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Pressing on Toward the Goal.

(Contributed Article).

READING Philippians 3:8-17 according to the Revised Standard Version seems to convey further helpful thoughts. In the Authorized version it is a passage well known to all Christians.

Firstly, the “all things” which Paul counted as loss were chiefly, if not solely, the advantages of which he could boast in Israel after the flesh. Paul’s lineage was such of which the average Jew would boast. Instead of glorying in the above average station in which he was born, he repudiated it, because he had found something better. Quoting from the R.S.V., he says that though he had reason for confidence in the flesh above other men, he had been led to see that it was no gain at all; in fact he repudiates it gladly in order to lay claim to something better. The only thing Paul wanted was to gain Christ, and be found in Him, — “not having a righteousness of my own, based on law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith.”

This faith that Paul had was not mere credulity; it was not a blind faith, but based on knowledge and reason. To use a simple illustration; we do not put faith in any person who is a complete stranger to us. When we confide in a person, or seek advice in personal, important affairs, the faith we have in that person is based on our previous knowledge of him; we know he is reliable and to be trusted. Faith, then, cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. We are not asked or expected to believe in something that cannot be understood.

When Paul says in verse 10,—”that I may know him (Christ) and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,” he was not desiring or seeking something that was obscure to him; he knew what he was talking about. How many professing Christians today really desire to share the sufferings of Jesus, and become like Him in His death? Rather, many fear the death that Paul desired. (Heb. 2:15.) If there is one thing more than any other that the flesh, or natural man, shrinks from, it is suffering. As for being made like Jesus in His death, how many really desire it? The ignominy of Jesus’ death is hard to appreciate in this day, when, outwardly at least, the cross and the death of Jesus are somewhat glorified. But in His day such a death was viewed as the lowest of the low. Few seek after that kind of death; most have a regard that they might make their mark in the world, and that their posterity shall look back upon their life and work with pleasure and pride.

Paul had a reason for desiring such close association with his Saviour, and verse 11 tells us what it was,—”that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.” We know that this was the first or chief resurrection that he desired, the spiritual or heavenly inheritance, the glory of the Lord. It was the glory of

the Lord that inspired Paul; he wanted that above everything, and he was no misinformed Christian. “If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him”; “if we are planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.” The one is necessary to attain the other. Paul knew that no earthly path of roses leads to glory.

In verse 12 he acknowledges,—”Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect; (no, but he was daily continually seeking to attain it) but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.” What beautiful expressions are in this version. Christ Jesus had made Paul His own; yes, had bought him with a price, had cleansed him fully, so that now there was no condemnation in him. What a miserable thing the Law arrangement was by comparison. It was fully to be expected that he would regard his previous connections with the Law as *a* loss; he had been wasting time and effort to no end, but now Christ Jesus was his aim. All that Christ Jesus offered him was not yet his own, he said, “but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

Let us carry that beautiful thought with us every day—the “upward call of God in Christ Jesus” — more and more the things of earth fade and the things of heaven grow nearer and dearer. Not only so, but our lives become daily more sanctified in the Master’s service; the daily round and common task has more lustre the longer we live, because we *see* that in every moment we can glorify our Father above, and what does not do so, we disdain to touch. While in tune with Him there is no experience of any kind that can befall us except it work out good for us in respect of the upward call of God — all draws us nearer to Him, removes dross of the old nature, and matures further the fruits of the spirit.

At times we may question this, and doubt if some experiences do really draw us closer to the Lord, but if we take the long view we are fully persuaded that all things do work together for the lasting good of those who are reaching out toward that great foundation Headstone of the corner, laid in heaven.

In the messages to the seven churches in Revelation, we know that the one addressed to the church of Thyatira (Rev 2:18-29) is historically addressed to the church during the time of the Papal reign. We need to read history to realise what the Christians of that time had to endure; indeed, they were persecuted practically to extinction. The Son of God, with piercing eyes like a flame of fire — eyes that miss nothing, either of good or evil — commends those who had maintained their zeal, through terrific trial for the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

In Rev. 2:19, we read — “Your last works exceed your first.” (R.S.V.) He loved and appreciated their first works, imperfect though they had been as “babes in Christ,” but all the long years of their trial time had worked out good, had mellowed and matured them, so that now the latter works of these true ones were more prized by their Lord. It is good for us all to know and realise that whatever our experiences, the fruits of the spirit are developing, the call of God in Christ is drawing us ever upwards, even though our earthly body is going down in ignominy—”becoming like Jesus in His death.”

Phil. 3:15 reads—”Let those of us who are mature be thus minded,” and verse 17 — “Brethren, join in imitating me.” May God help us to do so.

May we conclude with a special word to the younger folks who may not yet be “mature” ones, but who have in some measure meditated upon the things relative to the “upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” Your numbers will be few in this day; care not for that, the Lord is sufficient. Watch unto prayer and keep close to Him. In this world of today you face peculiar difficulties, but Jesus knows the position. We are in the world, even if we are not of it. The majority of professing Christians today are both in the world and of it too. Then there is the unrealistic Christian who tries not to be in the world, or of it either, the monk-like tendency that shuts-in to self, and all else out.

You are young, with life before you, and like all Christians you are expected to provide things honest in the sight of men. This is the day of the specialist. There is no degradation in earning a living with pick and shovel, but we need to realise that today no such jobs exist. The world of tomorrow will know little labor but skilled labor, and the wise youth of today will fit himself. To the truly Christian youth this may present a test and a problem. If you have heard the “upward call of God in Christ Jesus,” and are minded to press on for its prize, you will probably feel that the time and energy required for your education for secular things is taking everything. Think of the old hymn—”Fight manfully onward, Dark passions subdue, Look ever to Jesus, He’ll carry you through.”

Learn to order your ways; remember, you have not got to do things because everyone else is doing them. As youths, your education to fit you for secular work is necessary; pay good attention to it, but seek and pray for the spirit of a sound mind. Even in this, as in everything, remember there are many things the world counts gain which are not really so. The most blessed experience that any of you can have is to know that “Christ Jesus hath made you His own.” Thus, going through His “school” make progress in “the upward call of God” that it might be true of you, that “your latter works exceed your former work,” in making Christ Jesus your own.

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The Presence of Christ.

THE subject of Christ's return is surely of paramount importance to all His disciples, and it is of special interest to all sincere students to know that eminent scholars of the Bible are agreed that the English word "presence" is the equivalent of the Greek word "parousia."

When we may look forward to having an absent friend with us for a season, we know that there must be a moment of arrival, also a time when he will be journeying, and thus "drawing near," but it is his presence to which we look forward. Though in speaking of the matter, we may say we shall do this or that when he comes, we do not mean, when he is drawing near or at the moment of arrival, but while he is present with us and we are enjoying the renewed fellowship.

The word "parousia" occurs 24 times in the Greek Testament, and there would seem to be no other word than "presence" that can so well be used to translate it in every instance.

In the Epistles we have:-

(1) 1 Cor. 15:23. Speaking of the resurrection of Christ (head and body), as the first fruits, afterwards, they that are Christ's during His "presence." James also speaks of the church—the body of Christ— as being a first-fruits unto God. Christ died, rose and revived, that He might be Lord of the dead and the living, thus all belong to Him by right of purchase. All are Christ's — the just and unjust—and are to be raised during His 1000 years' reign. "As all in Adam die, so all in Christ shall be made alive." 1 Cor. 15:21,24. Rom. 14:9. Acts 24:15. John 5:28,29.

(2) 1 Cor. 16:17. Here Paul is expressing his gladness at, the presence of three brethren. "For they have refreshed my spirit." That was not by their journeying "or "drawing near," nor by the act of "arrival," but by their "presence" and fellowship.

(3) 2 Cor. 7:6; (4) 2 Cor. 7:7. Here the Apostle speaks of the comfort he had by Titus having come to him. It was not that Titus was coming, but that he was comforted by his presence and fellowship, and the good news he had brought.

(5) 2 Cor. 10:10. Here:the word "parousia" is correctly translated presence, and it should be clear to all that that is what is meant. One could not reasonably say that His bodily "drawing near" was weak, or that His bodily "arrival" was weak.

(6) Phil. 1:26. Certainly Paul did not mean that the act of his arrival would do the Philippians good; it was his presence and fellowship, his instructions and counsel that would increase their joy.

(7) Phil. 2:12. The word is again correctly translated "presence," and is placed as the alternative to absence. No other word could so well convey the meaning of the passage.

(8) 1 Thess. 2:19. Again the meaning is not the "arrival," or "drawing near," but the "presence" of the Lord, for the Apostle speaks of the church as being in the presence of the Lord all that time.

(9) 1 Thes. 3:13. The word rendered "coming" should be "presence" here also. The Apostle is referring to the same event as in the previous passage, namely, the church being present with the Lord at His second presence with all His saints.

(10) 1 Thes. 4:15. Here again the word rendered "coming" should be "presence." If the Lord was to come

like a flash of lightning, as some so misunderstand Matt. 24:27, then no one could await with joy, nor could there be any time when “The dead in Christ, having risen first,” some could be left over or remain. With the true rendering of “parousia,” i.e., presence, all is harmonious and reasonable. When the Lord should be present, He would first raise those who had fallen asleep in Christ, and then those who were still alive in the flesh would be caught away just as they finished their course to be together with the Lord, with those who had preceded them. These do not sleep as others who died before the presence of Christ, but at the moment of death are “Changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,” and so they together with all the body of Christ shall be “forever with the Lord.”

(11) 1 Thes. 5:23. Again read presence instead of coming. It is not the act of His “arrival” we look forward to, but to His presence.

(12) 2 Thess. 2:1; (13) 2 Thess. 2:8; (14) 2 Thess. 2:9. The word should undoubtedly be rendered presence in each of these texts.

(15) James 5:7; (16) James 5:8. It should be evident to all that the “presence” is the thing which James referred to and not the act of “arrival,” or “drawing near.”

(17) 2 Pet. 1:16. That Peter had in mind the “presence” of Christ in Kingdom glory, is evident from the fact that he refers to the “Transfiguration” which was a picture of the Kingdom.

(18) 2 Pet. 3:4. Should read “Where is the promise of His presence?” This verse is having fulfilment in this our day.

(19) 2 Pet. 3:12. This has reference to the time called, “The day of God,” “The day of the Lord’s wrath.” It will not be a flash of lightning in length of time, but a period, “A time of trouble,” even greater than that in Noah’s day, or at the destruction of Jerusalem.

(20) 1 John 2:28. If the coming of the Lord was like a flash of lightning, there would be no time for anyone to feel ashamed “before” Him, but John had no such thought. He, along with all those who love His appearing, looked forward to being like the Lord and with Him, and to “see Him as He is.” Such have confidence that they shall not be ashamed before Him at His presence.

Thus we have gone over all the instances of the word “parousia” in the Epistles, and see that no other word than “presence” can so well convey in English the meaning of the inspired writers. Now we turn to Matt. 24, where the remaining four translations of the word occur, and find that the same word “presence” is clearly the Lord’s meaning in each case.

(21) Matt. 24:3. Here is the inspired question which was asked of the Lord, in order that the inspired answer could be provided for our edification, and it is only when we allow the proper meaning of the Greek word “parousia” four times used in this connection that *we* can comprehend the “meat in due season.” V. 45.

“When shall all these things be and what shall be the sign of thy presence (parousia) and of the end of the age?” So that the answer given is not indicating signs that the Lord was soon to be near, or to arrive, but rather that He would be present when the signs should be seen.

Had the Lord intended returning in a way visible to all human eyes, there could be no value in providing any sign of His presence, but as He had said that it would not be with observation, the signs are given, and the signs are all now to be seen.

(22) Matt. 24:27. It would be indeed a sorry thing if the Lord was to come and go just like the lightning flash, but when we see that the Greek word rendered "lightning" is elsewhere used for the shining of a candle, we readily perceive that it is the glorious sunshine, rising in the east and shining all day, setting at evening in the west, that is here used to show the glorious reign of the "Sun of righteousness, which shall arise with healing in His wings." Also, that it is not just the "arrival," "coming," or "drawing near" that is referred to, but the "presence" of the Son of man, which will continue for a 1000 year day. The word rendered "lightning" simply means "brightness," or "shining," and could be used for sunshine, or shining of a candle, or brightness of lightning, and is dependent upon connections respecting translation.

(23) Matt. 24:37; (24) Matt. 24:39. "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the presence of the Son of man be."

The word in the Authorized Bible is mistakenly rendered "coming." As Noah was present in the "Days of Noah," so, of course, our Lord must be present in the days of the Son of man. See corresponding passage in Luke 17:24,26.

Earthly Way Ended.

Recently our elderly Brother Neale, of Adelaide, reached the end of the earthly way. In recent years our Brother had been hindered by ill-health from attending Class meetings, but always warmly received those who visited him in his home. Brother Neale was one who had learned to trust the Lord, and he bore the effects of a painful malady with patience and fortitude, and looked forward with desire for the coming of God's Kingdom of righteousness and peace, when sickness, sorrow and death will all be done away. Much sympathy is expressed to the members of our Brother's family, and especially to Sister Neale and son John, who have lost a loving husband and kind father. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Psa. 30:5.)

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Contentment.

"Charge not thyself with the weight of *a* year,
Child of the Master, faithful and dear;
Choose not the cross for the coming week,
For that is more than He bids thee seek;
Bend not thine arms for tomorrow's load—
Thou may'st leave that to thy gracious God;
Daily only He saith to thee,

'Take up thy cross and follow me.'"

Except the Lord Build the House.

(Psa. 127:1,2.)

(Convention Address)

“EXCEPT the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that are builders of it in it.” So reads the margin rendering, and we think this is quite applicable to our topic. This supports what we know to be true, that much energy, influence, time, expenditure, conscription of forces, flattery, violence, guile, falsehood, truth mixed with error, art, talents, beauty and ugliness, sacrifice, science, learning, inventions, in short, all the resources of which man is capable are exercised for one purpose. That purpose is to build a house, a collective house.

People build houses for a variety of reasons —(a) For shelter from the elements; (b) for protection from enemies; (c) for independence; (d) for creative expression; (e) for raising a family; (f) for investment of wealth; (g) for rest and peace. Our text definitely teaches two things— (1) The Lord takes a part in human affairs; (2) only when man’s efforts are in harmony with the Grand Architect can the building be passed as fit for habitation.

None should need convincing of the inability of any house to withstand storm and tempest, tidal wave and earthquake, lightning and fire. “The world that was” perished in a flood. Regarding those who build houses for rest and peace, we wonder if they find any peace outside of God’s peace.

Other houses are constructed with a view to something different to habitation; a place of worship or a religious institution; a legislative assembly embracing either the building itself or the assembly itself; a place of business, many big business houses being prefixed with “The House of So and So”; and there is the Stock Exchange.

A house could also refer to “a household,” a family, including ancestors and descendants. You have heard of the House of Windsor, the House of Stuart, the House of Jacob, the House of Israel, Judah and David. “Moses was faithful in all his house”; that is, the house of servants, and there is also a house of sons, the Head of that House being Jesus Himself. “If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub,” Jesus queried of the disciples, “how much more them of his household?” Our text still holds good, “Except the Lord builds the house, they labour in vain that are builders of it in it.”

Many houses are built embracing one or more of the foregoing ideas or ideals for construction. Irrespective of how many houses may combine for greater strength (since unity is strength), God’s sanction for continuance is needed.

Just as a group of houses may combine and become a village, so villages may combine and become towns, towns amalgamate and become cities; cities affiliate to become nations; nations combine for commonwealths. Yet this same simple truth is applicable to either the humble tent in the wilderness as it is to the magnificent temple, the city of gold, or the “impregnable” nation. Our text warns, too, that any conspiracy to defeat God’s plan will be of no avail. “Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.” (Read also Psa. 2:1-6.)

In case we think “it couldn’t happen to us,” turn the pages of history back and ponder the might and strength, pomp and glory of nations that have ruled the world and today are no more than a memory.

God invites us to ponder a few things about “the watchman.” He was the employee of the group to be alert, awake, and about his business so that the other occupants of the city could enjoy their sleep, their

rest. The watchman would instantly raise the alarm the moment danger threatened. It could be invasion, enemies, natural disturbances, “underground” movements, etc. Once the alarm was given remedies could be taken to offset the coming trial. One could not blame the watchman for doing his work; in fact he is to be commended. The cause for complaint was without doubt in the house, in the village, the city, or in the nation.

The housebuilders of the city, the builders of it in it, transferred their responsibility to the watchman; he would safeguard their interests. The watchman would no doubt call for reinforcements as needed; his garrison would be strengthened as the occasion demanded. The watchman’s efforts are said to be all in vain except •the Lord keep the city. Ponder how men have striven to ward off the wages of iniquity. In the city we call Christendom are four big houses—social, political, financial and ecclesiastical—and all have their watchmen.

Are there any watchmen in today’s cities? Remember his duties of yesteryear; to guard against, to protect, to warn, etc. Think of all the money and effort expended annually to protect the city, the nation, against disease; the military forces that console us with security and defence; the political armies who arrange our welfare conditions; the scientists who contribute their share towards defence and arresting disease, etc.; the research workers; sometimes conscripted armies of watchmen; the huge watchdogs that raise their towers to overlook the cities’ walls, we call them insurance companies; banks to guard our wealth; newspapers, radio and television to cry aloud the moment danger is sensed; the economists to solve all our currency troubles; the firemen; public servants, etc., are all “watchmen” guarding our cities from trouble that may develop either outside or inside its walls.

The text of our subject further describes activities organised for the city’s continuance. Troubles have come; they have increased both in size and importance. To counter these troubles, these calamities, has meant many long hours of fatigue; rising early, retiring late, a thousand-and-one sacrifices by all inhabitants. We have not been as successful as we hoped, as we prided. The “bread of sorrows” has in some way come to every home, every house; the aftermath of two world wars left bread of sorrows which we still eat. The stain of sin we cannot cover. Instead of fewer hospitals we need more, still more, and bigger than ever; mental institutions, too.

If the watchman wakes in vain, except the Lord keep the city, it surely means that the inhabitants have no peace, no rest, despite transferring their responsibilities to the watchman. Could anything be truer? It also means that despite all efforts, trouble, calamity, death has found us unprepared.

Abraham looked for a city which hath foundations, a city built not on the sand of surface values. Jesus described the progressive troubles of the house, or city, built on sand. He said in His parable — “*And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell; and great was the fall of it.*” Please note the gradual deterioration until the final phase, when “great was the fall of it.” The watchmen are on the job, but the Prophet Isaiah says they are “blind, ignorant, dumb dogs that cannot bark, greedy who can never have enough, shepherds that cannot understand, all looking to their own way, for their own gain, thinking that tomorrow will be the same as this day.” (Isa. 56:10-12.)

A house, a household, a village, a city or a nation, or a commonwealth of nations built on selfishness, hatred, envy, violence, deceit, idolatry, would possibly find it hard to believe, while the builders of it are in it, that dire experiences are just around the corner. When the “best of them is as a brier and the upright among them sharper than a thorn hedge,” Micah says the day of visitation is on *its* way. The condition is so grave, they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net, contention and strife, no confidence in another, no mercy to intervene for other suffering folk; what a sorry picture. Micah says this will happen when the “enemies of man in his own house” are not subdued. Things progress from bad to worse until all that can be done is to “wrap it up” for bitter vexation, perplexity, fear, and destruction to

take its toll. (Mic. 7:1-4.) It has happened before, many times.

Despite this gloomy picture, there is a brighter side. In this respect our text says, “He giveth his beloved sleep.” There may be fightings without, fears within, the “mountains may be cast into the midst of the sea,” “men’s hearts may be failing them for fear of those things which are coming upon the earth.” It could be a time of great shaking, as prophesied in Hebrews 12:22-28, yet all the while “He giveth his beloved sleep.” Rest, peace, belong to the Lord’s people. Jesus left us a legacy of peace; who can take it away? If God be for us who can be against us?

Why do His beloved rest in peace when all around is confusion and strife? Because their faith is in God’s House, a House in which are many mansions; a mansion for the House of Sons; a mansion for the house of servants; a mansion for the house- (hold) of man — the family of man. Because their faith is in the City of the Living God, the New Jerusalem, a city whose Builder and Maker is God. It was Solomon, a man of peace, of rest, who built the typical house of God; the same qualities of rest and peace will be found among the House of Sons who are to assist, (“coworkers together with God”) in building the “house not made with hands.”

When that gracious building is complete a strange work is promised; God has promised to re-build a house now in ruins. It is the tabernacle of David, fallen down in ruins, but, thank God, is to be restored to its former glory and power for the blessing of mankind in general. “Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.” “He giveth his beloved sleep.”

Jesus, the “thief in the night” has broken into the *house*, the “kingdoms” of this world. “The present evil world” will soon be a thing of the past, and then the New Jerusalem, the House of God’s building, will take control, and what a prospect! This will be a house, the labour of which will not be in vain.

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Faith and Sight.

(Contributed Article)

LET us draw your attention to Hebrews 11:1 —”Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” As we intend to show ;the difference between Faith and Sight, we could look at 2 Tim. 2:15 —”Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

It will be observed by what follows that the dividing of the word of truth indicates a time feature, or time period.

The whole plan of God is divided into such periods; we refer to the time of the Prophets, the time of the Judges, the Kings, the time of Christ, etc. The particular time we have under consideration is known in the Scriptures as — “In those days,” “the last days,” or “the time of the end,” which brings us to the period in which we see our faith turning to sight. Once having seen something we no longer need to have faith in it in the sense of still expecting it.

Getting back to Hebrews 11:1, this is what one concordance has to say about it—”Faith is a dependence on the veracity of another”—and as God is the author of all prophecy it must increase our faith in Him. Having our faith in God and His prophecies, let us examine Zech. 12:3—”In that day (the last days or time of the end) will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people; all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.” Look at Matt. 24:6-8, which has reference to the last days —Bible students recognise this as the end of the Gentile times; namely, 1914 onwards.

Another prophecy which helps us in this matter is Dan. 12:4 which could apply now only, and can be recognised and understood. With all these things happening before our eyes, seeing •them must increase our faith in the author of them; namely, our Heavenly Father.

We would like to draw your attention. to Dan. 11:40—”And at the time of the end shall the king of •the south push at him; and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.” This is the time of the gathering of the nations by God. See also Isa. 10:24-34; 17:12-14; 34:8,9; Joel 3:1-4,9; Zech. 14:14; Ezek. 37; 38; 39. This gathering is to be to the Promised Land, which boundaries are shown in Gen. 15:18; the latter part of the verse reads— ”From the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”

Have a look at a map of the Middle East, the focal point being Palestine; trace the Euphrates from its mouth, at the top end of the Persian Gulf, back to its source. You will observe that the north takes in a considerable portion of Syria, while to the eastern side of Palestine is Jordan and Iraq, while on the southern border is Saudia Arabia, and all these countries are hostile to the Jews,—God’s people.

Let us look now at the gathering of Israel. We are familiar with the 37th chapter of Ezekiel which shows the gathering of the “dry bones.” (Also Ezek. 36:31-38.) We can see that this process began with Zionism and the Balfour Declaration, the release of the Promised Land from the Turks in 1918, and Israel becoming a nation in 1948. The last phase is shown in Ezek. 37:14 when the breath of life, or the spirit, is given, when God comes to their aid at Armageddon, at which time they will recognise their Messiah — “Him whom they had pierced.”

We have already said that all nations are to be gathered together; how do they line up; can we recognise

them?

Today they are commonly known as East and West, with two distinct ideologies. How do the Scriptures define them? As North and South. Does the Bible show this division? We will draw your attention to the description in Ezek. 38:2,3,5,6. We see in these verses the names of Gog, Magog, Meshech, Tubal, Gomer, Togarmah, Persia, Ethiopia and Libya. We must include Egypt in this group, as they are the avowed enemies of Israel, and are now in league with Russia.

What about the king of the South? Let us look at Ezek. 38:13,—”Sheba and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, and all the young lions thereof.” Look at the map again. Sheba and Dedan are on the southern tip of the peninsula, bounded by the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. Today Sheba and Dedan are names only, but the locality is the important point, because the British control this sector, which is known as Aden. It is generally conceded by Bible students that the “Tarshish” mentioned in Ezek. 38:13, means Britain, and if we take the whole of chapters 38 and 39 they show that Sheba and Dedan are there right to the end.

We think it is right to bring in Zech. 12:3 at this point. “And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people; all that burden themselves with it shall be cut into pieces,” etc. The term “that day” (or time of the end) is used again. We know that Turkey held great sway in the Middle East in 1914, and were in control of Jerusalem; they lost it to Britain in 1918. What has happened in the time from 1918 till now? Britain has lost possessions or alliances with these countries—Egypt, Canal Zone, Jordan, Iraq, India, Burma, Ceylon, Malaya, Singapore and Cyprus, thus forcing her into the only safe position in the Middle East, that of Aden (Sheba and Dedan), which we know is south of

Jerusalem. This leads us to the conclusion that Britain and all she represents is the King of the South.

This may seem like a presentation on history and geography, but we feel that what has been stated is the prophetic utterance, as we see it in the Scriptures pertaining to the time of the end, and also the signs of the time of the end as shown in Matthew 24, and other similar Scriptures, such as Daniel 12:4. Seeing all these things does not hold our interest simply on account of their military or national *significance*, but because they show us the times in which we are living, and their prophetic value, knowing that they are the culminating part of God’s Plan. Therefore, having seen them, our faith is increased in the Word of God, and in Him who inspired the accounts to be written, hence our dependence on the veracity of our Heavenly Father.

Our justification in watching these things is borne out by the life of our Master. He was very conscious of things going on around Him, and we know He came to be the Redeemer of mankind by His sacrificial death. He could have gone straight to the temple after His baptism and sojourn in the wilderness for forty days and said, “I am Jesus of Nazareth! I am the King of the Jews! I am the Son of God,” and then have been promptly executed for so-called blasphemy, as He was eventually, and His death would have brought the salvation of mankind. But our Lord had many things to do, chiefly the inauguration of the Church. He associated with all kinds of people from the least unto the greatest in the land. He healed the beggars, the sick, etc.; He dined with publicans and sinners; He had discussions with the priests and Pharisees who were considered the spiritual leaders of Israel; He also came in contact with high civil officials of the land, such as Herod and Pilate.

All these things He did that He may become a sympathetic and understanding High Priest. (See Heb. 4:14,15.)

Can we as followers of the Master do less? We know if we are faithful unto death we will be made kings and priests; therefore, we too must be sympathetic and understanding. We are told to watch and pray as we see these prophecies being fulfilled, such as the 24th chapter of Matthew, Daniel 12:4, etc. May God

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