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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

### "Bless the Lord, O My Soul"

Such were the words of David as his heart found expression in the Psalms. From his own experiences he knew he could "bless the Lord", and "forget not all his benefits". Surely, this man after God's own heart knew the great benefits which God bestows upon His people.

Today the Creator still reaches down to those who are striving to be like David, so that they, too, may experience His care, His merciful provision for every need, lifting up in times of trouble. In trying to come closer to David's mind, can we not find help through his words in the Psalm, so that our hearts may cry out, too, "Bless the Lord, O my soul" ?

In the 104th Psalm, we may contemplate God's gracious provision for each need of all His creatures. For His people, a very particular and chosen food is provided. We read in verse 15,

"Wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart."

This is no ordinary food, but that which works upon the heart, gladdening and strengthening it, and at the same time, causes the countenance to shine. Is this not the food for which we must yearn and seek, spiritual food for sustaining the inner man, so that the growth will continue on to the stature of man—THE MAN—David's greater Son. Can we then discern what this food is ?

### "Wine that Maketh Glad the Heart"

As we know it, wine is a stimulant which quickens the heart, and brings a sense of warmth. How much more so, the wine with which God gladdens the hearts of His people! Is our thirst and our seeking, brethren and sisters, for this wine which the Father provides? The Spirit speaking through Isaiah calls —

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money ; come ye, buy, and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price."

Isaiah 55 : 1

This wine is beyond the price of money ; it is the gift of God, to those who come seeking its life-giving qualities and offering up their lives in gratitude to Him. Such grow to experience a consuming thirst which finds satisfaction only in this food of the Spirit, and come to recognise all others as poor imitations. Verses 2 and 3, in Isaiah 55, query :

"Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread ? and your labour for that which satisfieth not ? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight in fatness. Incline your ear, and come

unto me : hear, and your soul shall live ; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."

Any food other than His, will not bring forth the Spirit's growth. How vain the labour and cost. How empty, too, when the longed-for is attained. And what of us ? Are we hearkening diligently, absorbing every bit of strength-giving food ? If we are eating that which is good, then we shall know even now in measure, that delight to the soul which is promised. For all who hearken, the promise is "the sure mercies of David".

Further help is given in the Song of Solomon, chapter 2 : 4, as the Bride-to-be is speaking of her Beloved in a time yet to come :

"He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love."

Banqueting house, the Hebrew original reveals is "wine house", and how much more expressive to those who long to be with Him. Do we not see here a symbol of the people of the Lord Jesus, united now with Him, into that joy which He promised would come. "I will drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" ? What gladness and rejoicing then by those who have faithfully partaken of His Gift, this "wine which maketh glad the heart of man".

### **"Oil To Make His Face To Shine"**

The importance of this oil is shown in the law given to Moses on Mount Sinai, which is a pattern of things to come. In Exodus 2 : 20, God's command was, "Thou shalt command the children of Israel that they bring thee pure oil olive, beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always." God appointed light from the beginning and has called all His children to that light. As in the type in the tabernacle, it was to be always burning, making light for the service, and reflecting in the jewels of the breastplate—so it is always with His People. His light is the lamp for our path, showing His way, and the beauty of this light is to be reflected. Is it not so, that only as we have the Spirit's oil, the path of righteousness is lightened ? This is the Father's provision and with it, should not our faces be made to shine, reflecting the lovely qualities of the One who is the Light.

The oil had another use as well, in the holy anointing oil. In Exodus 30 : 25 we read—

"And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment . . . compound after the art of the apothecary : it shall be an holy anointing oil."

This oil sanctified the altar, the candlestick, the vessels, and all things used in God's service. It sanctified also Aaron and his sons to their holy work.

Then, pondering the testimony concerning this oil, which God gives, may we not believe and wonder, that all those who would serve Him in righteousness, as they partake of the oil, become sanctified and made holy? The oil is a gift and will never fail, where there is faith. We remember Elijah's comforting words to the poor and faithful widow, who succoured him in the time of famine—

“Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.”

I Kings 17 : 14

Elijah believed and was able with the faithful widow, to partake of this food all through the famine—that time of tribulation. Must we not enter into this experience also? If we believe and seek, submitting ourselves to Him even as the widow did, that oil will never fail. David knew this and rejoiced in His goodness and mercy.

“Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies : thou anointest my head with oil : my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life : and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.”

God does care for His people, provides the wine and oil to sustain in tribulation or distress. It is that which is prepared for His people, to the end that there may be an anointing of the head with oil. In Psalm 45 : 7, the promise is given : “Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness : therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” This speaks of the Lord Jesus, but for all His followers who love righteousness and hate wickedness, is this hope held out. Again in Psalm 133 : 2, 3, the unity of those who are accounted acceptable at His coming is spoken of. “It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard ; that went down to the skirts of his garments ; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountain of Zion : for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for ever more.”

Surely here is the accomplishment of all hope, the final anointing which makes the face to shine for eternity, reflecting in perfection the glory of the Father.

In Isaiah 12 : 6, we find this use of the word :

“Cry out (shine) and shout thou inhabitant of Zion : for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.”

As we strive, brethren and sisters, in the hope of His very presence amongst us, are we not helped, fed by God's loving care in the provision of the oil and all its promises? How gratefully we

ought then, to join David in exclaiming, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

### **"Bread Which Strengtheneth Man's Heart"**

Going back to the Psalms, we find that David speaks of food—bread to strengthen the heart. Can we see a type of this in the manna given for Israel in the wilderness. There they had no food, and would soon have perished if He had not, in His mercy, provided. Surely it was bread to strengthen their hearts. There were special commands to Israel concerning the gathering of this bread, given, God said, to prove them. They were to gather a certain rate each day, and on the sixth day, a double amount, that no gathering would be done on the Sabbath. God provided amply for everyone's need. In our wilderness journey, His food is given also, if we will gather it faithfully, realising that without it, we should perish. We remember Israel at one time said, "our soul loatheth this light bread". How carefully we must gather lest by our actions or attitude we display the same contempt, which was such a great offense to God. If we neglect so gracious a provision, and seek some other, are we not just as truly as Israel, saying, "I loathe this light bread"? We must remember it is from God, and is expressed in Psalm 78 : 24, 25, for there we read how God "had given them of the corn of heaven. Man did eat angel's food : he sent them meat to the full".

If only we could fully appreciate the holy position—angel's food provided for us. Dare we lack in appreciation? Dare we misuse that which is so precious? Dare we fail to partake of this gift so bountifully bestowed? Let us take it in gladness, to the strengthening of our heart, in that we may hope to be bound to Him in the peace and oneness of His Body, to which the bread of life is building us.

### **"Food Convenient For Me"**

Having then contemplated that food and all it means, which the merciful Father has given for us, is our longing quickened as it ought to be? If only we might realise our great need for this wine, oil, and bread in the same way in which we very soon feel the need for natural food. We should plead, "Feed me with food convenient for me." Food ordained of God for the perfect strength and growth of His children.

Thinking upon these things, we do indeed desire to "bless the Lord", echoing David's further words, "My meditation of him shall be sweet : I will be glad in the Lord." Psalm 104 : 34.

J.A.DeF.

## The History of the Truth in the Latter Days (10)

### Christadelphians and Re-union

The history of the Truth in the latter days is not unlike that which is recorded in the Word of God. From the foundation of the world, due to the ingratitude of man, the goodness of God has been overlooked and His ways despised.

For a few moments let the mind dwell on the history of the Truth in the past as recorded in the Word of God, when the frightening dangers of falling away may be seen in their true perspective.

Man at first was created very good ; on the introduction of sin and the increase of his numbers he was given, in the mercy of God, the means of controlling himself so that he might become like God, godlike. In the superb wisdom which this arrangement discloses, characters could be formed that were not automaton but were developed under different circumstances, producing different men and women, but nevertheless having one thing in common—that their minds and hearts were like unto God Himself.

The requirements in the wisdom of God did not stop man from the exercise of his free will in the other direction, the gratifying of himself by the neglecting of Divine law, and so as the pages of the Bible are quickly turned over it is not only a case of individuals who failed in this matter, but large groups of people including ecclesias and nations.

Early in the history of the world there appear the significant words from God—

“Then began men to call upon (call themselves by) the name of the Lord”. (Genesis 4 v. 26).

What had happened to require such a statement ? Previously all men belonged to God so that no name was necessary to differentiate between those who followed Him and those who did not, but it is evident that at the time of Seth, after the evil working of Cain and others, this command to distinguish was necessary, and a separation between those who belonged to the seed of the woman and those belonging to the seed of the serpent was inevitable if the Truth were to be preserved. This fact was seen some hundreds of years later to have developed to considerable magnitude, when the earth was peopled by those who were the sons of God and those who were only the sons of men. At this time the record states there was a joining of the two which was highly displeasing to God. What a warning for the present ! The result that ensued was confusion and loss of the Truth except for eight who were saved in the Ark.

Only some three hundred years after the flood, the Divine record reveals a lonely man trekking from his home town and father's

house in obedience to a Divine command. Ur was the name of the place which he left, a word which means Light. Surely it was not necessary for a man of God to leave the Light, but as Jesus said, there is a light in a man or people, which is darkness. Whilst it is not revealed, it is evident that in this place there had been the Light but that God now looked upon that light as darkness, and a fresh start had to be made for the maintenance of the Truth through the faith of one who God called from this place to a land which He promised him.

From Abraham, through the miraculous intervention of the power of God, sprang God's nation Israel, His ecclesia, styled by Stephen 'the ecclesia in the wilderness'. Present-day pleaders for laxity and toleration often refer to the happenings in Israel as an excuse for their pleadings. How tragic this blindness, for the eyes should see in the history of the nation of Israel God's view of rebellious sinners, and especially in the calamities which overtook the nation, His judgment upon them. What more powerful warning could be given to the present day than the fact that the Ecclesia of Israel was cut off by God for disobedience and remains so to this present time? It is true that a few of those who are descendants of Israel respond to the Truth but the rest belong to an apostate body cut off by God. All their feasts, their ceremonies, their readings of the law, their observations of the law are in vain and nothing better than an abomination in the sight of Adonai. Only the judgments of God which are soon to break upon the land will awake this one-time Ecclesia to its stupendous error and bring forth the heart confession that their eyes have been blind to the One whom their fathers pierced.

### **The need to preserve the Truth**

Coming down to the days of the Apostles, here again the pleaders for false charity in respect of sin and rebellious sinners refer to their letters as suggesting a state which can be tolerated in the Ecclesia without bringing God's displeasure or imperilling the preservation of the Truth. What folly, for when the situation is examined and the question asked "What happened to all these Ecclesias?" the answer is that they have long since perished and become part of the world. The subtlety of human reasoning can always find two ways of using the Word of God: to support what God requires, or to wrest the words to satisfy human thinking. This is so, as is well known in every sect of Christendom. How great the shame should be of those who commit the same error whilst professing to have the Truth and to be brethren of Christ. If only these would stop to think and ask, What will they do which the early ecclesias failed to do, to save ecclesias from perishing?—then the simple fact will emerge that there is no safeguard amongst Christadelphians at all.

If on the introduction of the first error, no action be taken but the error condoned, then before long another error is bound to raise its head. No action in regard to the first error creates the precedent that there can be no action in respect of the second and in a surprisingly short time those professing the Truth will have become the Synagogue of Satan. Suffolk Street clearly state in their literature that there should be no dividing from error, although in such terms as may deceive the simple. Hence they speak against division for the preservation of the Truth, and whilst professing in rather bland terms to be willing to deal with error in individuals, it is well known that many of their members openly avow that they are against any form of withdrawal. Their complete failure to understand the only means whereby the Truth can be preserved is seen in many of their writings of which the following quotation from their "Quiet Reflections on Unity" published August 1938 is a telling example.

"It is surprising to sometimes find sincere brethren who seem to think that Jesus approves of division in the Brotherhood : that it is a heaven-sent method of manifesting one, a sort of sifting process which it is necessary to keep continuously at work . . .

"The unscriptural policy of withdrawal from ecclesias because of one or more against whom is an objection, is not found in the Bible. In fact, there is not one verse in the whole of the Scriptures which commands or permits withdrawal en masse. Read how the Apostle Paul reasons with his beloved ecclesias, beseeching them, entreating, castigating them, but all in love. Never do we read that he "withdrew" from Antioch, Smyrna, Rome or any other ecclesia. When instances of single withdrawal were mentioned, he says "yet count him not as an enemy" and "restore such an one in the spirit of meekness."

Writers of such words shut their eyes to the great facts which God has preserved as admonition for the last days, facts which show that failure to divide from wrong and wrong-doers has caused not only individuals to be cut off by Him but ecclesias. Israel was one and so was Laodicea. Can we—dare we—attempt to be more charitable than God and in doing so ignore His righteousness ?

### **The divine requirements for dealing with error either in the individual or the Ecclesias**

It is surprising how those professing to be the brethren of Christ have persuaded themselves that there are no Divine requirements that need action for the dealing with rebellious sinners, whether in individuals or ecclesias. The mind of most seems to be dominated by one thought, how to escape the unpleasant duty of removing those from the camp who are not only sinners but are rebellious

sinner, that is to say, refuse to acknowledge God and His ways.

The lessons of the Old Testament are dismissed with the general observation that they are only types and “we are no longer under the law”. What must the Creator think who has caused so much to be preserved for present guidance, when His words are treated in this way ?

In connection with the commands in the New Testament, which are a reflection of the same spirit as the Old, the greatest endeavour seems to be to neutralise them by setting one against another or muddling them in such a way as to make them meaningless. If reference be made to the remarks of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 18 respecting treating some sinners as “heathen men and publicans” then the reply is quickly given, “Oh, but that is for personal offences.” If the quotation be made that you are to reject “after the first and second admonition,” then the plea is made that to whatever state a brother might come in his defiance of God, you must still address him as a brother and admonish him as a brother. So the creature is served, and his position respected more than that of God, until a situation has arisen amongst Christadelphians in which every man does that which is right in his own eyes. One hears on every hand the mis-use of another scripture, which shows how true this is—“Judge not that ye be not judged”, and again “Salvation is an individual matter”. It is painful that the words of Christ on “judging”, which it will be remembered He said on another occasion should be done righteously, should be so grossly mis-used. If the whole of His words be carefully heard on this matter, it will be found that they are not given to stop judgment, nor to discourage judgment, but the reverse, that anything in the eye of the one desiring to judge should be removed, however small it is, that he will be in a position to help remove what is in his brother’s eye with the result that both will be able to judge rightly.

### **A brief examination of the commands in the New Testament dealing with separation**

Undoubtedly the requirement of the Spirit in calling out a people for the Name of God is to separate from the world and its ways :—

“Come out and be separate and touch not the unclean, and I will receive you” (2 Cor. 6 v. 17).

There is nothing to stop one or more members of the Body going back to the world, becoming defiled with the unclean, when God will no longer ‘receive’ such but will cut them off. Fellowship, it should be remembered, is not what is professed by man but what is declared by God. If God be pleased to “dwell in them and walk in them” then such a people have fellowship with Him. Only on such a basis can the power of fellowship be understood. When reference is made, either by the world or those who profess to have

come out of the world, to different 'fellowships', it is evident that this simple divine fact has not been perceived for there cannot be two 'fellowships' separated from each other, each enjoying the fellowship of God. The greatest honour man can receive is to have this fellowship, to be joined thereby to the one and only true Body in the hope of eternal fellowship with all those who throughout the ages have belonged to God. Surely commands for the preservation of such fellowship must be clear and explicit. It would be an insult to the Almighty to suggest any ambiguity respecting this. If there is a danger of losing this fellowship, will not God make these dangers clear? Therefore, as the various commands are set down, let the devout mind try and assemble them in such a way that they present one message, clear as the Light and showing the path which God intends one desiring to please Him must follow, though it may mean the loss of all things.

"Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established.

But if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the ecclesia; but if he neglect to hear the ecclesia, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

(Matthew 18 vv. 15-17).

"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

(I Cor. 5 vv. 4-5).

"If any man teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness . . . from such withdraw thyself".

(I Tim. 6 vv. 3 and 5).

"And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him that he may be ashamed.

Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."

(2 Thes. 3 vv. 14-15).

"A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition reject."

(Titus 3 v. 10).

“I would they were even cut off which trouble you.”  
(Galations 5 v. 12).

“Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues”.  
(Revelation 18 v. 4).

Collectively, these expressions of the Divine mind must give one message which is the interpretation of the spirit of Christ seen both in the law of Moses and in the words of Jesus and the Apostles. The mind which seeks to impose meanings of its own will never discover this message any more than one who wishes to prove from the scriptures that there is a soul which goes to heaven at death. A devout mind however, willing at all times to submit to consequences whatever these may be, will try by prayerful seeking to understand what the message is that will give lively and present meaning to all the foregoing passages without any suspicion of contradiction.

An attempt will not be made of lengthy exposition but rather to indicate briefly how the passages quoted above clearly reveal the Divine way in dealing with sinners, and, be it noted, rebellious sinners. There is an obvious difference between a sinner who will repent and one who refuses to do so. The former is to be helped in the mercy of God, the latter is a despiser of God's mercy and as will be seen his retention, under whatever pretext, is dishonouring to the Creator. The words in Matthew 18 spoken by Jesus show how care is to be exercised when a trespass is known, and the steps taken 'to gain' in the mercy of God. Here in these words there is no reference to personal transgression, it is dealing with a trespass. The words 'trespass against thee' are in the sense of it having come to the notice of the one concerned. These words follow a powerful illustration given by the Lord Jesus to show the peril that besets a Body which refuses to cut off a faulty member like an eye or a hand. He makes it clear that that body which refuses this duty will end in everlasting fire rather than in the life which it professes to seek. What a warning! And what a rebuke to those who say that Ecclesias cannot be cut off 'en masse'.

In these remarks of the Lord Jesus it is evident that after the establishing of the transgression in the eyes of the one who comes to know of it, two 'admonitions' are to be given, one with witnesses, and then by the Ecclesia in an attempt 'to gain'. Failure to 'hear' means the Ecclesia must cut off. He who has now become a rebel is to be regarded in the same way as a heathen man and a publican. How was the heathen regarded?—hated like the publican, the tax-gatherer who often levied oppressive burdens!

Yes, it is true there is a command to love one's enemies but where one's enemies become the enemies of God then righteous

minds will be like that of David who said "I hate them with a perfect hatred."

Jesus in effect said there were to be 'two admonitions', and failing these being successful the one proving himself a rebel must be rejected. How wrong to plead that those who deny God must be treated as brethren, loved as brethren and admonished as brethren when they have proved themselves to be heretics, a word which means they are utterly wrong.

It is hoped that these few remarks will enable the rest of the passages gathered together to furnish one Divine meaning, that one who is a rebel and therefore despises God can no longer be admonished as a brother but must be regarded as a heathen man and a publican ; and, as a heretic, must be delivered to Satan, must be withdrawn from, must be cut off. Are not any who may in a crisis support a despiser of God as bad as he ? Do they not partake of the evil ? Are they not in the same condemnation and therefore rebellious sinners whether it be in the individual or in a group of individuals ? Such an Ecclesia or Ecclesias are to be dealt with in accordance with the principle which will uphold the honour of God, preserve His Truth and establish the unity amongst themselves, with whom God will still be pleased to dwell and receive as a Father.

### **Help from the spirit of Christ in the Law**

Present day apologists for error are reluctant to observe the power of the Spirit of Christ in the Law. They are prone to dismiss it, no doubt because its teaching is so inconvenient to their wishes, with the general observation as has already been remarked, "We are no longer under the law but under Christ." They do not realise that in so saying they are putting a difference between the Spirit of the Law and the Spirit of Christ and are denying an elementary fact of the Truth that the Spirit of the Law is the Spirit of Christ. There is not space to deal with an apparent difficulty in Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5 wherein referring to various items in the Law he continues by saying "But I say unto you . . ." Any reader who wishes for help on this matter to show that the words of Jesus are upholding not only the Law in the letter but in the spirit, are referred to a previous issue (February 1955).

How wonderful is the grace of the Almighty in providing so much of the Spirit of Christ in the Law that enables the devout mind to see the means by which an ecclesia may be preserved as a dwelling of God ; for an ecclesia to be preserved without God means nothing.

Frequently the Law shows that those who refused to obey must be cut off. To modern pleaders for tolerance, it would seem very unkind that someone who during the Feast of unleavened bread

had kept leaven in the house, should be taken by the congregation and stoned to death—but such was the law of God, such was the spirit of Christ. God knew that were leaven allowed to remain, the whole Ecclesia would be corrupted, and so this practical requirement is a great object lesson for the spiritual—just as the Apostle says, “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump”. The spirit shows how this should be purged out and the way this is to be done was seen in type in the Ecclesia in the wilderness. The whole of the Ecclesia must put their hands to the destruction of the rebel. In that way they were to show that their mind was God’s mind, that they had no sympathy with the one whom God would no longer tolerate because of evil. Further the dead body was to be taken and hanged on a tree, ‘that all Israel might hear and fear.’

This lesson, which the faithful will perceive is the Spirit of Christ, should be carefully remembered for the perilous times in which we live and of which we have been warned by the Apostle Paul. No-one likes withdrawal, no-one likes separation, no-one likes seeing one or more cast out, but this is a matter in which human sentiment must submit to divine wisdom for the honour of God and for the preservation of that incalculable blessing in which God promises to dwell with those and with only those who endeavour to be separate from all that is defiling to Him.

(to be continued . . .)

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

“Behold, I come as a thief.” Six times in the New Testament is the warning given. In every case it is accompanied by a fervent appeal to ‘watch’: to watch “lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.”

What is the import of this repeated warning and the exhortation to “watch”? Does it mean that brethren and sisters should be daily scanning the newspapers for signs which may indicate the imminence of Christ’s coming, and so not be taken unawares? Or may there be something more than this concealed in the injunction to “watch”?

A consideration of the six references to Christ’s coming being like a “thief in the night” is enlightening. It is seen immediately that ‘watching for signs’ is only part of the lesson Jesus would have us learn: that there is a ‘watching within’ besides a ‘watching without’. Take, for example, the last of the six references, in the message from the glorified Christ to John in the Isle of Patmos:—

“Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.”

(Rev. 16).

Here is a watching: more than a watching for 'signs of the times' but a watching inwardly, a searching scrutiny of one's garments provoked by a fear, a real fear, of being found naked.

Another passage in the Revelation likens Christ's coming to that of a thief. The letter to the angel in Sardis contains the warning:—

"Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain . . . If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."

(Rev. 3).

Again a watching—but not a watching for 'signs.' Here the watching is to be focussed on "the things which remain," that they might be strengthened. It may not be without significance that again there should be reference to the keeping of garments undefiled, for the letter continues:—

"Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white."

To understand the need for inward scrutiny, a daily watching of oneself, is not difficult, but why should this needful exhortation be related to Christ's coming "as a thief in the night"? Perhaps the answer can be discovered in the remarks of Paul to his brethren in Thessalonica:—

"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night . . .

But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness."

(1 Thess. 5).

In these few words, the Apostle pin-points the way, the only way, of escaping the humiliation of being overtaken by Christ "as a thief in the night." And what is it—merely to be alert to the signs of the times? More than that! The answer is so simple, but so profound and all-embracing: we must be 'children of the day'! To such, Christ's coming could not possibly be as a thief "in the night"!

### Children of the Day

"Children of the day"! Nothing is easier than to satisfy oneself that, like the brethren in Thessalonica, we are "not of the night, nor of darkness," but are, in very truth, the children of the day. To such complacency, the words of the Apostle which follow, showing how the children of the day are to be recognised, act as a suitable goad:—

“Let us not sleep, as do others . . . for they that sleep, sleep in the night ; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.”

(verse 7).

There comes to mind the Proverb :—

“A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep . . . ”

O, how easily it can happen—and does ! A little sleep, a little slumbering—and what is really taking place ? Is such a one still of the ‘children of the day’ ? Or is he (or she) gradually becoming one of the ‘children of the night,’ all set to be overtaken by the thief ? The warning is, “they that sleep, sleep in the night” ! Is it surprising that every reference to the coming of the thief is accompanied by the appeal to ‘watch’ ?

With these thoughts in mind, let us consider those words of Christ to His intimate disciples :—

“Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.”

(Matthew 24 v. 42).

Here was one overtaken by a thief. The reason is implied in the verses which follow :—

“If that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming ; and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken :

The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of . . . and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites.”

Let us not cast aside too quickly this warning example, as being unnecessary for us. It was not what the servant said, but rather what was in his heart, that caused his disaster. Slowly, insidiously, he became one of the children of darkness, only to be overtaken by his lord, as a thief in the night.

There is another goodman mentioned in the Scriptures, one who lived in the time of Christ and to whom John and Peter were once sent. His name is not mentioned, and little is recorded of him. Yet he was greatly honoured, for in his house, in an upstairs room, was the ‘last supper’ held. The Word does not say why he should have been chosen, but can the reason be discovered from the brief record :—

“Go ye into the city . . . say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples ?  
And he will show you a large upper room, furnished and prepared . . . And the disciples went forth . . . and found as he had said . . .”

(Mark 14).

Furnished and prepared ! What an encouraging example ! Let us then heed, as never before, the appeal of our Master—

“Watch ye, therefore : for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh . . . Lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.

And what I say unto you, I say unto you all, Watch !”

J.R.M.

## News from the Ecclesias

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

Interest continues in Portmadoc, where two further lectures have been given. We are grateful for the help of Brethren F. Harrison and H. J. Smith in this work of witnessing.

Arrangements are in hand for two lectures in Criccieth in early July.  
—per J.R.M.

**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.

The Fraternal Gathering on June 10th, when the subject “The Lord is my Shepherd” was considered, was especially helpful and enjoyable. Representatives from all ecclesias were present, and the Right Hand of Fellowship was given to Bro. DeFries.

We are grateful for the ministrations of Brethren D. Lancaster and R. A. Pulman during the last month.

A lecture has been arranged for July 11th at the People's Hall.  
H.J.S.

**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.

It is difficult to realise that before this is in print, God willing, a long anticipated face-to-face contact with those to whom we are bound will have been accomplished.

Gracious is the Father who has ordained that this binding be a true fellowshiping of all that obtains in The Household. There is growth, work, disappointment, joy—all to the furtherance of His Purpose, and the perfecting of those who are His servants.

The contacts due to advertising still continue and still reveal concern of some in regard to the Christadelphian Re-union movement. It remains to be seen whether that concern will develop into a seeking for Truth, or the establishment of many more small assemblies, which fail to discern that there is only One Body, One Table.

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.

It has been a great joy to us all to welcome from the States Brother and Sister DeFries who arrived at Manchester Airport on Friday, June 7th. The help afforded by these contacts is very great, providing for that wonderful experience of those who were called from different nations and were separated by so many miles and proving they could be joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment and consequently speaking the same things. What a tribute to the working of His power!

Saturday, June 15th was an especially joyful occasion when we had our Sunday School outing to Wythenshawe Park. The day was perfect with brilliant sunshine tempered with a refreshing breeze. To spend time such as this amidst the glories of His creation in such ideal conditions is reminiscent of how Israel were permitted to rejoice before the Lord at the Feast of the Tabernacles, also of their great deliverance in the wilderness which is yet to come to the true Israel of God.

We have also been glad to have the help of Brother H. J. Smith.

It has recently been our duty to withdraw fellowship from Malcolm McDonald, after attempts 'to gain' had failed; how sad when it is remembered that 'whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.' On the other hand, we are glad to announce that R. D. Osborne has been received back into fellowship.

W.V.B.