

The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No. 79

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In this Issue:

Page 1. Editorial	Harvey and Evelyn Linggood
Page 1. Too True To Be New (continued)	Brother Ernest Brady
Page 4. What Became of The Ark of The Covenant?	F.G.J
Page 4. The Ark	Brother G.L.Dreifuss
Page 6. The Bible and World Peace	Brother F.C.Maycock
Page 10. In Zion Poem	L.L.S.
Page 10. Reason For The Virgin Birth	Brother Ernest Brady

Editorial

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus and Reader friends,

Warm Greetings to you all and many thanks for all letters and messages received during the past month; a letter from Sis. Myrtle James of Ontario Canada informed us that Bro. Harold James her brother in law fell peacefully asleep on April 18th, 1986, he had been in very poor health for a number of years, so as she said we cannot sorrow for him to be back, nevertheless he will be much missed, his suffering is now over and we hope soon to be reunited with all the faithful when the Master returns.

World news has been dominated recently over the Nuclear power plant in Chernobyl and Bro. Phil Parry writes "It seems that what happened to the Nuclear reactor power station in the Ukraine is a lesson and a warning to the world that it is abusing a power it is not meant to use because of the inability of man to control it.

The Apostle Peter refers to what will happen in the future. 2 Peter 3. Whether as a result of men or God, he mentions the elements melting with fervent heat exactly what happened to the core of the reactor in the power plant – so what will it be like on a greater scale? Peter says "Seeing ye know these things will happen when the day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night, what manner of persons ought ye to be, you who are looking for such things, God always gives warning of what He is about to do in order that perchance men may repent and turn to Him through the means placed at their disposal, so that they are without excuse".

This month sees the completion of "Too True to be New" by E. Brady. We have also an exhortation by Bro. Leo. Dreifuss entitled "The Ark", Also an article by our late Bro. F.C.Maycock on "The Bible and World Peace" written many years ago. We pray for the welfare of you all both at home and abroad and send our good wishes and Sincere love in the Masters Service.

Harvey and Evelyn Linggood.

Too True To Be New.

continued from May

The question then arises, if the condemnation which Adam incurred was a legal bondage or alienation which involved all his children, in the same sense in which Levi while yet unborn is said to have paid tithes in Abraham to Melchisedec, how was it possible for Jesus, who was also a man, to

escape it? The explanation is in the facts of His birth. It was to make the Redeemer of the race a near kinsman of the one to be ransomed but at the same time free from the bondage which held him that He was a new creation begotten by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary. It was this necessity, and this alone, which required that Jesus should derive His life not from the condemned line, but anew from the source, direct from God. If Jesus had been a son of Joseph He would have been no different physically or in nature from what He was, but His life would have come to Him from Adam and would have been a condemned or forfeited life. Had that been the case, it would have been impossible for Him to offer Himself as a sacrifice however willing He might have been, or for such a sacrifice to have been accepted. It would have been the same as if a Jew had offered a pig or a dog instead of the prescribed lamb or other legally clean animal. This is actually what the Christadelphian view comes to, for if inherited sinful flesh and condemnation are not blemishes and do not render a creature imperfect then words have no meaning. But we know that Jesus was not the son of Joseph. His life was newly created by the Holy Spirit for the sole and especial purpose of bringing into the world a man related to Adam, of the identical flesh and blood nature, but Whose life was not derived, from the alienated Adamic source. It was on this account that the Angel was to say to Mary "Therefore that Holy Thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

We have seen that the doctrine of inherited sinful nature is completely false, not even the worst sinner is born with a defiled nature, therefore neither was Jesus; there is no need for the invention of either an Immaculate Conception or for an unscriptural distinction between Jesus' nature and his character. He was the same flesh as His mother, as His brothers and sisters and as all other humans.

It was in the origin of His life that He differed, and this difference was not of physical quality, of goodness or badness, but a legal one, a difference, we may truly say, of ownership. Jesus belonged to God because He was given life direct by God and was not brought into existence by the will of the flesh as an extension of the life of Adam. This is why He was called "holy" from birth. This does not simply mean He was a good baby, for as an infant He could not manifest a holy character; it meant He was set apart; He was holy because of His origin. This is what Jesus referred to when He spoke of Himself being "from above" while His hearers were "from below," and when He said "He that committeth sin is the servant of sin and abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth ever." (John chapter 8)

As Jesus grew up and developed character under trial. He retained the holiness in which He was born and therefore His right to the life He had received; unlike Adam He did not fail under probation and forfeit His life by disobedience. Therefore when the time came, He had in His own possession the equivalent price to that which Adam lost, a life. His own life, that which could be offered, if He so willed, for the life of the world. It is impossible for us to properly appreciate the love of God revealed to us by Christ in His sacrifice unless we can contemplate the possibility that He might have chosen not to give His life and still not have been guilty of any crime. This may seem a startling thought and indeed it is only perhaps possible to consider it hypothetically, but it must be evident that even to regard His death as the crowning act of obedience if His life is to take away its real true voluntary and sacrificial meaning. How far less is it possible to accept the Christadelphian view that it was in any sense whatever for His own salvation? There came a point in His life when we believe He knew that He had overcome the world and could justly claim the recognition He had earned. "Now is the hour come that the Son of Man should be glorified." What does this mean but that He was entitled, as of right, to enter into His Father's house and assume His place at the right hand of God? What stood in the way? What was to prevent Him? Hear His own words "But except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone."

In Gethsemane He prayed that He might not be called upon to drink the cup prepared for Him. This was what He willed and who would dare to affirm that such a desire was wrong; or that had His courage failed or His endurance proved unequal to the trial He would have been guilty of sin? Where is there a law which says a man must give his life for others? It is true Jesus said "This commandment have I received of My Father," but this signifies a thing given into His charge, not a law or order to which obedience was a matter of obligation, "I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again; no man taketh it from me." This was the charge He had received from His Father. The only compulsion upon Him consisted in His own determination to fulfil His Father's purpose, because He realised that upon His willingness to sacrifice Himself depended the eternal existence of a multitude whom no man can number. The consideration which induced His obedience therefore was not

anything He might have suffered had He failed, but the desire both to merit and to show His Father's love to mankind and the rewarding prospect of seeing the fruits of His suffering in a great company of saved ones, "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied."

From what has "been advanced it will "be apparent that, although there are considerable divergences of opinion on this question amongst Christadelphians because of the false belief in physical sin-in-the-flesh which they all entertain, not one of them is able to give a clear and simple explanation of his doctrine. We see the one extreme in the vague and negative attitude represented by L.C.Jennings and the Suffolk Street fellowship they are probably conscious of some inconsistency in their position but lacking either the ability to resolve it or the courage to renounce the theory of implanted sin which gives rise to it, they are content to confess a complete inability to understand, explain or preach the Cross of Christ in any real and convincing way. The other extreme is represented by John Carter and the Temperance Hall Section, who swallow sin-in-the-flesh on the Roman Catholic model, hook, line and sinker, and do not scruple to follow that false line to the bitter and blasphemous end; teaching that the purpose of Christ's death was the ritual destruction of a condemned and sin-defiled body designed to demonstrate God's abhorrence of human flesh. Both these extremes meet in crediting to the Virgin Birth the fact that Jesus did not sin; explaining that His divine origin endowed Him with the power to overcome sin, thus, shamefully, robbing Him of all honour and falsifying His identity with us. Both agree in their perverse conclusion that Jesus' death was required of Him as a proof of His obedience and therefore as much for His own deliverance as ours. In this case, however, unlike some, the truth does not flow sweetly in the valley between such ugly and distasteful extremes. It is only to be found by abandoning both the empty kettles of Laodicea and the sinful flesh-pots of a modern Egypt and searching in the quiet hillsides of Galilee for a loving Shepherd of the Sheep who suffered, being tempted and having overcome all trials, laid down His life for those whom He came seeking and to save.

Experience suggests that many of the people who receive this pamphlet will not read it at all; while some will scan it hoping to satisfy himself that the writer has a bee in his bonnet. Of the few who spare the thirty minutes or so which it takes to read, the majority will recognise that the reasoning is sound and scriptural and the facts true, but they will see no reason for doing anything about it. The conviction that they have the truth is so embedded in the Christadelphian mind that even the demonstration and admission of palpable error rarely disturbs their equanimity. To such we can only say that they have a different conception from ours of the value of truth and the obligations of the calling of God.

Having outlined the facts to the best of our ability and put them before you without cost we consider our duty done and that the issue must be left to the individual conscience. We judge no one but ourselves; facts may appear of more, or less, importance or clarity to different people and it is not in us to decide the degree of truth or error which may admit or debar a person from participation in the things of the Kingdom and the name. It is our opinion, however, that the very simple and elementary faith, perhaps even mixed with considerable error and superstition, which might have sufficed in the Middle Ages, or even 20 years ago, or for a person of limited capacity, will not be excusable in people like us who have every opportunity and inducement to make spiritual progress. Ignorance and inability to reason is one thing; mental idleness and smug self-satisfaction is a different matter; we do not feel under any obligation to harangue the reader on such points. The facts of the Atonement and their purpose speak for themselves and it was the intention of the Almighty that these should have such an influence upon the mind of the believer as to enable him to count all things else as of no value beside, the full realisation of His love in Christ. It will be a sad thing for any of us to find that we have allowed other considerations to stand between us and the truth.

"Just are the ways of God and justifiable to man."

(Milton. Samson Agonistes.)

Brother Ernest Brady

The Ark of The Covenant

What became of the Ark of the Covenant? No one knows. We are introduced to the ark in Exodus chapter 25; from then onward it played an important role in the Religious and Social life of Israel as a nation and for the individual, during their journeyings in the wilderness and when established in the land.

All traces seem to have been lost from the time of Josiah; it is last heard of in II Chronicles chapter 35, wherein we are told there was no such Passover kept from the days of Samuel the prophet until then. In this chapter we see Josiah instructed the Levites to “put the Holy Ark in the house which Solomon the son of David... did build; it shall not be a burden upon your shoulders”:

Here it would have a permanent home, whereas almost all the tabernacle and its contents were of a mobile structure being carried, this would apply to the Ark for it had rings at the 4 corners into which the carrying stakes would be slid. (Exodus 57:5). From Jeremiah we learn that at the Babylonian captivity and Nebuchadnezzar’s destruction of the Temple the Chaldeans took away most of the Temples contents of value and the structures - but what more precious than the Ark.

It is noted however that on the Arch of Titus in Rome among the articles displayed on the bas relief showing the Romans carrying away the Temple items at its final AD 70 destruction. One thing is not to be found; The Ark of the Covenant.

F.G.J.

The Ark

Exhortation by Brother G.L.Dreifuss

There are several instances in the Bible where we read about an ark. There is Noah’s ark and the ark in the Mosaic tabernacle, later transferred to the temple. Peter tells us that Noah’s ark became the symbol of baptism (I Peter 5:21). On examining all that the Bible teaches us about the ark, Noah’s ark and Moses’ ark, and the figures of the cherubim carved over the latter, we find that the ark teaches us two things:-

1. The necessity to be redeemed and saved.
2. The necessity to abide in Christ after having once accepted Him.

When we examine the two arks more closely, we find that they can teach us more than is evident on first sight.

Noah’s ark had only a window at the top. So light could only get in from the top, that is as far as natural light is concerned, not considering for the moment the artificial light of the candlesticks in the tabernacle. In spiritual matters, God only is the enlightener. He is the father of all lights, and all spiritual enlightenment which we possess is not our own, but given to us from God. In the days of Noah, and Moses, and indeed up to the days of the apostles, all light was given by divine inspiration to God’s chosen servants. Now we can only find it in the recorded words of the Bible.

Cherubim are not mentioned in connection with Noah’s ark. But nevertheless, we read about them long before Moses was commanded to make the tabernacle. We read about them for the first time in Genesis, where we are told that God placed cherubim at the east of the Garden of Eden to keep the way of the tree of life. (Genesis 3:24). They were there to prevent anybody from re-entering the Garden of Eden. They became later symbolic of the whole Divine scheme of salvation as unfolded in Christ. In the account of Noah’s ark we are told that God shut Noah in. Now once Noah was in there and the ark started to drift about on the water, Noah had no control over it whatsoever. It was God who controlled it. It was entirely through God’s control that the ark was prevented from foundering upon a rock or on a mountain. It was indeed a test of Noah’s faith in God. Noah was not able to do anything about it. Christ

is our master, our captain to whom we have surrendered our life. We are not our own, but Christ's bondservants, bought with His blood. It is God who takes control of the believer's life.

All our plans and decisions are subject to His will and approval. But on the other hand, if we let God control our life in faith, as did Noah and all other faithful men of God, we have that assurance that "all things work together for good to them who seek God." We cannot expect to escape trouble and hardships, but we know that God tempteth no man above that which he is able to bear, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it. Noah was the builder of the ark, but not its Captain.

God directed the ark afloat. But even the building of the ark was to God's design and instructions. So were the Mosaic ark and tabernacle. God instructed Moses to the smallest detail in everything with strict instructions "to make everything as it was shown him in the mount." How the ark symbolises salvation, and so we see that Noah's ark and the Mosaic ark both teach us that salvation is of God and on His terms only, man by himself is neither able, nor even intended to effect his own salvation. God alone is the author of salvation. He devised the scheme in Christ, by which fallen man could be reconciled, and only the divine pattern of the ark, symbolising Christ's mission would do. Then after the flood when the ark was no longer necessary, God made a covenant with Noah. He promised that he would never again destroy the earth with a flood, and that he would ensure a continuous succession of the seasons. This covenant still stands. The token of the covenant, the rainbow, may be seen to this day.

There are altogether three divine covenants on record: the one with Noah, the one with Abraham, which was renewed on the mount of Sinai and extended to become the covenant with the children of Israel, and the one with the Christian believers. The second one was broken by man. The first and third are still in force, and it is our own individual responsibility to honour the last. Let it not be recorded against us that we have failed to keep our part. Unlike the second covenant, it is not a national, but individual responsibility. Then we have animal sacrifices brought to our notice, coupled with the commandment not to eat blood. Although the three Covenants are very different, yet we have the same basic principle in them all: without blood no reconciliation. But without reconciliation God will not enter into any relationship with us, we just remain aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, which means in effect strangers as far as God is concerned. So we see how even in the days of Noah the redemption in Christ, at that time thousands of years ahead, was already prevalent in all God's dealings with man. The best exhortation we can get from the ark, the Mosaic ark in particular, is the fact that it was intended to be an abiding place. The intention, subject to the children of Israel keeping their part of the covenant, was that the ark should have been an abiding place where God dwelt. This is the purpose of God that eventually He will dwell on earth, in the holy city of Jerusalem, with men who will duly honour and obey Him. But all the time God's dwelling with men is conditional upon man's obedience to the end of his probation. From the beginning God's intention was to dwell in the ark placed inside a simple tent. Temples were men's ideas, though God was pleased with David when he wanted to build a temple, and He accepted Solomon's temple. Yet all the riches of that building were of no avail. The children of Israel had sinned. Obedience is much more important than a costly and luxurious temple. There is no tabernacle, or temple, or ark in our day. The method of worship has changed from the ritual to that of the heart and mind. We are to serve the Lord in spirit and in truth. But the fact that God dwells with His faithful children has not changed. We are now the temple of God, or should be (I Corinthians 3:16), we are the Father's house, a spiritual house, and if we are faithful God is with us in spirit every moment of our lives. Christ promised us (John 14:25) "If a man love me he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." This is how God dwells with His chosen now. Through His spirit He is directing and controlling our lives, if only we let Christ enter into our hearts and minds, as God took control of Noah's ark. But the idea of the ark being an abiding place works two ways, as do all covenants and treaties: we must abide in Christ. The failure of the children of Israel was that they did not abide by the terms of the covenant. They accepted it readily enough. They repeatedly said to Moses: "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." But under trial they failed, and all that generation, save two, perished during the forty years sojourn in the wilderness. The next generation renewed the covenant with Joshua, just as readily as their fathers accepted its terms under Moses. They said to their aged leader: "We will serve the Lord... the Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey" (Joshua chapter 24). So we see that two successive generations accepted the covenant eagerly enough. But neither generation was sufficiently enduring to abide. They failed to

realise that God, the great King, condescended to dwell among them in a modest little tent. They wanted to be like the other nations surrounding them. That was the failure of the Jews to this day. They always want to be undistinguishable from the people among whom they live. That is also the trouble with many professing Christians. They still want to be of the world as well as in it. The Israelites wanted a king and a temple like the heathen of their day. God gave them both, and their king as well as their temple were a blessing, a God given blessing, as long as they abode in God's ways. But each became a snare once they forsook God's ways. Their kings, beginning from Solomon, only their third king, to their last, with a few exceptions, instead of leading them in the right way sinned themselves.

The Law of Moses, the God given law, should have been their daily readings. Instead it got lost, so much was it neglected, and was only found again during the reign of Josiah, one of the last kings. The temple which was to have been God's dwelling place was so desecrated with idolatry that God departed, probably at about the time of Ezekiel. God will not make His abode with sinful people. Now all these things were written aforetime for our learning and warning.

I think when we saw the truth at first and learned of God's will and purpose, we were all just as keen to accept God's covenant, sealed by the "blood of Christ, as were the children of Israel under Moses and Joshua. But can we honestly say that we always faithfully abode by it? Do we make our bodies the temple of the living God always? And when God wants to make His abode with us, does He always find us a worthy, fit dwelling place? I think we must all admit that at times He finds our bodies and minds which now should be the Father's house, the Father's abiding place, the spiritual ark... that He finds our bodies and minds desecrated, as He found the temple in Ezekiel's days, when His presence departed from the children of Judah. Let us follow Christ's exhortation to abide in Him, for only then will God and Christ make their abode with us. Only then are we the temple of God. Let us follow the example of Noah in the ark and indeed let God take control of our lives. Trust Him that He will not allow us to stumble, or tempt us without providing a way of escape. The whole history of the Bible, from cover to cover, is full of examples to show that nothing displeases God more than the forsaking of His ways by one who once accepted them and has already been enlightened. God has forgiven grave sins, if the sinner was repentant. But what He does not forgive is defiance and a permanent turning one's back on His covenant, after having accepted it so keenly. "If any man draws back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." (Hebrews 10:58). Let us abide in Him with the same tenacity as we did when we first accepted Him. Let it not be said of us on the day of judgment that we turned lukewarm as did some of the early Asian assemblies, that we tolerated sin and false doctrine as did some of them; and may God never find it necessary to withdraw His spirit from us as He had to from the Mosaic ark in the temple.

Among some papers of our late bro. Fred Pearce is an address given "by another of our sleeping brethren, F.C.Maycock in March 1938 some 48 years ago, just before World War II. It would appear the thoughts expressed were as the result of a careful reading of Isaiah chapter 2.

The Bible and World Peace

This year (1938), as you doubtless know marks the fourth centenary of placing a copy of the English Bible in every Parish Church throughout the land. We, today, thank God from our hearts that we can, without fear of molestation, gather round its sacred pages to speak to one another of the Peace that is promised - that is sure and certain, as the day follows night, despite the fact that we live in a world spending thousands of millions on weapons of war every year. The opening verses of the chapter in Isaiah speak of a time when men shall "beat their swords into plowshares. It is a promise from the Lord God of Heaven, and one day it will become a matter of actual experience. In this prophecy we learn:-

- 1 of the people through whom this world peace will come.
- 2 the period when we may expect to see its accomplishment.
- 3 the place from whence this Divine Law is to come forth.
- 4 the Divine Person who will carry it to its beautiful consummation.
- 5 of the glorious effect which will result therefrom.

Do not imagine it is all a Utopian dream. It is not the purpose of God that the world is always to be a place of sin, misery, war, desolation and death. He has declared that the earth shall be filled with His glory. God has given us the opportunity to seek for, and obtain, a part in that purpose, if we will but come to Him in the ways of His appointing. What an inestimable honour and privilege it is that men should be permitted to hearken to Divine counsels - to listen in to what God has made known in His Word. Man can do himself no greater honour than in all humility, and in the spirit of earnest prayer, study to know what God has promised to do and the more so as we see the day approaching.

“Say hath the night of sorrow reigned; the dawn shall bring us light;
God shall appear, and we shall rise, with gladness in His sight”.

Where do we stand in the stream of time is always an interesting and faith absorbing topic of those who are daily watching and waiting. This scripture reading has been recorded twice - first in Isaiah, and second by the prophet Micah (4:4), who also makes some very important additions. No doubt both Isaiah and Micah were deeply impressed by the glorious prospect of universal peace and prosperity in which their own nation of Israel was destined to take such a prominent part. It has been said concerning Israel that their golden age is always in the future – and that witness is true. Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome have had their day - but the oldest, and in every way the most remarkable of all nations, still looks forward to a future that will surpass anything yet experienced. It is a hope that springs eternal; it is a hope based upon the promises made to a father of Israel, that is the reason why that despite all the persecution that they have gone through, a just punishment - albeit scattered and peeled, they remain as God’s witnesses throughout the length and breadth of the earth. Judgment and mercy are strangely wrought in His dealings with this wonderful people, and every word of God in prophetic utterance is sure, for here we are dealing with foundation facts. God has a “set time” and “time appointed” for the restoration of His people as the Psalmist declares in Psalm 102:13-16. Centuries may pass, but that is no argument in favour of the failure of His promises. Four thousand years were allowed to pass before the promise made to our first parents, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head was fulfilled; but in the fullness of time God sent forth His son, made of a woman, and the miracle of Bethlehem was the Divine answer to the promise in Eden. Many other incidents could be recalled and joined to show that God is never behindhand in His promises, nor slack as men count slackness - and so in strict harmony with His other dealings, He declares through His two servants that the period we have come to know as the “Times of the Gentiles” will terminate in due course. It was thus prophesied while as yet they had not even begun to run, for the Golden Head of the image - Nebuchadnezzar had not yet appeared. It is well to remember that in Scripture there is a distinction to be drawn between ‘people’ and ‘peoples,’ or the Jews and other nations of mankind. The word ‘nation’ refers to Israel, while the word in the plural indicated the Gentile races. So in the prophecy in Isaiah the purpose of bringing Peace centres round Judah and the house of Jacob. Their history is most dramatic, a history of calamities. “You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities” (Amos 3:2). Scattered and peeled, uprooted and trodden down, in hopeless captivity, serving foreign masters in bondage worse than slavery, sold as cattle in the market-place – they are still to fill the cup of their national apostasy, for their treatment of their Messiah when He came to His own and they received Him not. Known throughout the ages as the tribe of the weary foot, they remain an outstanding witness to the wrath of God and the truthfulness of His word. Yet the covenants stand firm: there is to be a complete reversal – they will be the head, not the tail, of the nations. They have been in the furnace of trial heated sevenfold - yet they survive. The promise made to Abraham has not been forgotten nor abrogated, but will yet be fulfilled in all its glory and literality. Read the letter to the Romans chapter nine in particular - you have it on record of the character of this marvellous people. Their re-gathering will be as life from the dead - the promises of restoration with open eyes and penitent heart they turn to Him acknowledging their sin. Then shall the 67th Psalm be fulfilled. Peace truly - “based upon the righteous government that shall “be shared to the remotest parts of the earth. The prophecy then not only tells us the people through whom these wonderful things are to be accomplished, but it tells us the time - “in the last days.” Jeremiah and Ezekiel both speak in scriptural language of the glorious day - a people brought back from the sword, gathered out of many people, dwelling at last in peace and safety, in the latter days when God is sanctified in their midst. When the Lord Jesus Christ came the first time the Roman world was in a state of universal sickness, and cried out for a Healer. When He comes the

second time, the world is to be characterised by distress of nations, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth (Luke 21),

The period between these two events is marked by a series of wars, pestilence, and war preparations. That, in the main, has been the history of the past 2000 years, and the more we study the events the more we are drawn to the conclusion that today we live at the end of the Gentile rule and authority, with the near approach of the joyful day so long ago proclaimed by the prophets of old.

Returning to our opening chapter in Isaiah our third point is before us - the place from where will go forth the law that brings Peace and Prosperity. Jerusalem in the midst of the earth - beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion. Jerusalem has been chosen by God for the high purpose it is to achieve as the centre of all blessedness to all mankind, Psalm 48:1-5. Prosperity unheard of is yet to spring up in that land promised to Abraham and his seed. Jerusalem shall yet prove the touchstone of all nations, and shall become a burdensome stone to all people, for though all nations be gathered against it, their designs for its overthrow will fail. Taken together, the Jew and the Land form an unmistakeable sign whereby we may know that we live in the days of the near approach of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ - He who alone can speak Peace to the nations. Remember the Fig Tree parable of our Lord: "When these things begin to come to pass then, lift up your heads for your redemption draweth nigh." To all those who are waiting and watching in the way of God's, commandments, come the assurance that "all things are working for good to them who are called to His Kingdom and glory." Amidst the gathering storm clouds - such may be privileged to hear His voice, yea He has promised that He will not leave them - so we say it may well be that those words will be heard again. "It is I, be not afraid." We turn again to Isaiah where we see that it is the Lord Himself that comes to take the world in hand. There is a gradual unfolding: from Jerusalem as the centre and Jacob as an individual, to the national and then the universal. The 72nd Psalm extols the wonderful picture of a Divine Kingdom on the earth, bringing joy, peace, and good-will to all men. As a King He will rule with equity to earth's remotest end. His government will "be carried out in perfect righteousness, justice, love and power, and "become perfect in every detail, it must endure as long as the sun and moon to all generations. Turn to chapters 9,11 and 12 of Isaiah; there you will find definite statements concerning this King who will reign in righteousness, the effect of which is Peace, Quietness, and Assurance for ever (three beautiful conditions, so absent in the world today). The interval that separates us from this happy time will be filled with events so graphically foretold by the Lord Himself and recorded in Luke 21:10-11. To Daniel 500 years earlier, it was revealed as a time of trouble such as was never since there was a nation. It was to coincide with the deliverance of the Jews, and more startling still, with the resurrection of the dead. World events are rushing to this climax. It will be a time of God's vengeance on those who "obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ." But it will usher in the time of Peace and Goodwill to those who have obeyed. To all who have been faithful in the days of their probation, it will mean the glorious gift of immortality - it matters not if such have been asleep thousands of years; they will come forth to be changed, in the twinkling of an eye. I Corinthians 15:51-52. They then will be invited to enter into His joy of ruling the world in righteousness, that all nations may be blessed.

These stirring events, centred as they are in Palestine, will startle the world, "kings will be dumfounded." "For that which had not been, told them shall they see, and that which they had not heard shall they consider." - Isaiah 52:19. Why? See v. 1,7,9. In the Psalms we read, "The nations rage and the people imagine vain things." All opposition will be useless. God has decreed - now He purposes. "What though all the world resist Him, God will realise His plan." The kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, who shall reign for ever and ever (Rev. 1:15). Words of ours are but poor vehicles to convey adequately all the blessings which will obtain in the kingdom of God. But turn to Psalm 67, short, but how beautiful - the earth no longer cursed will yield an abundance for all. Christ alone is able to speak peace to the world, but before that must come the humbling of the pride of man. Read also Haggai chapter 2. We are now better able to appreciate Isaiah 2:2 and 4. So peace and the time of goodwill is coming, and we note that it is in connection with Judah and Jerusalem - not with Moscow, London, Berlin, New York or Rome - Christ returns King of the Jews and of the whole earth - not a mere temporary Peace at the whim of man, for nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore (Micah 4: 1-4). That exceeds the hopes of the most enthusiastic member of any peace society. But it is coming, Christ is ordained to do it - His co-helpers are being prepared; and if you will you may share in the honour and glory and the immortality of His

coming age of peace and goodwill, of blessedness and power. To be associated with God's Kingdom through Jesus when He will be enthroned in the City of the Great King. This is our hope.

IN ZION

In Zion there are wonders I am longing to behold;
Its beauties surely will my soul enthrall;
But ere I'm ushered to the place where all scenes unfold,
I must prove I am worthy of it all,

I long to be where mercy, love and faithfulness combine
To make each day one of surpassing joy;
But if such boundless pleasures are to be forever mine
I must for God and Truth my time employ.

I want to see those jasper walls, those streets of shining gold;
I want to see those cedars, straight and tall;
The tree of life, whose leaves will heal the nations, as we're told;
But first I must prove worthy of it all.

I must renounce the things in which I took great delight;
All worldly pleasures that defile the soul;
And find my joy in doing what my Father says is right,
The joy of Truth that makes the spirit whole.

God offers much for little, but that little must be done
Before the right is granted to pass through
And share eternal joys with Christ, His Son.
Yes, there are certain things that we must do.

Instead of being overcome by fashion, hate and pride,
And other like emotions holding sway,
We now must gain the mastery, and stem the evil tide;
The noble precepts of our Lord obey,

We must prepare to enter there by overcoming sin;
By casting down each notion of our own.
We must be pure and holy now, if we would ever win
A crown, and see our Saviour on His throne.

There is a battle to be fought, a race that must be run,
And only those enduring to the end
Will then receive the plaudit of Lord and King, "Well done"
And with the faithful join as friend with friend.

Were I content to settle for a mere "three score and ten,"
Than moulder in the dust, for evermore
I'd cast all thoughts of Zion to the moles and bats, and then
Enjoy whate'er the world might have in store.

But no; I want to live when Christ shall o'er the earth
hold sway, participating in that Jubilee.
I want to dwell in Zion through a long, eternal day,
So I will work, from sin to be made free.

L.L.S.

Reason for The Virgin Birth

How was it possible for Jesus alone by the one great sacrifice of himself, to redeem a multitude? It was because Jesus did not derive his life from Adam but direct from God and when He chose to carry out His Father's plan to save mankind, there was only one possible way to do it and that was by paying the ransom price, a life; his life instead of Adam's, to that other master sin. He thus purchased back to God all those who were sold into bondage in Adam.

E. Brady.
