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in opposition to the Dogmas of
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A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

and a warning against the deception in the last days
foretold by Christ

"Take heed ye be not deceived"

AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

REMEMBER YE THE LAW OF MOSES MY SERVANT

I WILL MAKE HER THAT HALTETH A REMNANT

DISCERNING THE THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

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At the Table of the Lord

He Wept Over Jerusalem

We have read the record in Luke 19, of the Lord Jesus coming up to Jerusalem as "the King that cometh in the name of the Lord." He was not received by His people, and the record goes on to state that when He came near to the city, "He beheld it, and wept over it."

Why did He weep over this city, the city of God? Before Him, others, faithful men, had also cried aloud in grief over the plight of Jerusalem; as in Lamentations 1 : 1, 2—

"How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! How is she become as a widow! She that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary! . . . All her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies."

Jerusalem, a widow—her Head gone! Jerusalem was like this also in the time of the Lord Jesus—the holy city, forsaken by the Almighty. Was this why he wept? He speaks further in Luke 19 : 42—"If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes." Jerusalem—the City of Peace, yet she failed to perceive the things which belonged unto her peace. Some hundreds of years before this, Isaiah had warned—Chapter 48 : 1, 2—

"Hear ye this, O house of Jacob . . . which swear by the name of the Lord and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth, nor in righteousness. For they call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel :"

Here, then, was a people professing the name, staying themselves (leaning for support) upon the God of Israel, calling themselves of the holy city. Was this the same state seen in the time of Jeremiah, and the time of the Lord Jesus? The words of the Almighty continue—Chapter 48 : 16-18. "Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret . . . O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had *thy peace* been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." How appealing are God's words, that His people might hearken and find *peace* eternally, ever flowing forth from the source of all peace. Were these words in the mind of the Lord as He mourned over Jerusalem? For peace, there must be a willing obedience, a keeping of a covenant. His people had forgotten, substituted their own traditions, broken the covenant; so peace was gone, and all hope of the *peace* which is everlasting.

These thoughts bring sobering consideration, do they not, for we are striving to be of that holy city. How does the Lord Jesus

feel as He looks upon us now, as individuals, or as an ecclesia? Soon He will come in reality, "the King that cometh in the name of the Lord." Will He rejoice because here is one, or here is an ecclesia who had not forgotten the things which belong unto the peace of Jerusalem. Or now is He sad at times, because these precious things seem to have been hid from our eyes? How great is the need that *each* brother and sister strives to grasp the mercy and keep the vision of Jerusalem's peace alive in his heart—so that it will not be hid from our eyes by fleshly cares and reckonings.

The Peace of Jerusalem

Consider the mind of David in Psalm 122, reflecting the spirit of the Lord Jesus, intent upon the peace promised to the city of God. It is a Psalm of ascent, and will, if we can enter into the spirit of it, lift us up in the journey Zionwards. Can it become, brethren and sisters, a reflecting of our own minds as we strive to ascend, to rise above all the earthly ties?

"I was glad when they said to me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." What joy in the calling, brethren and sisters, and what determination! We shall stand in that city if only the mundane, the petty, the selfish can be put aside, and not be permitted to take us away. Then verse 3, what a city this is! "Builded as a city that is compact together." There is real help here—this is no ordinary city. Compact, we find, is also translated, "coupled" or "joined," as the curtains of the tabernacle were described in Exodus 26 : 6. "And thou shalt make fifty taches of gold, and couple the curtains together . . . and it shall be one tabernacle."

Can we now, hoping to become the dwelling of God, grow more closely coupled together, being bound by the precious faith which is indestructable as gold. Only faith which has endured the fire of affliction is strong enough to bind the house together. Can this be so strong in each of us that it carries us over and above that which might divide and pull apart the house? Our calling is to an heavenly city—one which is compacted together. Each difference, each difficulty, each shaking within the house must become an opportunity for us to manifest to our Father and to each other that the bonds of the Spirit which unite us are stronger than any, so that we,

"Speaking the truth in love, may grow up unto him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Ephesians 4 : 15-16.

Then, brethren and sisters, let us in truth unite with David, who from the heart pleads, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem : . . ."

(Psalms 122 : 6). Is that our constant prayer—the motivating force behind all our working and striving—the peace of Jerusalem? Do we, with importunity, seek *this* peace, remembering that “they shall prosper that love thee.” As the mind of David unfolds, must we not find within ourselves the echo of his words—“For my brethren and companions’ sake, I will now say, Peace be within thee.” This was the mind of David, it is the mind of the Lord Jesus—it is His longing, and is it ours? Do we, for our brethren and sisters’ sake, long for that peace, that complete and unending unity may be established? What are we now doing to bring each toward that peace? Is all our living put into the “compacting” of the house now? Looking back over the last year, what have we contributed, what responsibilities have we shouldered, what personal feelings have we put aside, for our brethren and companions’ sake, that the peace for which we all long may be had now in foretaste? Is there Spiritual triumph over the carnal?

David’s thoughts should find response in our hearts, “Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good.” Our hearts and prayers must be moved by faith, unshakable conviction, that the Jerusalem which is of God, will stand soon in peace and glory, manifest to all. To seek its “good,” with David, means now that we seek the good of the members of which that House will be built. So let us bend our efforts, our prayers, our very lives to the present binding and building of this house. Each brother and sister is responsible for the strength of the building—the appointed ones are there to help, to guide and to serve the ecclesia. But we *all* hope to be of that house, and to partake of that peace. Then we must *all* become aware and alert, lest we should ever lose the faith and the vision, causing grief to the One who is our Head, that He should cry out to us—

“*If thou hadst known . . . the things which belong unto thy peace!*” They must not be hid from our eyes, brethren and sisters.

The Time of Visitation

These things *were* hid from Jerusalem, and so the Lord Jesus foretold of her destruction and why. “Because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.” Here is help and warning given from the example of Jerusalem nearly 2,000 years ago. The word *visitation* has in its original, the meaning to oversee, to inspect, to reckon up. It is used in several places as bishop or overseer. We find it used in the Old Testament with similar meaning.

In Job 10 : 11, 12, particular help is given :
“*Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews. Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.*”

What was the visitation upon Job? Was it not a great trial of affliction to *prove* him, and because he endured faithfully, was not his spirit preserved? God visits upon each of His children with tribulation. If the spirit within us is of The Spirit, will it not be preserved by this visitation, this overseeing by the Almighty? How steadfastly Job faced his trial and how pleasing to God. Just so, are all those who can endure because of a determination and a love.

Job continues—verses 14, 15 :

“*If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity. If I be wicked, woe unto me; and if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head. I am full of confusion; therefore see my affliction.*”

Here is the mind of one who *knows* his time of visitation. Job said, “I am full of confusion,” or reproach or shame. Here was a recognition of his sinful nature, and his great need for God’s help. Does it not help us to follow His example? For just as surely as Job, we are now in our time of visitation. What are we demonstrating, brethren and sisters, to the One who oversees and knows our hearts? Are we enduring affliction, exercised by it, carrying out, “See my affliction,” and in the spirit of Job, placing ourselves wholly in the hands of the One who is permitting all things, that in time to come, that great final day of visitation will find us accounted worthy to be with Job, and all his brethren and sisters, who have been rightly exercised throughout their life-time of visitation.

Again, we find the word for visitation used in Numbers 4 : 16 : “And to the office of Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest . . . the *oversight* of all the tabernacle.” Is not this the same today; there is a divinely appointed One who has been given the oversight over all the dwelling of God, visiting each one, inspecting the works, judging the heart. He knows each one and places upon each the particular trial or affliction which is needed to prove his faithfulness. The question is, brethren and sisters, do we recognize that this, *now*, is the time of our visitation, the opportunity given to prove ourselves, whether we shall be members of the Lord Jesus, or shall be destroyed, as was Jerusalem, which did *not* know its time. The opportunity will soon be gone—are we taking advantage of the time, knowing that the Almighty and His Son are overseeing, desirous of helping, if only we will respond. Are we redeeming this time, not forgetting the words of the Spirit through Isaiah, Ch. 10 : 4, as he speaks of Israel’s failures and God’s anger at them : “For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still.”

His hand *is* stretched out still to any who will respond; He is there to lift up, to help, to strengthen in the time of our visitation. Do we *know* it, brethren and sisters, and do we respond faithfully

now, remembering the Spirit's warning—"WHAT WILL YE DO IN THE DAY OF VISITATION?"

J.A. De F.



Remember Ye the Law of Moses My Servant

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour"

(Exod. 20, v. 16)

This command touches upon one of the worst traits of human nature : the defaming of another for the exaltation of self. Pride is the root of the trouble, which can more easily be satisfied if competitors are eliminated. A sure way of doing this is by maligning the opponent, sometimes by direct statements, but more often by false insinuations. Worldly society is corrupted by the evil, from the poor and lowly to the rich and mighty ; even among those who are responsible for the government of the people.

False witnessing is the tool of the gossip, which when sharpened by jealousy and spite, is destructive of much good.

"A whisperer (talebearer) separateth chief friends" (Proverbs 16, 4. 28).

Families are often split by the evil work, and when politicians have dipped their pens in the poison, communities have become embittered, and on a larger scale, national rivalry has been provoked and inflamed.

How vastly different the world would be if careful attention were paid to this command. There would scarcely be any lawsuits. Jealousies with their attendant cruelties would disappear, and mankind would come to rejoice in a peace never tasted since the days when Israel was faithful. The restoration of such peace will come ; but first the punitive judgments of God are necessary to rid the earth of all rebels—those who will not have Christ to reign over them. How refreshing will be the work of the "Prince of Peace"—to instil all the things which belong unto His peace in every heart.

"He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds : as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain" (2 Samuel 23, v. 4).

Everywhere upon earth will be serene and tranquil, beautiful in the assurance of peace which will come by the nations learning to do what is right from the only source of true wisdom—the law of God.

He who is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace will bring about this world-wide change. Assisting Him will be those who are like Him ; those who have learned like He did the wonderful things of the Law which go to make up "His Peace."

Whilst it is easy to see the plight of the world, fairly easy to see the reason by the aid of the Spirit, it is difficult to apply the wonderful teaching of the *Spirit of the Law* to one's own life. Yet those who do will be with Christ. Those who do not will be rejected by Him. Consideration of the task is of supreme importance, and no effort made to succeed can be too great.

“Thy Neighbour”

“*Thy shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*”

“Neighbour” has a far more intimate and sacred meaning than understood by the Gentile mind. The neighbours of professing “Christians” are those living next door, in the same street or district; who they may not know and to whom they seldom speak. The Lord Jesus shows how wrong is such a view, and that the neighbour is truly a member of the family of God. When He answered the question: “Who is my neighbour?” the parable spoken in reply clearly indicated that the neighbour was the one caring for and providing for the one half dead—a “certain Samaritan.” This Samaritan was Christ, which would be well understood at the time for the Jews said to Jesus:

“*Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?*” (John 8, v. 48).

The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans; neither would they with Christ, nor with those whom Christ delivered from death. A death, in the parable, caused by violent robbers whose evil work neither the *priests* nor the *Levites* attempted to remedy. In the parable, they “passed by on the other side,” condemned by their inaction as accomplices after the fact. They who should have known the Law, and been messengers of its Spirit, failed to appreciate the meaning of the holy term “neighbour.”

The word in the Law is the equivalent of brother in the New Testament, rightly understood as applying only to those who are members of the family of God, and not to those who have either left the family or been expelled from it. Again, a word has lost its spiritual significance by common usage. The word “Brother” is appropriated by Trade Unions, Free Masons, Secular Societies and is promiscuously used by those who ought to know better as defining the member of any fellowship of “Christadelphians,” however tenuous his claim. Jesus set the term on an altogether higher level—

“*For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister . . .*” (Mark 3, v. 35).

“**False witnesses did rise up**” (Ps. 35, v. 11)

“*False witnesses did rise up: they laid to my charge things that I knew not.*”

In these solemn words the danger is brought home to ourselves ; the very evil which has corrupted the world is likely to infect us. How dreadful the thought that a community of people which have been purged of the works of the old man may be confronted with this insidious working of discord and tale-bearing ! The unity impaired until the evil is removed. Yet such is the possibility as David declared, and as the Spirit of Christ which was in him testified. On occasions the false witnessing can be blatant as in the case of Jezebel's plot to kill Naboth. More often the work is done unseen, insidiously, so that the guilty might have some chance to escape : so that when challenged the words spoken can be denied ; if proved, the meaning attributed was not intended. Oh ! how much evil can be done on occasion before the deceiver is tracked down. There would be much less if his first attempts were met with the ears of stolid righteousness. The sower of discord knows the ground which will suit his seed. He tries the soil first. If there is a feeling of grievance, of exasperation, of grumbling against those responsible for the work, he soon realises that he has found the right ground. In goes the seed and it soon springs up, producing its evil fruit. The seed is obviously wrong and so is the ground. The lesson to be learnt by the devout is clear. To carry the seeds is a sin. To provide ground for its reception is also a sin. It is by this partnership in an evil work often involving the reputation of trusted brethren, that many have lost *the* Truth, still persuaded that they are the righteous injured ones. They become blind to the spirit they manifest. Their words, their attacks on brethren, their counter-attacks to try and prevent examination of themselves, are all part of an evil work, aided throughout by falsity—false witnessing in words and deeds. Deep down it is not *the* Truth they care about. It is only themselves who are to be considered. Their minds are removed from His whose will was to suffer even wrongly if need be. With the mind captured by the flesh, they can only think of the flesh, and although the words of the Spirit are used their power and meaning are completely lost.

“ He that is a faithful spirit concealeth a matter ”

(Prov. 11, v. 13)

“ A talebearer revealeth secrets : but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth a matter ” (Prov. 11, v. 13).

These words point to a high level of conduct among brethren: A way in which the “ love of neighbour ” is a real power. Not only must the talebearer be condemned, the talebearer who is generally a false-witness, but also there must be reticence about certain things which are known about brethren, which if repeated, would pull a brother down. Not that sin can ever be cloaked. If acknowledged in the way required, it cannot be treated as a spicy bit of gossip after

the manner of the world. No ! a faithful spirit will conceal it even when provoked by argument, and it might be to his advantage to reveal it. This is true love on a high plane, the love of *the* neighbour which binds the family of God together in a way nowhere else enjoyed by any other family. And through the love given and received in such a blessed family, appreciation comes of the Giver of such love, until the heart is filled with the love of God.

(To be continued)



I will make her that halteth a Remnant

We read much in the Bible of the patriarch Jacob whose name so continually recurs both in the prophets and in the psalms—sometimes as *Jacob* but more generally as *Israel*. The mind is caused to wonder what was the difference between Jacob and Israel, for they were indeed the same man. For something like ninety years Jacob was his name, whereas for the last sixty years of his life, he was called Israel. But why the change? It was the Almighty God who through His angel decreed the change, and He must have had some profound reason. What was the reason, and what is the divine lesson God would have us learn? The two names Jacob and Israel, each highly significant, have quite different meanings. Jacob signifies *supplanter* whereas Israel means *prince with God*. But is this the only difference and the only lesson for us?

Had we lived four thousand years ago and been contemporary with this servant of God, one outstanding difference would have impressed us as we watched him in his daily life. We should have observed that *Israel always halted*. Wherever he went and whatever he did, there was the unmistakable halt, such a contrast to his walk in earlier days when his name was Jacob. Had we enquired as to the cause of such an unusual and sudden change in his gait, what a remarkable story we should have heard as this man of God unfolded the events which culminated in him being lame.

Jacob was returning from Padan-aram, where for twenty years he had sojourned, to the land of his father Isaac. Arriving at the brook Jabbok, startling news reached him: his brother Esau to whom friendly overtures had been made, was approaching with four hundred men. Jacob was in great distress. Evidently the anger of his brother had not subsided, not even after Jacob's twenty years' exile. Fearing lest all his family should be completely smitten he separated his children and all his flocks into two bands, saying, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.

It is difficult to imagine the distress and anguish which must have pervaded that little band as they were divided into two, with the

real fear that by morning one company might well be destroyed, perhaps even both. It must surely have been one of the most distressing days—if not the most—in all the life of Jacob.

It was on this very night that the angel appeared to him and with whom he “wrestled” or rather “clung on,” throughout the night until daybreak. It was during this night too, that the angel touched the hollow of Jacob’s thigh, causing him to be halt. When daybreak came, his name was changed to Israel, for

“*As a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed*” (Gen. 32).

So moved was Jacob by this experience that he called the place Penuel, *the face of God*, “for I have seen God face to face and my life is preserved.”

Is it not remarkable that the very day Jacob saw God ‘face to face’ was the day he began to halt? How significant that the one person in the world divinely named ‘prince with God’ should therefore halt for the rest of his life!

Twenty centuries later, the Apostle Paul, endeavouring to encourage his brethren wrote—

“*By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph: and worshipped, leaning on the top of his staff.*”

Yes, we can picture an old man about to die, *still halting* and so leaning upon his staff.

“I will assemble her that halteth”

The mind moves forward to that time when “all Israel shall be saved.” What a great company of men and women will there be assembled on the mountains of Zion! As the eye tries to picture them, will there not be that same outstanding characteristic—*every one halting*? Not one of them will have a confident walk, but rather will have learnt by experience *to be fearful in every step they make*.

How this mental picture helps to make the Scriptures shine out: for we read of a great marriage supper, to which were invited—

“*the poor, and the maimed and the halt and the blind.*”

Likewise the prophet Micah wrote—

“*In the last days, it shall come to pass that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains . . . and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks . . .*

In that day will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out . . .

And I will make her that halteth a remnant . . . and the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion, from henceforth even for ever” (Micah 4).

Great will be that day, a day when "the desert shall rejoice and blossom as a rose," a day when the command will go forth to "*strengthen ye the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees.*" so that—

"the lame shall leap as an hart."

What a sobering thought that it is the *lame*, the *halt*, that shall leap as a hart !

Once again, the mind goes back to Israel as he worshipped God, halting, and leaning on his staff. And the greater Israel ? Yes, she too, the remnant that halteth, is leaning, leaning on *the staff* for do we not read—

"Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved ?"

Like Jacob, we can all say "Surely this is none other than the house of God." But dare we say we belong to Israel ? If we walk in the confidence that in all our ways we are right, then surely we cannot hope to share that glorious name of him who *halted and worshipped leaning on a staff*.

THE VISIBLE HAND OF GOD IN THE LATTER DAYS

As a result of the pioneer work of John Thomas and later of Robert Roberts many embraced the Truth, and towards the end of the last century there must have numbered several thousands spread over the countries of England, America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. As is always the case an increase of numbers brought new perils, a feeling of confidence amongst the brethren who discovered in the powerful teachings of the Truth a weapon which none of the adversaries in Christendom could gainsay or resist. Robert Roberts put to silence many of Christendom's "reverend divines" and had succeeded in worsting the great Charles Bradlaugh in debate. Brethren were jubilant, confident, perhaps over-confident. An experience came to those in Birmingham that was a chastening and humiliating shock.

Robert Roberts was tempted to invest in a firm claiming to produce sugar electrically and thus would provide investors with stupendous profits. Many in Birmingham invested their life's savings, the general object of which it was stated was to provide means whereby Jews could be helped back to the Holy Land. The whole business was a fiasco and all those brethren who had invested money, including Bro. Roberts, lost every penny. How different was the 'gait' of those who until recently had been so confident. Truly they were humiliated and in their walk "halted," no longer feeling so confident in their own powers.

The Example of Uzziah with its lesson for the Last Days

Just as in the foregoing there was a visitation of God which brethren could not ignore—even as there are now—so it was in the time of King Uzziah. The record preserved helps the devout mind to see how easy it is to become confident in the flesh without realising it. In this way Uzziah failed, he became destitute of the essential ‘fear of the Lord’ by which men are taught to walk humbly before their God. He dared to execute the priest’s office by burning incense. Opposed by valiant men, like all men of the flesh he became angry. God was not to be mocked. In an instant the king of Israel, Uzziah, became leprous and was a leper unto the day of his death. Observant minds of the brethren and sisters at the time could not fail to be impressed by the lesson which God had given that even one who was in such an exalted office as the king must never be confident in his own walk, and must be ready at all times to be directed by God.

It is remarkable that in the year this king died the prophet Isaiah had a wonderful vision, as if to show with the removal of the self-confident, a blessing could then be given. He sees the Lord sitting upon a throne and above it the seraphims. He hears them cry one to another Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.

The effect upon the prophet was that he realised how unclean he was in the sight of God. How different from the king which had just died. The prophet found that he could become clean by means of fire taken from the altar being placed upon his mouth. The lesson is very powerful and shows how that without the Spirit, the fire from God’s altar, the presumptuous workings of the flesh cannot be subdued. It is not sufficient to say that we want the Spirit but that we need it in order to overcome those native tendencies of over confidence and presumption.

How great this blessing with its lesson would seem with the evil king gone.

**“ In the days of Uzziah . . . two years before
the earthquake ”**

The things which are written beforetime are certainly recorded for our learning. The prophet Amos whilst speaking of nations which were contemporary with Israel undoubtedly draws a picture of the time of the end when Israel will be a nation in the earth again and surrounded by other nations who are to receive the judgments of God. Finally, all nations excepting Israel are to be overthrown by these judgments. It will be the day of the Lord’s anger when by the means of a *great earthquake* present society with its “ kings and great men, rich men, chief captains and mighty men ” will pass

away. Does the prophet give a hint of the length of time before this catastrophe will overtake the nations of the earth after the Lord's voice will have roared from Zion with a message similar to that given by the prophet Amos—

“For three transgressions and for four I will not turn away the punishment thereof.”

The prophet refers in all to seven nations including Israel, in particular those nations which have always been the enemies of Israel surrounding her. These in turn are to receive the judgments of God which will finally bring about their downfall for ever.

On account of the weakness of the flesh it is easy for the mind of the believer to rejoice in the downfall of others which he can see is richly deserved without discovering in himself those weaknesses which need to be overcome if he is to be well pleasing in the sight of God. Again, the danger is of falling into the trap of over confidence. The message given by the prophet on this occasion to Israel is one which every brother will do well to take to heart in order to deliver himself from those feelings of self-satisfaction tending towards an attitude which must be displeasing to God, perhaps best summed up in the words of the one condemned in the temple who said “I am holier than thou.”

Let us listen carefully to the prophet's warning voice to Israel which surely must be meant in these last days for us—

“Therefore the flight shall perish from the swift, the strong shall not strengthen his force, neither shall the mighty deliver himself. Neither shall he stand that handleth the bow: he that is swift of foot shall not deliver himself, neither shall he that rideth the horse deliver himself.

He that is courageous among the mighty shall flee away naked in that day, saith the Lord.”

Powerful words to show that those in Israel who become confident in the flesh—remain confident in the flesh—will not be able to deliver themselves by their own strength in that time of judgment which must surely come.

How blessed indeed are a people who can have such valuable lessons. To walk with God will require chastening experience so that confidence in the flesh will entirely disappear and though the ‘gait’ afterwards may be halting and lame nevertheless these are they who will be blessed of David's soul and will find acceptance at the hands of the Lord Jesus. They will no more be called Jacob but Is-ra-el, princes with God. The highest honours upon earth cannot be compared with such an exalted, glorious and eternal destiny. May it ever be remembered the reward is only for those whose flesh has been touched by divine power and so walk haltingly henceforth with no confidence in the flesh.

Discerning the "Signs of the Times"

For over a hundred years now, it has been the custom amongst many religious sects, to include in their monthly magazines articles entitled "*Signs of the Times.*"

It is interesting to look back at some of the articles issued by those upholding the Truth in past decades. There was, for example, the time when the Crimean war was followed with intense interest ; might it be a herald of the coming down of the great northern power upon the land of Israel ? Many years later, events in Egypt in the 1880's were carefully observed as perhaps being a prelude to Christ's immediate return. Then again, some forty years ago, the daily fortunes of the nations as they struggled and fought during the first world war were eagerly reported : was the stage being set for " the great day of the Lord " ?

Such articles gave much encouragement and exhortation to Christ's brethren of those times. It is as though God in His kindness has ordained that each generation of believers should receive encouragement from the unfolding of events around them, even though history has since shown they could not have been the *final* fulfilment, but rather " shadowy " or " historical " fulfilments.

Now the Scriptures expressly refer to the time when " the vision shall speak," as though, immediately before the " great day of the Lord," all the writings of the prophets will shine out with divine light as never before, convincing all true believers that the time of the end *is* at hand.

In this connection, there is a wonderful exhortation to be derived from the example of the prophet Daniel, a man beloved of God. He, too, was intensely interested in the ' Signs of the times.' A captive in Babylon, he knew the Almighty had decreed, through the mouth of Jeremiah the prophet, seventy years desolation upon Jerusalem. As the years went by, and he perceived the end of this long period approaching, what was his attitude ? Did he merely wait until God's promise of restoration should be fulfilled ?

The ninth chapter supplies the answer, and reveals how Daniel made earnest and moving supplication to his God. Evidently he had been caused to realise, as perhaps never before, the wretchedness and waywardness of Israel, himself included. Thus we hear him pleading :—

" O my God, incline thine ear and hear ; open thine eyes and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name ; for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercies.

O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God; for thy city and thy people are called by thy name."

Here was no self-modesty, but a real appreciation of the holiness and kindness of God, without which such words could never have been uttered.

It was "while I was speaking and praying and confessing my sin, and the sin of my people, Israel, and presenting my supplication," that the angel Gabriel appeared to Daniel, comforting him with the assurance—

"I am come to show thee, for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter and consider the vision."

There was then revealed to Daniel the prophecy of "seventy weeks" which were "determined . . . upon the holy city," as recorded in the latter half of this ninth chapter.

Does not this incident in the life of Daniel show that God is not unmindful of the confessions and supplications of His children? Perhaps we do well to ponder the question, *Does it seem reasonable that any should be permitted to understand the vision at the end of the chapter if they cannot embrace from the heart the prayer of Daniel in the beginning of the chapter?* For it was while Daniel was "confessing his sin" that he was told by the Angel:

"I am come to give thee skill and understanding."

A year or two later, the prophet was granted another vision. His immediate response was to set his heart to understand and to chasten himself before God. Three weeks later, an angel appeared to him, saying:—

"Fear not Daniel, for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words . . . And now I am come to make thee understand . . . what shall befall thy people in the latter days."

This raises another searching question: for is it to be expected that God will grant understanding of what shall befall Israel (and the nations) "in the latter days" except to those who "set their hearts to understand and chasten themselves before God"?

When we think of Daniel, a man of such understanding faith, and reflect upon the spirit he exhibited: his feeling of unworthiness, his mourning, his chastening of himself, his appeals for 'skill and understanding'—is there any brother or sister of Christ who at the present time really feels worthy of understanding the "*Signs of the Times*"?

News from the Ecclesias

Beeston (Notts.)—Adult School Room, Acacia Walk, Beeston.
Sundays : Breaking of Bread, 11.0 a.m. Sunday School,
2.0 p.m. Bible Class, 3.0 p.m. Thursdays : 7.45 p.m.

We are looking forward to the occasion of our first Annual Sunday School Party at Beeston when, if the Lord permits, we shall see two for the first time at our gathering, reminding us of the day when we hope to be together with those of all ages whom we have not seen as yet. Until then, we labour in a corner of the vineyard, in which work we are grateful for the recent help of Brethren S. Lancaster and W. V. Butterfield. H.J.S.



Criccieth.—Pentrip, Black Rock, Portmadoc. Sundays : Breaking of Bread, 11.0 a.m. Revelation Study, 3.0 p.m.

At the lecture in Portmadoc on January 7th, nine strangers attended. They appeared very impressed by what they heard, and one or two were anxious to know if further lectures would be given there. This seems an encouragement, and we are considering having another lecture shortly.

The help received on the Sunday was greatly appreciated, and strengthens us to hold fast.

The weather, too, being perfect, was favourable for the work, and now immediately following is a complete change—hailstorms and the mountains all around covered with snow. Thus we see the care and guidance of our Father at this time.



Eden, New York.—Grange Hall, Church Street. Sundays : Breaking of Bread, 11.15 a.m. Sunday School, 10.0 a.m. Revelation Study, 1.30 p.m. Bible Class : Mid-week alternately in Forestville and Hamburg.

Work here has continued with the contacts in Canada. In compliance with their request to read and comment on their book "Apostolic Teaching on Fellowship and Withdrawal," we have seriously done so. The progress of their apostasy is appalling, for among other false teachings they advocate that Apostolic Doctrine is to personally and ecclesially ostracize offenders, but allow them to participate at the Table. The ostracism is to be such that they would eventually go out from that assembly. Such procedure would relieve the assembly of necessity to withdraw from evil, and thus the commands of Christ and the intent of His teachings would be thwarted.

This blasphemous teaching alleges that Christ would fellowship at His Table those whom His professing brethren would not socially tolerate because of their evil works. Scriptural refutation has been sent with our "comment" especial attention being called to Christ's command to "be reconciled" to thy brother if he hath "ought against thee," before offering thy gift at the altar.

How close a parallel to this heresy we have seen in the recent Division, when Ecclesial action condemned a work as evil, but did not charge the doers, nor call upon them to repent or refrain from the Table. The lesson is pointed, for disobedient action will often also offer a new wrong doctrine to support it.

J.A. De F.



Manchester.—Memorial Hall, Albert Square, Manchester.

Sundays : Breaking of Bread, 11.30 a.m. Lecture, 3.15 p.m.

Thursdays : 7.15 p.m. at Onward Hall, Deansgate. Law of

Moses Class : Second Saturday each month at 3.30 p.m.

A delightful time was spent at the Sunday School Party on Dec. 27th. Brethren and sisters and also children attended from Beeston, Enfield, London and Criccieth. After games and tea consideration was given to the subject "The Right Way." With the help of charts and illustrations it was shown how necessary it was to walk rightly from childhood so that as children become men and women they may appreciate the great privilege of being permitted to embrace the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Following this first part of the demonstration consideration was then given to the Way of Life and the children recited verses about those who kept in the way of life and about those who fell from it. The names of those mentioned by the children were either placed in the way of life or out of it on the chart. It is hoped that the simple lesson will have been well impressed upon the young minds that they may appreciate that doing what is right is the only way to true happiness and peace and that failure to do right can only bring sorrow and misery.

The work of witnessing to the "Christadelphians" in Birmingham it is hoped will take place in March. The object of the effort is to show that the present developments amongst "Christadelphians" towards re-uniting reveals a fatal lack of understanding of the doctrine of fellowship by all sections of them. Experience in the latter days shows that it is comparatively easy to have large numbers of men and women congregated together on the basis of human rules and understanding but few indeed will embrace the Spirit's doctrine of fellowship by which men and women may become members of one united family—the family of God.

W.V.B.