### **Zechariah 8:20-23**

“Thus saith the LORD of Hosts: “It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities: And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, ‘Let us go speedily to pray before the LORD, and to seek the Lord of Hosts’ I will go also.” Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD.” “Thus saith the LORD of hosts: In those days, it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you.”

These verses speak of the fulfillment of the elements of the everlasting covenant where God has promised that all nations will be blessed in Abraham and His seed. The Hope of Israel is the Gospel message that makes up the plan and purpose of the Father with His Creation.

This quote was made by Brother Roberts in Christendom Astray – page 208. “We shall find that in the purpose of God, the salvation of the world is bound up in the destiny of the Jews; that apart from their national glorification, such salvation is a dream, to be realized, neither by nations nor individuals, spiritually nor temporally – and that the man who is either ignorant or skeptical of this coming future development, is darkened in his understanding on one of the essential features of Christian teaching.”

This golden thread of salvation begins with the promises made to one man of faith and the selected seed of his family. It is through Abraham, who was called the “friend” of God that mankind must look to understand the purpose of Yahweh. As we

continue to unravel this thread of salvation that is wrapped around and throughout the entire revelation of God, we must ask ourselves some very important questions concerning the fulfillment of these promises that are outlined in the first book of the Bible. Were the promises fulfilled during the lifetime of the patriarchs? If not, what kept these promises from being fulfilled? Will they ever be fulfilled and if so, When?

The answer to the first question can be readily answered by looking at just one small verse. **Hebrews 11:13** reads – “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”.

We know that none of the faithful men of old received the fullest inheritance of the covenants. No further elaboration is needed on this question. There are no *if, ands, buts, however, or what about this* regarding this issue. This one verse answers all objections. Therefore, the student of discernment must search the scriptures to determine the answers to our other questions. What kept these promises from being received by the Holy men of old? Will they be ever fulfilled and when?

We start our journey towards the answers to these questions by remembering these five concepts.

### **The Beginnings of Our Journey**

- The fulfillment of God’s promises is sure and certain and will be fulfilled exactly as He has designed.
- Although there was a national return to the land after the exile to Babylon, all of the promises were not fulfilled. The Kingly line of succession came to a close. There was no temple built as described by the prophet Ezekiel and most importantly, there was no national acceptance of the terms of the covenants and recognition of the covenant sacrifice – Jesus Christ.
- The unfilled prophecies must still be valid, for we read nowhere that God has done away with these promises.
- Although Israel’s return over the last century is part of God’s Master Plan, this is not the complete fulfillment of these eternal promises.
- God’s purpose with Israel is not complete. He will still bring repentant Israel into the covenanted land and they will be His people and he will be their God.

Let us turn to the book of Deuteronomy. God’s provision of His law and His commandments provides much material for consideration of this subject. We ask our readers to turn up and read **Deuteronomy 30:1-10, Leviticus 26:40-46 and Jeremiah 11:1-8**. We should take notice of the many facets of the plan and purpose of God in these verses. The passage in Jeremiah speaks of the oath that God made with the nation of Israel after He brought them out of the iron furnace of Egypt. The prophet reminds the nation of the promise of an eternal land inheritance. He reminds the nation of their responsibilities to be obedient to the covenant and the resulting curses if

they were not obedient. The passages from the Law speak of the result of non-obedience. The nation would be driven from the land of the promise to the land of their enemies. However, God, for the sake of the Hebrew fathers would remember His covenant of old. Even in the land of their enemies, even in their sins and iniquities, God in His mercy, would not cast the nation away, neither would He abhor them or utterly destroy them, but would remember His covenant and bring them back to the land promised to the fathers of old.

However, “I say then, Hath God cast away His people? God forbid.” This quote from **Romans 11:1** reminds us of the faithfulness of the Creator. The apostle Paul continues in this chapter to state that there is and there will always be a remnant according to the election of grace. In **verse 15**, Paul gives us something very important to think about in these latter days. He tells us that if the temporary casting away of Israel because of their unbelief resulted in the reconciliation of the Gentiles, then the receiving of the Jewish nation back would be equivalent to life from the dead. This thought should take us back to the **37<sup>th</sup> chapter of Ezekiel**, where the prophet speaks of the final fulfillment of the restoration of the nation in the early stages of the Kingdom of God. The dry bones prophecy speaks of the gathering of the children of Israel from among the heathen, where they have been scattered, and they will be gathered on every side and brought back into their own land. Here we see a direct fulfillment of the promises made unto the Fathers of the nation. God will save them wherein they have sinned and will cleanse them and they will be His People and He will be their God. This chapter also tells us of the fulfillment of the promises made unto King David, that his Son would rule over the nation forever and would administer just and righteous laws.

Returning to **Romans 11:26**, we find an interesting passage. Here we read that **“All Israel shall be saved”**. In my mind, some have wrested this scripture to show that each and every Jewish individual living at the time of the Advent will be invited into the Kingdom as mortals to live in the land of promise during the Kingdom age. This line of reasoning would be similar to saying that all of spiritual Israel, Jew and Gentile, will be allowed to enter the Kingdom in an immortal state. We know this is not true, because the scriptures teach us that some/many will be cast to the Master’s left and will be sentenced to the second death. This concept that **All Israel** will be saved into the kingdom as mortal constituents ignores the **“IF”** factor. There has always been and there will always be a requirement from God that individuals must exhibit faith in God and His promises. **Hebrews 11:6** is very clear on this subject. “Without faith, it is impossible to please Him, for he that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” This is the only way that God has prescribed to participate in the inheritance of the covenants.

### **The IF Factor**

The verses that we have reviewed so far, tell us of God’s unchanging love for the Hebrew people and His commitment to His promises. However, the verses also speak of a scriptural concept that may be hard to understand. For brevity, I will call this the

“**IF**” factor. God’s promises and the fulfillment of His covenants are unconditional on His part. They will be executed exactly as he has recorded in His Holy Word. However, there is a conditional aspect to God’s unconditional promises. This was true for the natural nation of Israel as we have read about and is also true for spiritual Israel. Although there were faithful Jewish individuals throughout the ages; the nation of Israel as a whole rejected the commandments of God, were unfaithful to the requirements of the covenant, had a corrupt priesthood that could not teach the nation about the laws of God and subsequent requirements of obedience and had even rejected God’s only Son as their Redeemer and Messiah. Therefore, the nation as a whole was excluded from receiving the inheritance of the covenants since their establishment as a nation until this very day when this same nation lives in disobedience and in a state of non-recognition of their God and His Son. The Hope of Israel is still that, a hope of a future fulfillment. Salvation is an individual concept. Individuals must make their commitment to the degree of obedience that the faithful servants of old manifested. This is the “**IF**” factor. God will be faithful to His word at all times and will bestow the inheritance of the covenants to whomsoever He will, **IF** these individuals seek Him in the manner prescribed and **IF** they are steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord and striving always to make our calling and election sure.

The nation of Israel has been re-established in these later days as a partial fulfillment of these promises made to the fathers of old. Through a good understanding of the Word of God, our pioneer writers accurately predicted this partial return to the land of promise and that the return would be made solely on natural desires and needs and would not be based on the recognition of the God of their fathers and the acceptance of the terms and requirements of the covenants made with the nation of old that God requires from this people.

Let us now review some scriptures to show the state of Israel in these latter days. Read **Deuteronomy 4:23-31**, **Ezekiel 20:33-38** and **Jeremiah 30:3-11**. Notice the terminology that is used in these verses. Moses describes a situation where the nation of Israel is in a state of tribulation in the latter day. Ezekiel tells us that the nation will consist of a group of rebels that God will purge from among this favored nation. Jeremiah indicates that at the time when the nation will be returned to the land of their fathers, Israel will be existing in a state of despair and travail and this particular time period will be identified as the time of Jacob’s trouble, a time unlike any that has ever been. God states in **verse 11 of Jeremiah 30** that He will correct Israel and will not leave her unpunished. All of these punishments that we read in these verses are a result of the disobedience of the nation to God.

The Scriptures teach us that all is not lost. God, the merciful, faithful and loving Father, will institute the means whereby the covenants of old will be fulfilled to their fullest. At the end of the time of the Gentiles, the nation of Israel at this time in their history will finally enter into the “New Covenant” with their Maker. We should understand that this is not really a “New Covenant” in objectives, goals or purposes.

This is the covenant of old recognized in a new and complete manner by the mortal Jewish people that survive the latter day desolation brought about by the wrath of God manifested in the destructive forces of the Gogian invader. **Zechariah 12:7-9** tells us that God will seek to destroy all nations that come against Jerusalem and that He will save and defend the inhabitants and will save the tents of Judah. **Jeremiah 30, verses 3 and 10** tell us that the dispersed nation will return to the land promised to their fathers and they will be at rest and none shall make them afraid any more after God destroys the latter day enemies of His favored nation.

The prophet Isaiah in **chapter 25:6-9** speaks of the complete reconciliation of the nation to their God. This passage reads – “And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things, full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the LORD GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His People shall He take away from off all the earth; for the LORD hath spoken it.”

In the mountain of God, which we know is symbolic of Mt Zion and Jerusalem, the face of the covering will be destroyed and Israel will no longer live in a Godless state and condition. The Israelites will be glad and rejoice in the salvation that God has provided. **Jeremiah 33:7-11** describes the eternal joy, gladness and praise of those who will go into the Kingdom as mortal constituents. This land will extend from the Nile River in Egypt to the Euphrates River, as required by the element of the covenant described in **Genesis 15:18**. This land will be partitioned among the 12 tribes of Israel as required by **Ezekiel 48** and the inhabitants will be ruled and governed by the 12 Apostles, raised and bestowed with immortality, as required by **Matthew 19:28**.

This is the time of the fulfillment of the covenants of old. As we know, a promised seed of Abraham is the singular seed of Christ. In **Genesis 22:16-18**, we are taught an element of the promises whereby this seed is promised to possess the gate of His enemies. In the latter days, we read in **Jeremiah 51:20**, **Zechariah 10:3** and **Zechariah 12:6** that God will use the Jewish people returned to the land of their inheritance to help fulfill this particular element of the promises.

The prophet Micah in **Micah 4:8** proclaims “And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.” Sarah and Abraham were both promised that out of their seed would come kings, even the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, which would rule God’s Kingdom on earth.

I think the verses in **Ezekiel 36:22-38** provides a very good summary of the things in which we discussed this day. The last verse of this passage tells us of the ultimate goal of the covenants of God - A holy nation serving God and recognizing their total dependence on Him and Him alone.

The apostle Paul makes this statement in **Romans 11:33** – “O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God: how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out.” We are so privileged to be in a position to understand a very small part of God’s glorious plan and purpose concerning His Holy Covenants with His favored nation of Israel. Let us pray for the peace of Jerusalem and that day when the enemies of Israel will be destroyed and He who was born to be King of Israel will sit upon His throne, even the throne of King David and will rule the world in righteousness.

I would like to close this article with a poem entitled **“The Sceptre Shall Not Depart From Judah”** which was printed in the September 1908 Advocate.

B. Henderson

## *The Sceptre Shall Not Depart From Judah*

*O, Judah, long, long, hast thou lain,  
Wrapped in the gloom of night,  
Rouse thou from slumber long and deep  
And Hail the dawning light.*

*The somber shadows flee away,  
Before approaching morn,  
Zion, AWAKE, thy youth renew,  
Thy peerless strength, put on.*

*The way leads through the trying fire  
Unto the shining goal;  
But though the victor’s crown shall wear  
In happiness untold.*

*The haughty foe with lustful eye,  
Thy prosperous state shall view;  
And seek to take to him the spoil;  
The quiet land pass through.*

*But to his final doom he goes,  
The conqueror’s might shall know;  
On Idumea’s fateful field,  
Shall fall, to rise no more.*

*Behold, upon the mountain side,  
The swift advancing feet,  
Of Him that bringeth tidings good,  
Thy willing ear to greet.*

*Rejoice! O Judah, yea, rejoice,  
Bid every fear begone;  
The foe is slain that sought thy hurt  
Proud Gog is overthrown.*

*Thine eye is lit with peaceful smile,  
Instead of gloomy frown;  
The rosy hue is on their cheek,  
O'er which the tear rolled down.*

*O Judah, keep thy solemn feast,  
And all they vows perform;  
The wicked pass through thee no more  
And none shall do thee harm.*

*For lo, on David’s reset throne.  
Shall reign thy greatest King;  
And all to him in homage bow,  
AND EARTH WITH PRAISES RING!*



## THE FINAL SCATTERING OF ISRAEL

### *A Consideration of Ezekiel 37*

**T**his chapter has served as an anchor to our faith for latter day believers. The regathering of Israel into Palestine, the parable of the fig-tree, Theodore Herzl (1897) and the First Zionist Congress, The Balfour Declaration, The British Mandate and the right of return, the establishment of Israel as a state in 1948. Ezek 37 and the vision of the dry bones has fit hand and glove with these significant developments. Or is the application of Ezek 37 and the dry bones the correct interpretation for this pre-colonization of Jews to the land - in unbelief? We were prompted to dig further into this study after hearing another brother speak on this subject. His presentation on Ezek 37 was a bit different than what we had always understood, and when he indicated that in fact our pioneer brethren agreed with the position he was presenting we decided to verify his sources and do the research.

First, the interpretation that we will present here of Ezek 37 in no way alters the timeline. It in no way diminishes the significance of Israel’s return to the land as witnessed in its various stages after almost 2000 - year dispersal. Rather, it gives even more clarity to the end-time prophecies as we understand them and solidifies their relevance in terms of sequence, Scriptural principle and the restoration, restitution and re-generation of the nation of Israel. Our primary sources are “Ezekiel” by John Allfree, Elpis Israel, Eureka, Milestones 1988 edition by Graham Pearce, Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come 1852 edition, and other minor publications and magazines namely the Bible Magazine past issues.

The simple premise/conclusion that we wish to present to you is that the vision of the valley of dry bones takes place after the Gogian invasion. Lest you think that this study is entrenched in minutia or the “splitting of hairs” in terms of its arguments and conclusion, we assure you it is not the case. This is yet another little piece of the puzzle that has found its correct spot which helps to illuminate the overall picture of Christ’s return and the establishment of God’s Kingdom and Purpose with Israel. It is immensely edifying and reinforces what we already understand but more importantly substantiates what we expect to happen at any time - the call to Judgment. There are no surprises, you already know the conclusion, so we invite you to discern my evidence regarding Ezek 37.

In this vision the prophet Ezekiel is transported to a valley which is full of bones (vs 1). These bones, he is told, represent the “whole house of Israel” (vs 11); an important point - not just Judah. He is commanded to prophesy over the bones and to cause them to “hear the word of the Lord” (vs 4). In response there is a “noise” and a “shaking” (vs 7) and Ezekiel looks on in wonder as the bones come together, sinews and flesh are laid upon them, they are clothed with skin, and breath is put into them.

They then stand upon their “feet, an exceeding great army” (vs 10). This chapter is frequently expounded as referring to the regathering of the Jews and the establishment of the modern state of Israel. In this view **most** of the prophecy has been fulfilled. The “noise” and the “shaking” mentioned in verse 7 are considered to be various important events in the progress of Zionism, from the work of Herzl to the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. Israel it is alleged, has been caused to stand upon its feet an exceeding great army, the victories of the Israeli armies over the Arabs since 1948 (and in accordance with Psalm 83) being witness to this. But there is something wrong with this approach:

- Subsequent prophecies (chs. 38 & 39) will show that Israel is to suffer greatly at the hands of the Northern Aggressor - Gog. If Ezek 37 takes place before the Gogian invasion and Israel (possessed of God’s spirit) stands on its feet an exceeding great army, placed in the land by Yahweh (where “placed” denotes “given rest, THE rest”), then why is such defeat and humiliation still future at the hand of Gog and his confederacy?
- The prophecy of chapter 37 presents an unbroken chain of events:
- The son of man prophecies over the bones (vs 7) “Ezekiel representative of Christ”
- There follows “a noise and a shaking” (vs 7)
- The bones then come together (vs 7)
- Flesh then comes upon the bones (vs 8)
- Skin then covers them (vs 8)
- Breath (God’s spirit) next enters them (vs 10, 14)
- In consequence of this they are said to live (vs 10)
- They then stand upon their feet an exceeding great army (vs 10)
- They are “placed”=(caused to rest) in the land (vs 14)

Where then can the Gogian invasion be located in this series of events? It is difficult to see how it could be anywhere other than prior to the events described in Ezek 37.

It is important to understand how this modern interpretation came about, and such an exercise will help us understand the basis and the ramifications of misunderstanding Ezek 37. For example W. H. Boulton writing of events leading up to the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 comments “Israel was a nation! It had its own government; its own parliament and institutions. The dry bones became alive! It was not all that might have been hoped for, but Israel was once more a nation in its own right. It was no longer a collection of dry bones, nor a lifeless body”. (The book of the Prophet Ezekiel, pp. 163-164).

But compare Graham Pearce: “The substance of the prophecy that brings bone to bone, flesh on bones to make a body, and the spirit that makes it a living body, is all in the future” (Milestones, 1988 pg. 70, also H.P. Mansfield’s Ezekiel’s Prophecies of the Restoration, p.57 - where he too expounds the chapter as having reference to the

resurrection of Israel that is brought about in the future by Christ and the Saints).

It is important to note that a right view of Ezek 37 is pivotal to an understanding of the events at the time of the end. If, as many modern expositors and writers argue, Ezek 37 is applied to the modern revival of the State of Israel then, in view of the unbroken chain of events presented in the chapter, logic demands that Ezek 38 will take place after Christ has returned and restored Israel (being the *cause* of the peace and safety and unwalled villages and in response to an Arab confederacy which almost overruns Israel i.e. Psalm 83 and Zech 14:2, which *then* entices Gog to come down). But, Ezek 39: 25-26 demonstrates conclusively that this peace and safety is considered a state of trespass against Yahweh, in that they secured it in the pride of their own hand. Brethren, here is the fork in the road and the origin of this commonly accepted view.

1. That view holds that an Arab confederacy overruns/scatters Israel.
2. Christ returns (in dramatic appearance to the world) with his angles to Jerusalem to redeem Israel and establish the Kingdom.
3. Judgment of the Saints then follows. The unwalled villages and the peace and safety is established.
4. Gog is enticed down to Zion because of the peace and safety, and is opposed and defeated by Christ and the Saints/Israel on the mountains of Israel in the battle of Armageddon.

But many problems are evident with this “phased approach”, or Arab/Muslim confederacy approach. First, if you read carefully the prophecies of Psalm 83 and others, the “Arabs” never succeed in their desire to “cut Israel off”. Christ of course cannot return to Jerusalem first with literal angels, this discounts the entire Rainbowed Angle/multitudeness Christ march from the south (Deut 33 and Hab 3), and the Judgment of those Saints which must have already taken place in Sinai. Christ of course returns as a thief to the world (Rev 16) and not until his glorious/victorious entrance into Jerusalem is he witnessed by the world. Gog is responsible for the scattering of Israel (there are not two scatterings of Israel just as there are not two “Great and terrible days of the Lord” or Armageddons - this is one event). Gog is also responsible for the planting of his tabernacles of his palace (or tents) between the seas (the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean) in the glorious mountains (Dan 11:45). The scattered Jews are then re-gathered as part of the Rainbowed Angel march from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Moab-Jordan, and part of that company that is returned and restored to Israel when Christ plants his feet upon the Mount of Olives. Christ and the Saints in complete victory now complete the gathering of the whole house of Israel from the land of Assyria, Egypt and the four winds (Zech 10:6-10 & Jer 31:8-9).

You see how quickly this view found traction in the Brotherhood as a shuffling of events was required to make a present day interpretation fit the world scene. The motive was pure, just imagine the emotional exuberance to the events of 1917, 1948, 1967, 1973. The desire for Christ’s instant appearing burned bright within the Brotherhood, but this interpretation was not the original one put forth by our pioneer

brethren and more importantly the scriptures themselves. Note Graham Pearce's personal notes on this issue:

"...what Dr. Thomas had written was in complete agreement with the conclusions that I had reached...he did not consider the pre-adventual colonization of Palestine by the Jews (i.e. the creation of the modern State of Israel) to be in any way the restoration spoken of by the prophets...he considered that there would be a desolation of the State of Israel by Gog's hosts, and this would be in fulfillment of Ezek 37 (causing Israel to say, "Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost" and) that Messiah and the saints will be involved in causing the bones of the nation of Israel to come together and stand up an exceeding great army." (Bible Student, vol. 9, pg. 75; Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come, vol. 2, p. 195, Eureka, vol 2, pg. 559; and vol. 3, pg 656).

(Also refer to Elpis Israel p. 441; Herald of the Kingdom..., 1852, p. 138; Eureka, vol. 2, p. 559; and Eureka, vol. 3, p. 656)

Subsequently, Bernard Burt (Central Fellowship) did an extended literature search for references to Ezek 37 in early Christadelphian literature. He concluded - *"It appears clear from researches into these published expositions that the view that the return of the Jews to the land, which began with the Zionist movement in 1897 was the fulfillment of the prophecy of the valley of dry bones, was the interpretation given to the prophecy by some leading Zionists and non-Christadelphian students of the day and that the brethren adopted this interpretation and publicized it despite the existence of quite different exposition of the prophecy in the writings of Dr. Thomas."* "By no stretch of the imagination can the spirit of independence and self-reliance which pervades modern Israel (identified as the trespass while dwelling in peace and safety) be correctly styled God's spirit, as some maintain." (J. Allfree).

When God imputes his spirit into the nation of Israel it is never to be withdrawn again and subsequently they are never to be scattered, oppressed or persecuted again and certainly not by Gog. But modern day expositions fail to explain this critical principle. **Ezek 39:29** states "*Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.*". **Ezek 36:26, 27** states: "*A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them.*" The point being, when God bestows His spirit into Israel it is a permanent change - something we have yet to see and most certainly an event after Christ has defeated Gog and his hosts in the battle of Armageddon.

In verse 2, of Ezek 37 the word "dry" is defined by Gesenius as meaning "hope has failed, or to be disappointed". **Prov 17:22** reads "A merry heart doth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones." Certainly this is not Israel's disposition currently. She relies upon the strength of her own hand, the treacherous treaties with her neighbors (Isa 30 - Egypt), and resides confidently in the ability of her own

military to defend herself. She is not of "failed hope, disappointed and in despair" as Ezek 37:2 requires. Therefore this state must occur and some point in the future. Let's look more closely at this dried bones aspect.

### Dried Bones (v. 1-3)

It is more probable, and consistent with the sequence of the prophecy that the Gogian invasion will reduce the modern nation of Israel to the dry bones condition depicted here by the prophet. Anticipating the explanation of the vision given in verses 11-14, the bones represent disobedient and unrepentant Israel who had chosen death rather than life (Deut 30:19). This death of the nation is a recurring theme in Scripture. Jeremiah spoke of Israel as a sheep slain by the Assyrian and Babylonian lions: "*Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones*" (50:17). Deut 28:25-26 also speaks of Israel in similar terms: "*The LORD shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies...thy carcase shall be meat unto all the fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray (frighten) them away*".

This has been the experience of Israel through the ages - to be slain, devoured and picked bare by Assyria, Babylon, Rome and all the nations which she has been scattered. However, Ezekiel's vision refers to none of these, but to a destruction of the nation which is still future. It is from the dead hopeless state of Israel here depicted that the nation is transformed into Messiah's Kingdom.

At the present time there has been a change in the condition of the Jewish people. Israel is a nation again in the land. But it should be carefully noted that this is not a fulfillment of this vision of revival, for verse 14 clearly teaches that God places them in the land. The word "places" does not mean simply to cause them to return to the land as many have already done. The Hebrew word *nuach* signifies 'to rest, settle down and remain'. This would suggest that to "place" Israel in the land is far more than to regather them, as Israel is regathered at the present time. It is to settle them in the land in fulfillment of the promises. Ezekiel confirms this, for he makes it plain that for Israel to be "placed" in the land depends upon them receiving the spirit – "*God says I will put my spirit in you and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land*" (v. 14). Here God says clearly that before He places them in their own land He will put His spirit in them. Modern Israel is in the land, but certainly does not have this spirit which leads them, as we shall see in God's statutes.

"The colonization of Judea by Jews under the protection of a Gentile government is neither 'restitution', 'restoration' nor 'regeneration'. Nothing short of a national establishment in the land under Messiah and his brethren constitutes either of them in the scriptural sense...Restitution is not simply the return of the race, but the setting up again of institutions that once existed there..." (Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come, J. Thomas, 1852, pg. 199).

Ezekiel's vision of Israel as a valley of dry bones is a vision of things still future. It represents the condition of modern Israel and world Jewry which will result from the Gogian offensive. It is a picture of Israel at the time depicted by Jeremiah - "Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble..." (30:7). Likewise Zechariah speaks of these days saying that Jerusalem "shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished..." (14:2). Habakkuk too writes of the time when Gog will "invade them with his troops", and the subsequent desolation is described in the words, "*the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines*" (3:16,17). And Joel describes the scattering of Israel by the nations, the parting of "My land" and "they have cast lots for my people" Tyre, Zidon and the coasts of Palestine-Gaza (Joel 3:2-4). All this speaks of a time of devastation yet to come upon Israel.

This view of Ezek 37 is confirmed by noting the words used in vs 9 - "Breath upon these slain". The effect of the Gogian invasion upon modern Israel will be terrible - "*Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts*" (clean cut off - RV). As Dr. Thomas said "Their hope would now seem to be lost, and themselves finally cut off from their parts." The hopes of self preservation totally destroyed, the strength of their own hand completely humbled, leads them to cry to Yahweh. At this critical juncture Yahweh responds to the cry of His people:

*"The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake (similar to a noise and a shaking from Ezek 37:7); but the Lord will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel" (Joel 3:16). "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south" (Zech 14:3-4). "And I will make her that halted a remnant and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the Lord (Yahweh) shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever." (Micah 4:7).*

Israel's humbled state is foretold by Jesus himself when having been rejected by Israel, he wept over the city of Jerusalem and said, "*Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*" (Matt 23:29). A reversal of fortune will face the nation of Israel for they "shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." (Zech 12:10).

Since the prophet is told "these bones are the whole house of Israel" (that is Judah and Israel) (vs 11), it would appear that this state of desolation is not confined to the Jews in the land. Gog's invasion of the State of Israel will be accompanied by anti-Semitic/anti-Zionist activity in the countries of Gog's armies, and throughout the world.

The great question will then be asked "can these bones live?" Will the nation of Israel, devastated by the Northern Invader, the latter-day Assyrian, the Gogian host, be able to arise again in the fulfillment of the promises of God? The question is answered in verses 4-8.

### Prophecy over the Bones

It should be noted at this point that Ezekiel is presented to us as part of the vision. He is in the valley of the dry bones and he is commanded to prophesy upon ("over" RV) the bones (vs 4). Further, not until he prophesies upon the bones does anything happen to them. Since it is Yahweh manifest in David's Son who is to save Israel from the Gogian invader, and who then proceeds to "restore again the kingdom of Israel" (Acts 1:11), it seems reasonable to conclude that Ezekiel the Son of Man in the vision is representative of the Son of Man whose word will bring about the restoration of Israel. Perhaps the "Son of Man" is a description of Christ and his saints - the multitudinous Son of man. As Graham Pearce comments "Ezekiel here is a man of sign, as in so many parts of his book. He represents the saints and their Lord" (Milestones, 1988, pg 71).

In Revelation 1 it is said of the Son of Man, that, "out of his mouth went a sharp...sword" (vs 16). Rev 19:15 adds, "that with it he should smite the nations". Isaiah speaks of the Lord Jesus in similar language when he says, "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked" (11:4 & 49:2). That which comes out of his mouth is his word, and when he speaks it is done. His word, like that of his Father is "quick (living, RV) and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword..." (Heb 4:12).

The Lord Jesus Christ, together with his saints, will emerge on the political scene after the Gogian invasion (Ezek 38:20, Zech 14:2-3, Hab 3:3, Joel 3:11). He speaks the word (or ushers the command) which brings about the overthrow of Gog's armies and the revival of the nation of Israel. With regard to the latter, it is not simply a call to the Jews in the land who have survived the invasion, but a call to the whole House of Israel (vs 11). So Isaiah speaks of that word which shall go forth over the bones: "*I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth*" (43:6).

### The noise and shaking

Here we have a mixture of the literal and the symbolic. Jesus has all nature under his control and will use these powers to judge the nations. Habakkuk says of him: "He stood, and shook the earth: he beheld and drove asunder the nations; and the eternal mountains are scattered, the everlasting hills did bow; his goings were as of old" (3:6 RV). Ezekiel's description of the downfall of Gog's armies is in similar language: "There shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel...all the men that are upon the face of the earth shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down..." (38:19-20). Thus the noise and the shaking has to do with the overthrow of the armies of Gog.

### The resurrection of Israel

It will be after this political upheaval that Israel will be restored as God's nation in the land. This is clearly taught in Ezek 39 where after the overthrow of Gog, God says - "Now will I bring back again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be zealous for my holy name." Of this time of restoration God says, "...I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there" (among the nations) (39:25, 28). Thus the national resurrection of Israel spoken of in Ezek 37 is not the creation of the State of Israel which we have witnessed, but something more wonderful - the recreation and regeneration of the nation by Messiah, subsequent to the Gogian invasion.

### Prophecy to the Spirit

The bones of the nation have been brought together and clothed with flesh, the Son of Man is given another duty to perform. He is told to prophesy to the wind (9). The word "wind" is the Hebrew *ruach* and is translated "spirit" in vs 14. This part of the vision concerns giving the dead nation the spirit that makes it live in God's sight. Only when the Son of Man prophesies as commanded does the spirit enter the nation, causing the people to live in God's sight and to stand upon their feet an exceeding great army (vs 10).

### Fulfillment

This is not the first time nor the last, that this spirit is referred to by the prophet. The other occasions are most insightful.

1. **Ezek 11.** Here the prophet speaks of the time of Israel's restoration when the people would be regathered (vs 17) and "they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence. And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you...that they may walk in my statutes, and...they shall be my people, and I will be their God" (v. 18-20).
2. **Ezek 36:24-27**, and then "a new new spirit will I put within you...I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes".
3. **Ezek 39** speaking after the overthrow of Gog "Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God" (vs 29).

It is the with this process of giving God's spirit to the dead body of Israel that the vision of chapter 37 is now concerned. What is this spirit that will be given to Israel, which will make the nation live and walk in God's statutes?

### The Spirit

The time spoken of in this prophecy is the time when God shall place (vs 14) Israel in the land covenanted to their fathers. The word place is translated from the Hebrew root *ruach*, which means to give rest. The word "rest" in both Psalms 95:11 and Isa 11:10 is a derivation of the same root. This would suggest that to 'place' Israel in the land is far more than to regather them as Israel is regathered at the present time.

It is to settle them in the land in fulfillment of the promises. Ezekiel confirms this, for he makes it plain that for Israel to be "placed" in the land depends upon them receiving the spirit - God says, "I will put my spirit in you and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land."

Israel will be brought face to face with the Truth about Jesus. Those who accept it in faith will be God's people. They will live in His sight, being energized by that spirit which is the Truth. G. Pearce states "This putting of the spirit into the body of Israel is the instruction they receive which gives them a new heart" (Milestones, 1988, pg. 72).

Jeremiah states "*I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding*" (3:15), and **Jer 23:1-4** "...And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: they shall fear no more nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord." "And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers (no longer blind): and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left (think of Yahweh's words to Joshua)." (**Isa 30:19-21**), and in **Isa 54:11** "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness thou shalt be established", because as Scripture begs: "*How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written (from Isa 52:7), How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*" (**Rom 10:14-15**). This preaching, instruction and teaching will come from the saints to Israel as part of God's spirit. This is still future.

This same order of events-restoration, is echoed in **Ezek 36:**

1. "I will take you from among the heathen...and bring you into your own land" (vs 24).
2. "...A new spirit will I put within you..."(vs 26).
3. "And ye shall dwell (compare vs Ezek 37:25-28 tabernacle, sanctuary, dwell) in the land that I gave to your fathers" (vs 28).

In conclusion, we would ask you also to consider the parallel between Ezek 37:1-14 with Hosea 5:14-6:3. The following are the high points:

1. Both houses of Israel are referred to-just as Ezekiel 37 concerns not a part of the nation but the "whole house of Israel" (vs 11). The judgments of God, under the figure of a lion, are presented as tearing the bodies of both Ephraim and Judah (5:14). This the Assyrian lion did when he invaded Israel in the reign of Hoshea (2 Kings 18:9), and Judah in the reign of Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:13). However, the glorious nature of the envisaged restoration, involving Israel and Judah, would suggest that the Assyrian invasion was a type of Gog's latter day offensive.

2. God hides His face from them until they acknowledge their offence and turn to Him to seek His face (5:15).
3. This will be in a time of affliction (5:15) just as we believe the case in Ezek 37 when they say, "Our hope is lost."
4. They will then say (being instructed by Christ and the saints) "Come let us return unto the Lord: for He hath torn, and He will heal us". (6:1).
5. Then follows the wondrous spiritual revival of that dead nation—"After two days he will revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight" (6:2).

Only when Israel has thus come to accept the truth concerning the Messiah will she stand upon her feet an exceeding great army (Ezek 37:10). She will then become the center of Messiah's operations in the earth. Ruling over Israel in the midst of the nations of the Gentile world the Lord with his saints will administer the work of establishing the kingdom throughout the earth. Then it will be said to Israel: **Micah 4:13** - "*Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion: for I will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt beat in pieces many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth.*"

*Tom Northey*

## THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

Bro. Roberts once stated that "the priesthood of Christ is one of the plainest teachings of the New Testament". The importance of this subject cannot be overstated. His present role as High priest - not according the Levitical system but after the order of Melchisedec (Ps. 110; Heb. 7) - sitting at the right hand of the Father, is a continual reality of every moment of every day. As ratifying the Everlasting Covenant through the shedding of blood, he oversees and mediates on behalf of those who fall under its operation as having been baptized into his saving name. Its very existence (as well as the priestly function throughout the ages) is due to one overriding issue – the existence of sin. Through this intercession we have access to God to seek the forgiveness of sins, of thanksgiving, praise, petition, help and comfort.

That Christ is a High Priest is very clear but what does he do in this position? As a mediator of the New Covenant what purpose does he serve for those who fall under it? Due to recent philosophical and shallow interpretations of scripture and a sliding back into the errors of the churches, a great deal of confusion has been articulated of late within the Brotherhood regarding some very fundamental points in relation to Christ's role as High Priest and how it currently relates to the Household.

Some erroneous views stem from distaste and misunderstanding of the belief that Christ acts as a mediator or intercessor to the Father for the sins of His people. To them this appears to be an angry Deity that needs to be appeased by Christ, which in their view is inconsistent with the grace and love that God has extended to His people. What develops from this faulty premise then is the idea that rather than Christ being an advocate with the Father on our behalf, that Christ is only an advocate **from the Father** toward His people. Though there is some truth to the latter thought, to deny that Christ mediates towards God on behalf of the saints is to deny a vital and life saving principle. This is taken even a step further to declare that Christ's mediatorial role is only for those outside of the Body of Christ in the work of "sharing of the word with the people" to lead them to belief. It is thought that Christ's role as a mediator is finished for the believer upon their baptism and it is suggested that for the saint to offer up prayer through Christ or in his name is **therefore unnecessary** and ritualistic or legalistic. It has also been recently suggested that since Melchisedec was both a priest and king at the same time that therefore the type demands that Christ must be **currently** acting as both priest and king as well. Such views make the clear and simple explanations of the Word of God of none affect.

### For who is Christ a Mediator?

First of all, it is important to understand who Christ is a High Priest for. Is it for the world or for the Household? Thinking back to the lessons of the Law, the Aaronic High priest did not offer sacrifice for sin or intercede on behalf of the world – his work was only for the covenanted house of Israel, and was only beneficial to them upon the condition of their sincerity and obedience. The High Priest wore the breastplate made up of the 12 stones, representing the 12 tribes upon his chest or heart. Likewise, **Hebrews 10:21** informs us that Christ is "*an High Priest over the house of God.*" – the spiritual House of Israel made up of Jews and Gentiles. In **Romans 8:27** Paul explains to the ecclesia that the Spirit, "*maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God*", and that this is Christ's role is further explained in vs. 34 who "*is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*" The "us" mentioned throughout the epistles, including the letter to the Hebrews, is without question in reference to those of the ecclesia and not the world. And back in **Hebrews 7:25**, we are told that Jesus, "*ever liveth to make intercession for them that come unto God by him.*" Bro. J.J. Andrew made a very emphatic summary regarding these scriptural passages – "Thus, the mediatorship of God's beloved Son is limited by the Divine will, the position of those who desire the benefit of his intercession, and the way in which they approach the Father; it must be through His Son only." (Christ and Him Crucified/ The Real Christ, p. 138)

Now, upon baptism we federally pass out of Adam into Christ along with the requirement and commitment to forsake the deeds of the old constitutional Man. Though we are imputed with the righteousness of Christ upon baptism, being freed from the law of sin and death (the constitution of sin) – we still bear the sin (diabolus) nature in our bodies. We are still capable of sin and do sin. **1<sup>st</sup> John 1:8** – "*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*" Upon baptism

we are free from the fatal, legal sentence associated with Adam's sin; but knowing that "the wages of sin is death" and that we continue to commit our own acts of transgression, what provision has been made to save us from the "wages" of our own post-baptismal sins? **1<sup>st</sup> John 1:9** – "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" **2:1** "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not, and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

Though we have passed out of the constitution of sin and fall under jurisdiction of "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus", the cravings and failures of the flesh continue in us and we are in need of intercession/mediation by the work of One qualified as once possessing the sin nature - but overcoming it; One who God views with favor to help maintain our favorable constitutional relationship that is characterized by His supreme righteousness on one side but the corruption and frailty of the flesh on our part. We must remember that God in His supreme righteousness cannot look upon sin – "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity" (Hab. 1:13). Therefore, consider the following:

**Hebrews 4:14-16** – "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest , which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace in time of need." And **7:24,25** – "But this Man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God **by (dia) Him**, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

The word "by" here (which may be better understood by the word "through") is from the Greek preposition *dia* which according to Bullinger "denotes any cause by means of which an action passes into accomplishment".

The way detailed and exclusive way proscribed through Christ is instituted by God. Yahweh has established the means of reconciliation through sacrifice and mediation. It is not for us to apply humanistic thinking to what we think God should be or how we think He should operate. Again quoting from bro. Roberts; "There is nothing in all of this to clash with the fact that God is gracious to our worthless race. His love is shown *in establishing an arrangement by which we have access to His favour and life for evermore*. His love could not be allowed to violate any other attribute of His being; it must work in harmony with all His rules and methods of operation; and this is what it does in the work of Christ." (Ambassador of the Coming Age, Vol. 6, p.25)

Now, how are we to offer up our prayers to God? Is it unnecessary or legalistic for the saint to offer up prayers through Christ by stating "*in Christ's name*"? It is true that many model prayers provided in the scriptures, including the "Lord's Prayer" do

not provide any closing consideration "*in the Name of Jesus Christ*". So is such expression and understanding that our prayers are offered through Christ and in his name a ritualistic invention of man? Christ, speaking of the time when he would be away commanded his apostles (**John 16:23**), "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father **in My name**, He will give it you." But during the time he was present with them he states in the following verse – "Hitherto (or until now) have ye asked nothing **in My name**: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." Once Christ entered the Most Holy at the right hand of his Father, he commenced his High Priestly function of advocate/ mediator/ intercessor and therefore the apostles and all other saints who follow are to approach Yahweh in the only available means provided the Believers – that is through the name of Christ. (See also: John 14:13; Eph. 5:19,20).

Our approach to the Father through the name of our Mediator is not only for the purpose of seeking forgiveness or help, but also **thanksgiving – Romans 1:8** , "I thank my God through **(dia) Jesus Christ** for you all". **Praise** is also to be offered up through Christ. **Hebrews 13:15** – "By [or dia – "through"] him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name." In connection with this, according to 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:5 we are considered a "spiritual house" and therefore makeup the antitypical priests who are "to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by (again dia – "through") Jesus Christ."

It was not until the Aaronic High Priest reappeared from the Most Holy on the Day of Atonement that people knew whether or not their sacrifice had been accepted before God. Whether our prayers, typified by the rising of the sweet fragrance from the altar of incense, are found acceptable to Yahweh depends upon the faithfulness and sincerity of present priestly duties. And the ultimate outcome is not known until our advocate/ mediator/ intercessor, he who stands before God on our behalf as High Priest, leaves the Most Holy at the Father's right hand to judge us according to our works – whether they have been good or bad.

What about the mediation of those out of Christ? As to how God may or may not listen to those out of Christ little is mentioned. We do have the case of Cornelius whose prayer for guidance was heard. God knows all and hears all, this cannot be denied. And for those who are seeking God and his Truth, the proper provisions will be supplied in *taking out of the Gentiles a people for His Name* – but all at the discretion of Divine prerogative.

### A Royal Priesthood

When Christ leaves the right hand of his Father the Household will no longer have a mediator and our probationary records will then be final. But this will not be the end of Christ's priestly role, only a new phase with added responsibility. Though Christ is currently fulfilling the role of High Priest for the Household and is in fact an ANOINTED King, "heir" to the throne of David; **he is not currently reigning as King-Priest** (either in a spiritual or literal sense) but is awaiting the time when he will sit on the Throne of David ruling over the restored Kingdom of Israel in this combined

role. The roles of Prophet, Priest and King must be understood in their appropriate phases and the King-Priest phase **has still not commenced**. Though Christ may have been referred to as a king various times during his first appearance (e.g. Matt. 2:2; John 1:49), this was in reference to Christ's anointed position as the Davidic "heir", not the reigning king. Thus, to use such references to prove that Christ is now also a reigning king as well as priest is to show a serious misunderstanding of the Gospel message – even if it is only meant in the sense of Christ ruling over our day to day motives and actions.

Though Christ is in fact the antitypical "Melchisedec, King of Salem", which is by interpretation King of Righteousness and afterwards King of Peace (Heb. 7:2), the combining of the Priestly duties with the role of King **cannot commence until the throne of David is reestablished in Jerusalem** – the former seat of power for both David and Melchisedec. We know from Divine Promise (2 Sam. 7:16) David himself must be present to witness that restitution. If Christ is already reigning as a King and therefore a King-Priest then the harmony and consistency of Divine Teaching and its prophetic expectations is made shipwreck.

Regarding the Melchisedec principles of "righteousness" and "peace", the imputation of Christ's *righteousness* does bring *peace* to the believer in respect to the atonement and our constitutional status (Eph. 2). But, in regard to **rulership** as "King of Righteousness" and "King of Peace" these principles belong as yet to the future, with the establishment of a Divine theocracy on earth. **Zechariah 6:12,13** – *"Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the Man whose name is The BRANCH; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both".*

Christ is referred to in the prophets as both the "Sun of Righteousness" (Mal.4:2) and the "Prince of Peace" (Is. 9:6). It is with his earthly presence of moral, physical and judicial righteousness, **and not until then**, that we read that "*the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.*" (**Is. 32:17**) **Is. 62:1** – *"For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."* **Micah 5:5**, "*this Man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian comes into our land*". It is out from Jerusalem (Salem) where all aspects of the Melchisedec type (Righteousness and Peace, Priesthood and Kingship) are to be made manifest and applied by Christ and his redeemed multitude for 1,000 years until the last enemy (sin and death) is completely destroyed from the face of the earth. "*In Judah is God (Elohim) known: His name is great in Israel. In Salem also is His tabernacle, and His dwelling place in Zion.*" (Ps. 76:2).

### In Conclusion

It needs to be emphasized that how we understand these matters, especially in relation to Christ's current role as High Priest and our utter dependence upon it, are in

fact matters of life saving Truth. This writer is amazed and troubled that there would be any thought given to waiver on this (and other) basic and clearly revealed subject matter. Truly, these are signs of the times as to the "itching ears mentality" that is gaining strength due to the tolerance and lack of urgency on the part of many.

Brethren, let us put away the nonsensical, philosophical and circular musings that are being promoted in our midst on this and other matters. We must stand unyielding on fundamental Truth, as well as to how that Truth is expressed – which will provide clear guidance for us down the straight and narrow path that leads to everlasting life.

A. Thomas

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## The Continual EDITORIAL COMMENT Controversy Surrounding J.J. Andrew

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BRO. J. J. ANDREW DEAD. Death has at last claimed a devoted, faithful and able brother. Our beloved and highly esteemed brother, J. J. Andrew, died early in the month of June. Perhaps of him it can be said as Paul did of himself, "For him to die was gain," since for five or six years he had been sadly afflicted with paralysis, affecting him physically, mentally and vocally. This affliction, almost at its first attack, brought to a close a long life of usefulness in the Truth, and as we believe almost terminated that probation which will receive approval of the Lord when the time of dispensation of rewards comes. It was up to that time it could be said of our dear brother that he had fought a good fight, he had kept the faith, he had finished his course. The lingering days that followed till death came may not be counted.

For nearly 40 years, Bro. J. J. Andrew has been a power of good in the work of the Truth, both by pen and by tongue, and especially by example as seen in a life that adorned the doctrines he was so well able to forcefully, yet calmly, and logically set forth. In the battles which the Christadelphian fought for years for the purity of the Truth, who did more able and valiant work than Bro J. J. Andrew? While others rushed in and, perhaps, vehemently met the first onslaughts, it was Bro. Andrew's calm, logical work of clearing up all difficulties and removing all obstacles that helped more than anything else to fortify and establish the strongholds of the Truth. He was so constituted that whatever he took in hand to do, it must be done thoroughly. He was a veritable embodiment of precision, and so long as he was spared affliction he was able to largely counteract the tendency of this characteristic to run to extremes. Toward the latter part of his life the Christadelphian world had the sad opportunity of witnessing how suddenly friends could become bitter foes. But aggravating as were some of the tongues that "set on fire of Gehenna", our dear brother, who is now at rest from it all, never retaliated, but made manifest that he had well learned the lesson of the Master, who, "when he was reviled, reviled not again." Take your rest, dear Bro. Andrew, in death's silent and undisturbed repose. Our turn may come ere long; but our prayer is that when the trumpet shall sound to wake the Lord's sleeping ones we

shall be worthy as we believe you are to receive the longed-for-words from the lips of our absent Lord. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." *Thomas Williams – Advocate, August 1907 – Pp. 248-249 (Reprinted in the pamphlet - "John James Andrew Offender or Defender?" – Bro. Jim Washeck – February 2002)*

So reads the eulogy of the man who is probably the most controversial figure in Unamended Christadelphian history. Brother Williams appeared to be the most outspoken supporter of this man, but also recognized that in the later years of Brother Andrew's life, the brother did change his position on certain doctrinal matters. Those difficult times surely strained the relationship between these two pioneer stalwarts of the Truth, who at times stood together in the fight against the errors that were being promulgated within the Household during those early years of the revival of the Truth. It is sad and unfortunate that doctrinal issues arose between these two men. However, as stated in Brother Andrew's eulogy, it appears that Brother Williams still maintained a lot of respect for his co-worker in the defense of the Truth.

Based on writings from Brother Williams and other historical writings found in Unamended literature, it appears that in his later years, Brother Andrew suffered from various illnesses of the flesh and because of his weakened position, he allowed himself to be influenced by others that were close to him in his last years. Unfortunately, the controversy surrounding this brother continues to the current day and will probably continue through these last days leading to the return of our Master. As we study the Christadelphian history over the last 100 plus years, one should realize that Brother Andrew has been supported by many and has been ridiculed and ostracized by others. The latest controversy (that is the subject of this article) will probably produce the same response within the Unamended community.

In the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a pamphlet was published and distributed in the Christadelphian community by a bro. Thomas Burton entitled "*Christ's Death, Resurrection and Intercession, when, and how does it affect the Believer*" (originally written in 1904). This booklet gave the impression that it was written by Brother Andrew, though it was not published until after his death. The publication and distribution of it caused Brother Williams to respond in the Advocate with strong criticism of the pamphlet due to the doctrinal errors that were contained within. We ask our readers to read Brother Williams' responses in the 1910 Advocate magazines for August, September, and October (available on disc). In more recent times, Brother Jim Stanton declined to re-print this pamphlet because of the doctrinal errors that were supported in it (Sanctuary-Keeper - September, 1988).

Brother Williams makes these statements in the September, 1910 Advocate regarding this flawed pamphlet: "If J.J. Andrew's pen wrote this and the rest of the pamphlet, it was not J.J. Andrew's mind that moved the pen. Any body who has read the writings of J.J. Andrew can easily see this, and will not do him the injustice of attributing to him the diction, the confusion and the absurdities of this pamphlet – not that we for a moment mean to say that the publisher has not acted honestly, nor do we question the honesty of any one who has had to do with this production. Nevertheless

it is a pity that an honest, but mistaken, idea of rights and privileges in the use of a deceased author's name has a tendency to give prestige to a work which is lamentably undeserving of it..." End Quote. It appears that Brother Williams is questioning the fact that Brother Andrew even wrote this pamphlet.

It is not the intention of this article to debate the doctrinal issues that were published, for we recognize and admit that the pamphlet contained doctrinal errors. It is our intention to warn our readers that this same pamphlet has been used in other current Unamended Christadelphian writings to defend the position taken by some in the Brotherhood that covenanted individuals currently possess "eternal life" in a spiritual or legal sense from the point in time when they come into covenant relationship with our Creator. This erroneous position, that the believers currently possess eternal life in a legal or spiritual sense, was taught within this controversial pamphlet, supposedly written by bro. Andrew. Again, we do not believe that this position is scripturally correct. Therefore, we do not believe that this pamphlet should be used by anyone to support a theory that we currently have eternal life in any sense.

The re-publication in these later days of bits and pieces of this controversial pamphlet may again have a detrimental result on the reputation of Brother Andrew. We believe that because of this current re-publication that some modern day Christadelphians, Unamended and Amended, may take the position of "*See, I told you so. Brother Andrew was the main cause of the split between the two bodies and this pamphlet proves that he did not cling to the truth of Yahweh.*" We believe that this is the wrong position to take.

Brother Andrew was a valuable contributor to the proclamation and defense of the one Truth. Unfortunately, in his later years he did stray away from his earlier positions. Because of the documented health issues of our Brother in his last years we do not believe that a work created and published during that time, which teaches erroneous doctrines, should be used by modern day Christadelphians to support the erroneous doctrinal positions that some Unamended brothers are taking in these last years prior to the return of our Master.

We admit that Brother Andrew was a man of controversy most of his life in the Truth and continues to be a controversial figure long after his death. We think that the best position to take regarding Brother Andrew is to appreciate the good works done by him in his good years for the defense of the Truth and extend compassion to him for the problems he suffered in his last years.

Let us not be drawn away by every wind of doctrine in these latter days before the return of our Master, but rather let us be like the believers of the first century Berean Ecclesia – Acts 17:11: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and **searched** the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." This is the safest path that we can take as we await the call to the Judgment seat of our Redeemer.