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# The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

in opposition to the Dogmas of  
Papal and Protestant Christendom

A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

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

**"Take heed ye be not deceived"**

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AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

THE HISTORY OF THE TRUTH IN THE LATTER DAYS

SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

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## At the Table of the Lord

### “Abide in Him”

In each true follower of the Lord Jesus, there is a deep yearning to grow ever closer to Him. In that desire, help can be found through one who was a close companion of Jesus Christ. Such was the Apostle John, for we read in John 13 : 23, that “there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom, one of the disciples whom Jesus loved”. Also, we find recorded in John 19 : 26-27, how the Lord Jesus, as He was crucified, placed in the hands of John, the care of His mother, Mary. He surely was one that Jesus loved and trusted. Can we find, then, in the mind of John, an example, that we may be as he was—close to Jesus ?

John, in his first epistle, speaks to us as little children, yearning to have us know the Lord Jesus, even as he did. He writes in Chapter 1, verse 3,

“That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”

Having known such a wondrous friendship, he speaks to us. Can we, then, brethren and sisters, take hold of his words, that we, too, might know the same fellowship, and so our “joy be full”?

Do his words in chapter 2 : 28, help us—“And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming”? Abide in Him!—how very much we want to do that, but do we really know all that it requires and means in our lives?

Examining the original word for “abide”, we find it means “to continue”, “to dwell”, “to endure” and “to remain”, implying a consistent closeness. What do we find involved in this?

Perhaps Jesus’ own words in John 15 : 1-10 help. Here He speaks of the vine and its branches, He being the true vine. Verses 4, 5.—

“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me . . . For without me ye can do nothing.”

How necessary is this abiding in Him, for as in the natural figure, those branches cut off from the nourishment of the vine, soon die and are only fit to be cast into the fire. In such a serious consideration, we must be careful to discern whether we are true branches, securely fastened to the vine. How can this be done?

The Lord Jesus has said, “the branch cannot bear fruit of itself”. Is this how we can tell? Let us, brethren and sisters, examine our lives to see what is being produced. Would the Lord Jesus find us

bearing fruit, becoming suitable for His use? Is there a growth in spirit, proving that we are labouring to "abide in him"? His words continue to help—John 15 : 10—

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love."

The Lord Jesus then, concludes that He has told them these things, "that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." In this same spirit, John has written to his "little children" to the end we might, with him, know the eternal joy, because of pleasing the Father.

For those who "abide in Him," there is a special work being done. We have an example in Job, one who was blessed of God with much goods, children, and prestige. God knew that he was upright, feared Him, and eschewed evil, and yet desired to test him to see if he would continue to abide. We know of his trial; all his riches were taken away, his children killed, and his own body afflicted with grievous sores, and yet, the rebuke to his wife speaks of an unshakeable trust.

"What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips."

In addition, and perhaps harder to bear, was the rebuke of those who professed to be his friends. Surely, through all the tribulation, Job found strength and wisdom because in truth, he did abide in Him. Aren't we helped to remember he is our brother, and so strive to endure in the same strength, because we, too, "abide in Him"?

**"Tarry ye here and watch"**

How alert we must be lest in spite of our determination, we might fail. John himself experienced such a weakness when Jesus went into Gethsemane, taking with Him, Peter and James and John. He said to them, Matthew 26 : 38—"My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me." We know a little of His agony there, as He felt His own great weakness and His dreadful responsibility. In that agony, He desired His three closest disciples to tarry (or abide) and watch with Him, to share if it were possible, His sorrow of soul. The record is that the three fell asleep and so were not with Him in His hour of need. Jesus' words to them were, "the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."

Can we put ourselves in John's place and imagine his sorrow and remorse? Yet, do we not fail in just the same way, in our determination to abide and watch with Him? Are we not continually passing through experiences which must cause us to be aware always of the weakness of the flesh, for no matter how

willing the spirit, if the flesh is allowed to overcome, there will be failure?

But even as He agonised in doing the Father's Will, our entering into that struggle, and, in a measure, suffering with Him because of obedience, is because we are indeed tarrying with Him—"abiding in Him." How greatly we fail, yet must strive harder, for His words are sure.

"If ye continue (or abide) in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed: and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

And thus we are given further help. Well, we might ask, how profoundly do we know the Truth—not merely a knowledge, but as the word means, perceive, understand it—and so apply it to our living, really to experience the power of it, which can alone free us from the bondage of sin and death?

The Apostle John knew that power working with him to chasten and bring him closer to his beloved Master. Has not each one of us experienced the hand of God working in this way? With such chastisement, comes a submission, a humbleness, a teachableness. The Lord Jesus tests all to determine if these characteristics may be making each one suitable for His use.

### **"See that ye Refuse not Him that Speaketh"**

Paul was another who had experienced the searching of heart. He was one who did respond to the hand of God calling him out to be His chosen vessel. He knew the Spirit working with him, which caused him to abide and to be attentive to His voice as guidance was given. From this experience, he could say, Hebrews 12: 25, "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh." With this earnest desire to be close to Him, must go the inclining of the ear. Paul goes on to show how this strengthening is necessary, that a shaking may be endured. The shaking we know, is to test those who profess to abide in the Lord Jesus. Paul's words are "that those things which cannot be shaken may remain". How significant that the word used for "remain" should be the same as "abide." The Lord Jesus expresses this in Luke 6: 47, 48:

"Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings and doeth them . . . he is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood rose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock."

Does not the Lord Jesus show how this shaking may be endured—only if the foundation is sure, firm, a rock which nothing can move? Paul in Colossians 2: 6, 7, further exhorts,

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord,

so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."

How earnest would be the Apostle John's plea to abide in Him, for his desire for us is that "we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming". How fearful and weak we feel, yet shall we be able to have confidence? Have we not seen that "abiding in Him" involves a heart-searching?

Are we bringing forth fruit?

Do we submit to and are we rightly exercised by the good or evil which God brings upon His people?

Are we tarrying and watching—fellowshipping in a measure, His struggle, and those of His brethren and sisters?

Are we shakeable—recognising what the foundation must be if we are not to be shaken?

These are sobering questions and make us realise how greatly we lack, but the Lord Jesus' words are given to comfort and inspire:

"Let not your heart be troubled . . . believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions (abiding places) . . . I go to prepare a place for you."

John 14: 1-2.

J.A.DeF.

## The History of the Truth in the Latter Days (7)

### Christadelphians and Re-union

Four years after the great Division of 1885 on the Inspiration of the Bible, there was an attempt made at re-union. The reason this proved abortive is illuminating in showing not only why the Division had been allowed of God, but why there could not be re-union without sacrificing principles vital to the preservation of the Truth.

#### First attempt at Re-union in 1889

Following a discussion between some of Temperance Hall with a few of Suffolk Street (then Masonic Hall) there was a request to Temperance Hall to formulate a proposition as a basis for Re-union.

On August 26th the Arranging Brethren of Temperance Hall decided that the request should be met by submitting the declaration made at the time of the Division:

"We hereby record and profess our conviction that the doctrine of the Divine inspiration and consequent infallibility of the Scriptures in all parts of them (as originally written by the prophets and apostles) is the first principle of that system of truth which forms the

basis of our fellowship one with another in Christ; and that consequently we are unable to compromise that principle by continuing in association with those who either believe or tolerate the doctrine promulgated by brother Ashcroft, and publicly endorsed and defended by brother Chamberlin, that the Bible is only partly inspired, and contains an element of merely human authorship, liable to err."

Such words are forthright. They uphold the right, and what is equally important they condemn the wrong. This is ever the duty of the faithful. How did Suffolk Street reply? Was their anxiety that they might secure Re-union with God and His Son? Let it be at once realised that when they "walked in the darkness" by condoning, if not supporting, an attack on the infallibility of the Word, they lost the fellowship of the Father and the Son, from which arises the only true fellowship "one with another". The Apostle John makes this startlingly clear:

"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you. that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

(I John 1vv-5-6)

The words of the Apostle will repay the most painstaking consideration. Human weakness is to excuse sin in all forms; to discount one sin by comparing it with some worse sin. Those who are lax in divine things talk much in this way, and confuse themselves—and what is worse confuse others—when they add "You can't have a perfect ecclesia," "None is perfect," "All sin and come short of the glory of God." They forget, if they ever knew, there is a difference between one who is resolved to uphold God's law, but sins through weakness; and one who is careless about the law and when sin is pointed out will not repent but seeks excuse. To the former the Apostle shows there is the merciful provision of forgiveness when confession is made, through the wonderful provision of the "blood of Jesus Christ his Son (which) cleanseth us from all sin". To the one walking in the darkness there is no such provision. His attitude is one of truculence towards God and rebellion against Him. Failure to "gain" such a one leaves him at the mercy of the adversary to where he belongs, and outside the fellowship of the Father and the Son.

The faithful basing their fellowship on this highest of considerations realise that what the Father and Son will not fellowship,

they, too, must not fellowship. If they do then they become partakers of the evil, as guilty in the eyes of God as if they had committed the evil. This was the position of those in Suffolk Street after 1885, even of those who fully and sincerely believed in a wholly inspired Bible. Their sin was they were prepared to extend their fellowship where God had clearly shown that He would not do so. Holy fellowship was reduced by them to a human institution meaning nothing more than "membership." How sad that so many should be deceived and lose the fellowship of Him, which truly is light and life.

### **Suffolk Street's reply**

Fatefully Suffolk Street declined the Temperance Hall proposition as basis of Re-union, and in the correspondence which ensued there was revealed how far the leaven of Partial Inspiration had spread. Suffolk Street made the counter suggestion that the Resolution passed before the Division would be adequate. Whilst its wording appeared satisfactory it was drawn to avoid division, to compose, if possible, conflicting elements, and in consequence was "a little prolix and elastic". The terms of this were:

"That this ecclesia believes that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, translations of which now exist in all languages, were originally produced in all parts of them by inspiration of God, in this sense, namely, that the Holy Spirit moved and guided the writers either to use its own words conveying information of which they had no knowledge, or to record their own knowledge in words which it superintended: or to adopt or incorporate from outside sources whatever it might approve or require to be recorded for its own purpose—the writers being in no case left to their own unaided efforts, and the result being that their writing was free from error:— and further, that this ecclesia will hereafter refuse to fellowship all who maintain that inspiration was limited to the writing of certain parts only, and that the other parts were the work of a merely human authorship liable to err, but will take no action against any member of the ecclesia until accusation is made against them in scriptural form, and he has been heard in his own defence."

The reply of Temperance Hall, guided by the faithful hand of Robert Roberts, was in the true beseeching spirit of Christ, but searching whether the leaven was still there. For if it were, re-union would benefit no one. It would not deliver Suffolk Street from "darkness"; it would imperil the light enjoyed by Temperance Hall.

Re-union without care would mean a great increase in numbers, a relief from and embarrassment in proclaiming the Truth, but with the cataclysmal result that Temperance Hall as well as Suffolk Street would be overwhelmed with darkness, thereby losing the fellowship of the Father and the Son.

The reply contained the following:

“We would gladly accept the said definition as a basis for Re-union, if we did not recollect that its terms were, after their adoption, declared by those who disagreed with us to be “ambiguous” and compatible with the doctrine to which we objected. Under the circumstances, as our sole anxiety is to shield the Scriptures in our midst . . . we feel it would be necessary to give us some guarantee outside the wording of the said definition, that it represents to your minds what it was intended to represent to ours.”

How unnecessary and uncharitable, it was alleged, was this querying by Robert Roberts and those with him, but can this be said when fellowship with the Father and Son is at stake? Remember the care needed by Israel to preserve the favour of His fellowship: how carelessness brought disfavour and sudden death to many. Truly these things are written for “our learning”, that we might rise above these human considerations when discussing Fellowship and come to the only plane that really matters—the divine, on which is shown how the Creator will be pleased to dwell with a people.

The great care of Robert Roberts was rewarded. The next communication from Suffolk Street revealed that the leaven was still there.

### **Leaven of Partial Inspiration still found in Suffolk Street**

The reply from Suffolk Street whilst supporting the original Resolution, which in substance said the Bible was wholly inspired and free from error, uncovered their reservations in no uncertain way:

“You ask us to give some guarantee that it represents to our minds what it was intended to represent to yours . . . Does it represent to you the contention that the Bible is verbally inspired throughout, and infallible in every jot and tittle? It does not say so, nor do we so interpret it . . . If you hold that a belief in the verbal theory of inspiration is essential to salvation or that a brother who does not hold that theory is consequently unfit for fellowship, we ask you for chapter and verse upon which you rely for your contention.”

How amazing that there can be formal assent to a Statement of Faith, and reservations such as these held, which completely undermine that Statement. As was pointed out by Temperance Hall at the time, this doubting of "verbal inspiration" and repudiating of the idea of the infallibility of "every jot and tittle" opened the door to every error regarding the accuracy and reliability of all and every part of the Word of God. Admit the possibility of error in one part, however small, and then the whole stands in doubt. It is only a tittle which alters the word in the Hebrew from "daughter" to "house"; and the rather insignificant letter "jot" or "yod" if omitted from certain words would destroy their meaning. The words of Jesus are sufficient answer to these doubters of God's Holy Word:

"Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law (and prophets—see previous verse) till all be fulfilled."

(Matthew 5 vv 17-18)

This was clearly shown by those with Robert Roberts at the time. His vigorous words and staunch stand delivered the Truth from its enemies—from the Synagogue of Satan, for surely this is what Suffolk Street had become. Satan descends to "depths" in his words, which those upholding the Truth would never consider. He (they—Suffolk Street) replied taunting Robert Roberts, accusing him of refusing to continue the debate, saying:

"Where does the champion that met Mr. Hine, Mr. Nightingale, and even Mr. Bradlaugh conceal himself when a mere stripling armed with only the Spirit's sword challenges him to defend the verbal theory of inspiration as a basis of fellowship?"

The reply of Robert Roberts and those with him was as magnanimous as it was the means of showing the Truth:

"We sincerely desire reconciliation, but cannot accept it unless there is a frank and unreserved recognition of the wholly-inspired character of the Bible throughout . . . If you have in any degree changed your minds, and are now prepared to take the stand we find it necessary to take, there might be hope . . .

Bro. Ashcroft maintained that the reasonable view of inspiration was that it took part only in those matters beyond the power of man to discover for himself: that it was reasonable to acknowledge the presence of a human as well as a divine element in the Scriptures . . . Brother Chamberlin came to the support of this doctrine in a very explicit way—"Inspiration has been given only where it claims to

have been given . . . There are actual contradictions and erroneous statements of various kinds, similar to the one we have referred to in Deuteronomy, and we must not be wilfully blind to such. There they are, however they may have got there. If the book were throughout free from any and every particle of error, these could not be found.'

(You) take the incomprehensible attitude of professing entire inspiration while objecting to the 'jots and tittles', and remaining in association with the very men who introduced the doctrine of partial inspiration at the beginning.

Under the circumstances, while re-union would be advantageous in many ways, there is no alternative but to accept the continuance of the present situation" . . .

"We uphold the complete and unerring inspiration of the Bible, including all its jots and tittles, as the first principle in our basis of fellowship".

### The Hand of God

Those serving God in spirit and truth are His, and their affairs are His affairs. He will never leave them nor forsake them.

At this time Suffolk Street boasted that Ashcroft who had apostatised from them, had now returned. Why was this allowed at this juncture? The "Fraternal Visitor" (Organ of Suffolk Street) which carried this news, at the same time had to report the failure of the efforts at Re-union. The Editor of the "Fraternal Visitor" allowed this man, guilty of charging God with error in His Word, to publish a letter about Inspiration. Like previous writings it contained the same poison, perhaps a bit better disguised, and by its scholarly phrases was calculated to deceive the simple.

The events of the next few days cannot have been accidental. Ashcroft had decided to go to America and took his leave of Suffolk Street at a tea meeting held by them. On the very next day, according to the "Ormskirk Advertiser," he was present at Seaforth Congregational Church to receive the well-wishes of his flock. The "Reverend" Geo. Lord presided supported by four more "Reverends." After the usual flesh-pleasing speeches in favour of the "Rev." Ashcroft, the latter left with their best wishes and a purse of 100 guineas !

Was it by accident that this happened just at this time? Was it not rather that Suffolk Street might be caused like faithless Israel to drink their own shame—to their own confusion—and to give encouragement to one like Moses who stood for the whole counsel

of God? Imagine the words of such an one appearing in a Magazine purporting to support the Truth at the time he was receiving the adulations and gifts of Babylon. To minds sensitive to the working of the hand of God, this would mean much, and help establish beyond doubt where the Truth and Christ were. Truly God will never leave nor forsake those who are His.

**“Neither will I be with you any more.” (Joshua 7 v 12).**

Those responsible for Re-union have ignored all the foregoing, with the vital principles involved. They have said these things belong to the past. “Let us start anew.” “Let us find a Statement of Faith, broad enough to accept as many as possible, narrow enough not to offend the more particular.”

And the rank and file have for the most part been deceived by such machinations. Suffolk Street has been represented to Temperance Hall as subscribing to the same Statement of Faith, so the question is asked “What can we do but accept them?”

The whole approach is wrong and unscriptural and shows that Temperance Hall have now lost the doctrine of fellowship as well as Suffolk Street. The Word of God shows clearly where there is departure from sound doctrine it is sin, and sin can only be removed in God’s eyes by confession and repentance. Let these propositions with their solemn implied conclusions be faced—both by Suffolk Street and Temperance Hall.

That Ashcroft and Chamberlin departed from sound doctrine on Inspiration, and in consequence sinned.

That they never changed their minds, showing repentance, and fruits meet for repentance.

That Suffolk Street never condemned them by withdrawing from them, to show that they stood with God in the condemnation of unrepentant sinners.

That in consequence Suffolk Street became guilty of the heinous offence of attributing error to God’s Word.

What would have been required to redress this situation at the time? Surely, to support by righteous action those who stood for the Truth, and at the same time condemn by withdrawing from the wicked assailants of the Truth.

What is the position now? The majority do not care and disclaim any responsibility for what happened seventy-two years ago. Time, however long, does not do away with involvement in sin in the view of the Creator. One coming to the Truth must learn that he has a sinful nature because of what Adam did six thousand years ago. If he turns to his helpers and says “I am not concerned with a sin of six thousand years ago,” he may sound wise, but one thing

is certain, he will never come to the Truth. Such, if he would please God, must realise that Adam sinned, and because of this he as a descendant of Adam, is sinful; and must seek God's appointed way of covering this sinful nature, of discovering first that it alienates him from God, but through mercy he may come to God through Christ.

The same principle was demonstrated clearly when Israel were before Ai. A command was given that none must take of what God had condemned. Achan—a brother remember—was covetous. He was tempted. He fell. Israel began to fall before her enemies. What was the matter? The record is illuminating:

"Israel hath sinned, and they also have transgressed my covenant . . . for they have even taken of the accursed thing. therefore . . . neither will I be with you any more."

(Joshua 7 vv 11-12)

What *was* wrong? Had all partaken of the accursed thing? No! Only one—brother Achan! And by his sin he involved all Israel, so that God though still working with them, had temporarily left them. Supposing brother Achan had not been found, or having been found, the Ecclesia in the wilderness had said "we rather like him and properly understood we think he is right and we refuse to cast him out." Then the solemn fact emerges that God would never have returned to them and they would have perished!

Ashcroft and Chamberlin in the Division were the modern Achan. They sinned. Their sin was clearly discovered as the evidence shows. Suffolk Street not only refused to cast the sinner out, but defended their sin. Temperance Hall in erecting a bridge called an agreed Statement of Faith, and not going to the root of the matter, have identified themselves with the modern Achan. Not that this shows that previously Temperance Hall were right in the eyes of God, for they have for a long time identified themselves in spirit with Suffolk Street, tacitly agreeing that a member of Suffolk Street had the same opportunity of finding a place in the Kingdom as one in Temperance Hall. Re-union has only shown up the fact that Temperance Hall had already lost the doctrine of fellowship—which means they had lost the basis of fellowship with the Father and His Son. Re-union with all its unscriptural aspects is only the fruit of this evil. This sombre fact may stir sincere hearts and minds to search where *the* Truth may be found, with the unspeakable blessing of the fellowship of the Father and His Son. Apart from His fellowship, one is in the world—

"Without Christ alien from the commonwealth of Israel . . . having no hope, and without God in the world."  
(Ephesians 2 v 12).

### **The Dreadful Darkness**

Perhaps the enormity of some of the things, which by fellowship in this and other countries involve Suffolk Street and now Temperance Hall, may shock the reader. If they do then perhaps there may be a healthy reaction, and urgent enquiry as to where the Truth can be found. Here are some of the wicked doctrines allowed, for which written proof can be given:—

“Flesh is now in nature as it was created at the first in man; therefore sin is not hereditary.”

How opposed to the words of Holy Writ showing in the flesh dwells no good thing!

Another heresy allowed:—

“It is a fact that Adam was mortal and corruptible by creation, and there was no need therefore to sentence him or his posterity to die a natural death.”

So God was wrong in condemning Christ in the manner of His death, for He was condemned for the nature He bore.

Still another error:—

“The devil which Christ destroyed by his death was the Law.”

“The Law” says the Apostle “is good.” How irreverent to speak of the embodiment of Christ’s spirit and teaching as the “Devil.”

One error begets another:—

“The bride of Christ is to be wafted to heaven itself, there to be married to the Lamb and thenceforward—form their new heavenly home—to reign over the earth and not on it.”

These are the shadows of darkness, a darkness which can be felt. Light has long since departed from Suffolk Street. In seventy-two years there has been ample time for the works of darkness to multiply: for the leaven has become all-corrupting. Maybe, there will be some in Suffolk Street and perhaps more in Temperance Hall who will find the true light, and be delivered from the deadly darkness of the present situation.

(To be continued . . .)

### **“The Signs of His Coming and of the end of the world”**

The eyes of all the world still remain focussed on the Middle East, as statesmen scheme, and nations manoeuvre for power and influence. From the north, Russia looks on suspiciously and quietly strengthens her influence in Syria. America treads cautiously, anxious to woo the Arabs without antagonising world Jewry.

Britain and France, like two recalcitrant children in disgrace, feel obliged to retire and keep silent; and Egypt jubilantly shows her teeth, secure in the knowledge that the shadow of Russia behind her is sufficient to discourage any would-be aggressor.

The most sorry figure of all is Israel. Desperately and frantically she tries to squeeze assurances from a reluctant America, or from an unsympathetic United Nations Organisation. O Israel! If only she could take to heart the exhortation of her illustrious king:—

“Happy is he who hath the God of Jacob for his help,  
whose hope is in the Lord his God.”

Instead she must learn by bitter experience the wisdom of those words:—

“Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man  
in whom there is no help.”

Surrounded on every hand by adversaries, she stands a lonely figure: no trustworthy friends, no powerful allies. Judged by natural standards her future is precarious and clouded by the knowledge that many peoples have avowed to destroy her. How one would like to whisper in her ears—

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, 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 thee . . .

### **The future of Jerusalem**

Little does Israel realise what the future holds for her and for her beloved capital, that the time is nigh at hand when nations will gladly come up to Jerusalem to hear the Word of the Lord. Nor is she aware of the dreadful calamities which are to precede this time of great glory—the cruel invasion from the north, bringing “a time of trouble such as never was,” when Israel is to find herself the battleground of all nations. If she but knew these things—and believed them—she would perhaps turn to the God of Jacob for help, instead of putting her trust in princes. But now they are hid from her and it is no use whispering these things into her ears, for she could not receive them. A subtle but radical change must take place before she can turn and put her trust in the God of Jacob.

Speaking of this time, now so very near, when the nations will come up against Jerusalem to battle, the prophet Zechariah made the remarkable announcement:—

“The burden of the word of the Lord for Israel. Behold  
I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the  
people round about, when they shall be in the siege,  
both against Judah and against Jerusalem.  
And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome  
stone for all people . . .

And in that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

And it shall come to pass in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." (Chapter 12).

This powerful message needs no interpretation and no exposition, but nevertheless, Israel cannot receive it, for there is something fundamentally wrong in her outlook, something most important which is lacking. Until this is remedied, she will never turn to God, and put her trust in the shadow of His wings.

The change to be accomplished is indicated by the words of the prophet which follow:—

"And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.

In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadad-rimmon in the valley of Megiddon."

### The "Spirit of Supplications"

These graphic words of the prophet describe the great change which is to transform Israel when she comes to recognise in her deliverer none other than the Messiah she has rejected for so long. Here is a mighty work of God, described as the pouring out of "the spirit of grace and of supplications," and causing a grievous mourning in the land, "as the mourning of Hadad-rimmon in the valley of Megiddon."

To appreciate all that is embraced by this reference to the "spirit of supplications" and the "mourning in Jerusalem" it is necessary to enquire into the mourning to which the prophet alludes—the mourning in the valley of Megiddon. Evidently here is a reference to that occasion when Josiah, the last good king of Judah, was slain at Megiddo, causing a great lamentation throughout the land—

"And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah: and all the singing men and singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold they are written in the lamentations." (2 Chron. 35 v. 25).

Here was a mourning indeed, a loud and grievous lamentation which has been preserved for all time, witnessing to a mourning

which shall yet be heard from Jerusalem when Israel recognises Him whom she pierced as her Messiah and Deliverer. The Lamentations of Jeremiah—a dead and forgotten book to most—is shortly to come alive with startling brilliance. From a people desperate and destitute will arise a great lamentation, the spontaneous expression of hearts and minds filled with “the spirit of supplications and the spirit of grace,” as the full import of their deliverance is perceived. Then from a host of lips will be heard the confession:—

“The Lord is righteous; for I have rebelled against his commandments: hear, I pray you, all people, and behold my sorrow . . . I called for my lovers, but they deceived me . . . Behold O Lord, for I am in distress. my bowels are troubled; mine heart is turned within me, for I have grievously rebelled . . . my sighs are many, and my heart is faint.”

(Lamentations Ch. 1)

Here truly is the spirit of supplication, a deep appreciation of one's position before the Almighty, the recognition of inherent failure before Him—an outlook of mind which is the very antithesis of confidence and self assurance. Let this lament of Jeremiah be read and re-read; let the spirit of the whole of the Book of Lamentations be allowed to pervade the mind, and there begins to develop a deeper comprehension of all that is meant by “the spirit of supplication,” which is so precious to God, but so rarely found in the world. It is when this spirit begins to enter the hearts of “the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem” that there will be heard a mourning “as one mourneth for his only son . . . and is in bitterness for his firstborn”—the firstborn who was despised and rejected of men.

Truth never changes. This same spirit of supplication was seen in Christ, as the Psalms so beautifully portray. It was exhibited by Moses and the Prophets and the Apostles. The urgent question is, Can it be seen in us?

J.R.M.

### 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 at the People's Hall.

Distribution of literature has been made in two villages near Nottingham and it is planned to make further distributions periodically in the hope that some may be interested.

We are grateful for the labours of Bre. J. Smith, Pulman and D. Lancaster which have helped us much to hold fast in these evil days.

H.J.S.

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

We are thankful as we now see the Spring approaching with all the wonders of nature—with the flowers and the lambs in the fields around us. We look forward, too, to the summer season when we hope to meet with our brethren and sisters and to be of service to them and also to receive their help in the work here, which appears to be progressing.

The arrangements for the lecture in Portmadoc on March 30th are now well in hand.

Per J.R.M.

**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: Midweek, alternately in Forestville and Hamburg.

The baptism of Mrs. Olive Dean, who travelled nearly 4,000 miles to be interviewed, has brought much joy and encouragement. Our new sister had been brought up in a "Christadelphian" Sunday School in Stockport, England, and her baptism on Saturday, February 23rd, 1957, is the culmination of more than three years of correspondence, and a study of the Word of God, and of the writings of Dr. Thomas and Brother Robert Roberts. For the present, she will be in isolation, and the help of brethren and sisters in letters and notes will be most welcome.

Advertising in Springfield, Massachusetts, is bringing some response. Other contacts also continue.

J.A.DeF.

**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.

There is a certain amount of lively interest at the present time which is keeping brethren and sisters occupied, some in correspondence and others in discussion. It has been most encouraging to have the work although difficult at times to keep pace with it.

Final arrangements for the meeting for "Christadelphians" in Birmingham are— 3.30 p.m. on Saturday, April 6th in the Small Theatre, Midland Institute, Paradise Street, Birmingham. Subject of Address— "The Divisions of the Past—and their lesson for the present. Has the doctrine of fellowship been lost?"

W.V.B.