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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

CHRISTENDOM - AND OTHERS - ASTRAY

THE HIGH PRIEST OF ISRAEL

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

"He must increase but I must decrease"

It is a blessing indeed that the Almighty has preserved for us the record of such men as John the Baptist. He was one sent by the Spirit to prepare the way of the Lord Jesus. As a "voice crying in the wilderness," he witnessed to the coming of the Messiah. In considering his life and his work, may we not find help and strength as we hope and wait for the Messiah?

His words in John 3 : 30, breathe the spirit of one who is working in love and faith, and in complete subjection to The Spirit. Of the Lord Jesus, John said :

"He must increase, but I must decrease."

We cannot help but be touched by the humility and faith of this man. What was the mind behind such words, for surely they must have pleased the Creator? Verse 29 tells us—"He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. This my joy therefore is fulfilled." Was is not this joy of John's which brought forth his words? He had seen Jesus, had baptised Him, witnessing the Spirit in the form of a dove descend upon Him. He knew HE was the Messiah. How he rejoiced in the coming of Christ, and in the unfolding of God's purpose in Him as a bridegroom who should in time to come, take unto Himself His bride.

As we look back into John's early life, we remember how Zacharias and Elizabeth, his father and mother, had witnessed the power of God, and would surely impart to John all their wonder and joy at God's Spirit working in them. They would teach him of his holy and particular calling as the angel had said—

" . . . Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias . . . to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

As the wonder of this calling of the Lord was instilled in John by his parents in his early years, he would grow in determination to rise up to the responsibility, and would dedicate his whole life toward its accomplishment, growing in spirit, and longing for the coming of the Lord Jesus. As John grew up, saw the Lord Jesus, heard His voice, baptised Him, and so rejoiced, would he not look back to his early training, his being brought up in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord," with profound gratitude to faithful Elizabeth and Zacharias, for all that they had done to fit him for the responsibility in his witnessing to the bridegroom?

Can we not find in this example, brethren and sisters, help and encouragement to bring our children up in the way they should go, to instill in their young minds and hearts the wonder of God's calling? How faithfully these early parents must have worked with John, and what joy would be theirs as they saw the response, the growth, the strength of spirit increasing in him. Would not their joy be fulfilled, as well as John's, at the coming of the Lord Jesus, and as they saw in Him the promised bridegroom? Would not the background of this training better enable John to express from his heart the words, "He must increase, but I must decrease."?

"He must Increase"

John would rejoice in the Lord Jesus, for through Him were to be fulfilled all the promises of God. Isaiah's prophecy, chapter 9 6, 7, would have real meaning and life to him.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end . . . The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

Here was the increase John believed must begin to be accomplished in the Lord Jesus. He would recall, too, the word of Zechariah—"Behold the man whose name is the Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord . . . and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne . . ."

(Zechariah 6 : 12, 13).

Here again in John's eye of faith was the increase which was to be Christ's—to build the temple of the Lord. How was it to be done? It was to be the building of a spiritual house with Himself as the chief cornerstone, the foundation, all built upon Himself to give glory to His Father. Such indeed was the increase which John saw, in which he rejoiced.

Did John also recognise another way in which the Lord Jesus was to increase—the way of which Paul speaks in Ephesians 4 : 15, 16? ". . . May grow up into 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."

Is this how we as His brethren and sisters can enter into this work—through the edifying of this body; so that it may be fitly joined together and compacted? Can not each of us contribute to the growth and beauty of the body, by discerning needs of each

other, supplying strength, drawing closer, edifying each other as its members into a compact and united whole—the Body of the Lord Jesus? Is this why Paul speaks of—

“ . . . holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.” (Colossians 2 : 19).

How important, brethren and sisters, that this spirit of Christ, the Head, is held, and grows in each of us, for this edifying of the body, to the end it may become “ . . . built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone; In whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth (increaseth) unto an holy temple in the Lord.” (Ephesians 2 : 19-21).

Here is the increase, which God has ordained should rest upon the Lord Jesus. Is it not our longing? Was it not John's joy fulfilled as he heard the voice of his Head, the Lord Jesus? What an altogether lovely mind his words express, out of the magnitude of that joy!

“He must increase, but I must decrease.”

There was no desire for pre-eminence or his own gain; only a selfless rejoicing at the unfolding of the promises of God. Can our mind be like that, brethren and sisters?

“But I must decrease”

What a great humility and submission is found in these simple words of John. Here was a true subjection of himself to the Lord Jesus, and to all that Jesus stood for—His Father's will. If in each of us this process were allowed to continue, there would be seen a selflessness, a gradual diminishing of the man of flesh, an enlarging of Christ in us. Can this be our determination as we strive to be members of the body of Christ, filled with His spirit, as we perceive John was filled?

Such a process was necessary even in the Lord Jesus, for we know God required that He prove Himself submissive before He could be exalted to the right hand of His Father. It was necessary that His self—His flesh decrease before He was to know the “increase” promised by God. We read in Hebrews 2 : 8—

“For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him.”

Are we shown here, Christ's work in decreasing Himself and the end of that work, His increase, all to the glory and honour of God? The process was painful to Him, for we are told He was made “perfect through suffering.” And He, brethren and sisters, is the “captain of our salvation.” So following after Him, can we take this to heart to help along the way, as we seek to conform, thus being helped to “decrease”? Can we put away pride and so abase

ourselves in the hope of being made perfect, a member of Him, part of His increase, to bring glory and honour to our gracious Father ?

Can we reach up to this example seen in the Lord Jesus, which inspired John to devote his life to the faithful "crying in the wilderness" ?

"The Zeal of the Father"

We may ask, how can we do it ? It is so difficult to put away the ties of our fleshly nature. The Lord Jesus faced the same struggle, having the same fleshly motions, we know. Perhaps if we can discern how it was accomplished so fully in Him, it will help us.

In John 2 : 17, it is written,

" . . . The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up."

Was this His strength, that which allowed Him to bring every thought into subjection to His Father's will ? His fervent mind was the driving force in His life, which consumed His flesh. It was His love for the Father, His desire to build His Father's house which enabled Him to decrease "self."

John, by the Spirit, was able to see all this in the One he had baptised, the One for whom he looked. How great was his faith; so great that he died at the hands of Herod for his faithful witness. But surely his joy was fulfilled as he beheld the Lord Jesus and remembered Isaiah's prophecy—

" . . . Unto us a son is given . . . His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father. The Prince of Peace . . . the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

John knew that this word of God could not fail, His zeal would perform it.

Indeed It will not fail, but we can, unless we are able to enter into the spirit of John's words—

"He must increase, but I must decrease." J.A.DeF.

Christendom — and others — Astray (16)

The Call of Moses (continued)

GOD'S graciousness is revealed in the call of Moses to be a Saviour of His people Israel. The details which the record affords of the life of Moses from his birth to a man of eighty years when he received the call at the flaming bush, show in a most remarkable manner the careful and deliberate working of God over a long time in preparation for the "call." To human minds it would seem a waste of time to wait so long before calling upon Moses to carry out the work that God required. He was forty years old when he was compelled to flee from the land of Egypt and then for a

further forty years he dwelt as a shepherd in the land of Midian. His life at that time would have little promise of change but God was watching and waiting until the sojourn in the land of Midian had wrought in Moses what God required. Forty years to the Almighty is of insignificant duration, although to men this period might seem an exceedingly long time. In this there is a great lesson. God is aware of any whom He intends to call long before they are aware that such a blessing will be theirs. Time may be spent in what may seem a wasteful sojourn in exile away from things which really matter. Years may pass in seeking and in searching, in contending and perhaps in contention which all seems without purpose but God knows best as He did in the case of Moses. The time spent in this preparatory period like that of Moses in the land of Midian will not have been without a purpose. Such experiences are necessary to show the vanity of human thinking, the baseness of human nature, and the utter inability to help ourselves. Eventually pride and self confidence give place to humility and a seeking of that power which is greater than man's. In the helplessness that is felt the heart begins to search for a power which no man can provide. Then there is a readiness to accept the "call" and a response can be made which could not have been made earlier.

In the "call" of Moses there is comforting assurance that God works carefully and over a long time to ensure that when He does make the "call," this can be appreciated by a heart full of gratitude.

The Flaming Bush

When the time had come for Moses' call he was still about his usual business of looking after his father-in-law's flock just as he had been doing for many years. In the course of doing so he had come to "the backside of the desert," to the mountain of God, Mount Horeb. Moses would be expecting nothing different from usual in the pursuit of his daily task when suddenly he received the "call" of God in a most dramatic manner.

An angel of God appeared unto him out of the midst of a bush which burned, but which strangely was not consumed by the fire. Moses wondered what the great sight was and particularly why the bush was not burnt up. As he did so he heard God calling to him out of the midst of the bush asking him to remove his shoes for the place where he stood was holy. No wonder Moses hid his face and was afraid. He heard the angel of God tell him of the affliction of his brethren and sisters in Egypt and that he, Moses, was required by God to go to Pharaoh and ask that the children of Israel should be allowed to leave Egypt.

There was no doubt in Moses' heart that he was in the presence of God. The sight of the flames enveloping the bush which was not consumed by the fire but was rather preserved by it, would

immediately tell Moses of a great power able to destroy but also to save. Especially would this appear so when the fire in the ordinary way destroys such a thing as a bush but in this case it was protecting it from any damage by cattle or man. Long afterwards Moses would think of what he had seen at Horeb reminding him that God could be a "consuming fire" to all who opposed Him but also "a hearth of fire . . . and like a torch of fire" round about His people for the destruction of their enemies. A comprehension of this character of God is imperative at the time of the "call."

Christendom pictures the Almighty as being satisfied with any little service which men may choose to offer Him, always tolerant of their weaknesses almost to the point of condoning them. God to them is never a God of righteousness condemning those who are wicked and eventually being prepared to destroy the rebellious. Their God instead of being strong and purposeful in character is characterless, being moulded and fashioned from time to time in different forms to suit the needs of the people. It will be immediately recognised that such a God is no God at all.

Have "the others" also lost this power which comes from an understanding of the character of God? Do they recognise that the voice of God can be heard through His Word settling all matters and removing all doubts? Or, have they not tended in recent years to regard certain items of doctrine and practice as being determined by God and others not so, but subject to personal opinion? Such is a sorry confession that to them God has failed to reveal His mind on many matters and hence in their midst there is much confusion and contention regarding many points of doctrine and practice; and, though it is usual to make a distinction between doctrine and practice, in point of fact practice is only the living exhibition of doctrine. Where there is a failure to believe that God has spoken on certain matters there cannot be an asking of His mind on these. Is there any wonder then in these circumstances that doubts prevail and regarding many items every man does that which is right in his own eyes? What a deplorable state for a people calling themselves to be God's people! Truly, with God walking in the midst of His people and dwelling amongst them His voice can be heard on all matters; if not, is it not a proof that God is not with that people? If God required His servants to speak so that they might be understood clearly will He do any less Himself? Does He not say through His apostle—?

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? For ye shall speak into the air."

(I. Corinthians 14 v. 8-9).

Frequently we read in the Word of the “trump of God”; or, His messenger having the “voice of a trumpet.” It is most clear that the gracious God of heaven, who has promised to make His abode with His people along with His Son, is there for the purpose of giving direction on all matters and that His voice might be distinctly heard in settling of doubts and indicating the path to be followed during the course of probation. Those who say that God’s mind cannot be heard on items such as “divorce”, which trouble the minds of many, do not realise that they are confessing that God is not in their midst, that they have not realised what it means when He promises that He will make His abode with His people and be there for the purpose of giving guidance and conviction of heart on all matters affecting daily life. The lack of Christendom in the belief that God is in their midst is now seen in “the others” with the dire consequences that on many matters there is floundering and groping after solution of difficulties. If these were His people then they would not only value His presence but know of it.

Moses’ dependence on God

When Moses received the call to be the Saviour of his people he had lost all confidence in himself. Although he might have boasted of his upbringing in the court of Pharaoh and felt himself privileged in seeing the vision of the angel at the flaming bush, none of these things affected him. Unlike Gentile leaders there was not the slightest sign of pride. When Moses was told by God that he was required to deliver Israel he immediately felt and confessed his own insufficiency. What sincere humility was here when he pleaded—

“I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am of a slow speech and of a slow tongue.”

When he was told of the One who had made man’s mouth, and could make the dumb or deaf or the seeing or the blind would be with him, Moses still pleaded his own inability for the task. The record states that, in consequence, “the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses,” but the original word translated “anger” can also be translated in other ways, as for example, “face.” It would seem that the Lord was not really wrathful against Moses but opposed the wishes of Moses and provided for his help by the appointment of his brother Aaron as a mouth-piece. It could not be that God was seriously angry with Moses when he was still allowed to carry out the great work of being a saviour of His people. The incident gives proof of the Divine testimony of Moses:

“Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.” (Numbers 12 : 3).

All feel "lost" at the time of coming to the Truth and in consequence are meek. Moses preserved this delightful trait throughout his work and is thus an example of Him of whom he was a type; for in Christ there was no pride. The Apostle says—

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." (Philippians 2 : 5-7).

Pride is the sole cause of contention, a hateful quality detested by many in others, but seldom seen in self. Can it possibly be imagined that God would save the proud? What a dreadful place the Kingdom would be if this were the case. The Lord has said He will destroy the "house of the proud" and will beautify the meek with salvation. How delightful to allow the mind to travel into the kingdom and think of all being like Moses; having minds that art truly meek and beautified with the Spirit and without any trace of pride, and all the hateful works that spring from this dreadful root.

God's Memorial Name given to Moses—"Yahweh Elohim"

The question asked of God by Moses when he was told that he should tell the children of Israel that God had sent him unto them to bring them forth out of the land of Egypt was a peculiar one. Moses said—

"They shall say unto me, what is His name? What shall I say unto them?" (Exodus 3 : 13).

Why should the name of God be in question when Moses would be able to tell them that it was indeed God who had sent him. Does not the question imply more than we generally understand by the word "name"? Rather, it would seem, that the purpose of God was being asked in bringing forth Israel out of Egypt and that a reference to the name of God in this connection was equivalent to asking what was His purpose. It will be remembered that the character and purpose of God was often conveyed in the names which He gave to Himself and so in the name given at this time it is obvious that it would point to what God intended to do.

Moses was told by God what His name would be to the children of Israel in this connection in the following words—

"And God said unto Moses, I am that I am: and He said, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." (Exodus 3 : 14).

The Hebrew for the words translated "I AM" has a far greater scope of meaning than the English. There is implied in the

original, the state of having been, of being, and of continuing to be. In a word there is condensed in this word the extensive meaning conveyed in the words that God is from "everlasting to everlasting." The children of Israel would understand by this that God is eternal and therefore His purpose is eternal and that they, being called to that purpose, were blessed with the hope which was also eternal. The Hebrew word translated "I Am" in the original is "Ehyeh" which is converted in the memorial name to Yahweh.

The full memorial name is given in the authorised version as "the Lord God" which in the original is Yahweh Elohim. The word Elohim is the plural of "mighty" and in the first place describes the mighty qualities of God Himself for all powers are of Him. It also refers to the purpose of God that He will be manifest in a multitude of mighty ones. So that when the children of Israel asked Moses what was the name that God had given to Himself when he was sent on his mission to deliver them from the captivity in Egypt the answer was Yahweh Elohim, I who will be mighty ones. Try to imagine the effect that this information would have on minds ready to be impressed; that although they were in distress through abject slavery, God was saying that He would reveal His mighty powers on behalf of His people and also would be manifested in those, who, although they were weak, should become mighty ones. What hope was here, what comfort and assurance for those who were prepared to receive the divine message which the name conveyed. After Israel had been delivered from Egypt having passed through the Red Sea and the great Pharaoh and his army had been destroyed in the waters of the Red Sea how this name would shine with glistening power that God indeed was mighty and those who were His people had become "mighty ones" through the salvation which He had wrought on their behalf. What a beautiful and powerful type this is to contemplate. That in the end when the One like unto Moses has returned to the earth and delivered all His people from the toils of Egypt they will be able to look back on their days of weakness with complete relief and see in themselves the fulfillment of the purpose of God that He, the Lord God, has become manifest in a multitude who have been blessed with mighty powers through Him. The name given by God for Himself at this time was most significant: indeed it was, as God declared, a memorial name unto all generations—taking the mind to the time when all generations who please God shall be delivered from the power of death, shall be freed from the fears of Egypt for ever, and be able to come unto Zion with singing and everlasting joy upon their heads, each and all having experienced in themselves the wonders and glories of His great name, Yahweh Elohim, God will be mighty ones. (to be continued . . .)

The High Priest of Israel (4)

“The Urim and the Thummim”

THESSE two names are first met with at Exodus 20 : 30, where Moses was commanded to put the Urim and the Thummim in the Breastplate in order that they might be carried over the high priest's heart when he went before the Lord.

“And he shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart continually.”

Later, when the Breastplate was actually made, there is no reference to these two names, but the putting in of the twelve precious stones is described. (Ex. 39 : 10-14). Later still, when Aaron was actually clothed with his garments of glory and beauty, it is written that after the fitting of the Breastplate upon the high priest, “Also he put in the breastplate the Urim and the Thummim.” (Lev. 8 : 8).

There has been some speculation as to what these names refer to, for at a glance it would appear they are the names of two objects fitted to the breastplate of judgment.

These two names indicate, “Lights of perfection.” Now we know that the great beauty of jewels, is the way they can be cut to reflect the light, making them look like brilliant lights of wonderful beauty and colour. Thus in view of this and the fact that the Lights of perfection must be carried over the heart, the same position as the jewels in the breastplate (Ex. 28 : 29), it is suggested that the Urim and Thummim are the names of the twelve stones as a whole, that is collectively as they sparkle in a variety of lights from their respective positions in the breastplate.

We have noted how in the prophecy of Malachi, that those who fear the Lord are likened to jewels, again they are likened to lights for writes the prophet Daniel—

“And they that be wise shall shine in the brightness of the firmament.” (12 : 3).

Thus as the jewels sparkle, so those accounted wise shall also sparkle like the stars in the heavens, reflecting the light of the Sun. Is not the breastplate then, an illustration of this show of brilliance, a sparkling of lights of perfection, the results of the Love of the Great High Priest as He bears His Israel upon His heart, never again to be removed. Also an illustration as we have seen, of the four-square City of God, the Bride of Christ, shining like a Jasper, clear as crystal, perfect.

“The Robe of the Ephod”

The Apostle John has informed us that the coat of the Lord Jesus at the time of His crucifixion, was a seamless garment, woven from top to bottom. It is suggested that the Robe of the Ephod was such a garment. Around the hem were fastened alternatively, a golden bell and a pomegranate of the same materials as the Ephod, that is, blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen.

The golden bells are a fitting emblem of the Faith ringing out their message of salvation. The pomegranates, being a fruit of many seeds, are a suitable emblem for those who have heard the message of God's great purpose, for shows the Scripture, they are to be a “multitudinous seed.”

To this end, Abraham, to whom was accounted righteousness through his faith, became the father of “many, or a multitude of nations.” (Gen. 17). The Patriarch received the covenant of circumcision, as a seal or sign of the faith he already had, being yet un-circumcised; that he might be the father of all who walked in the faith, whether they be circumcised or uncircumcised. (Rom. 4).

The promises to Abraham, pertaining to a seed, were made concerning Christ.

“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made, He saith not, and to seeds as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed which is Christ.” (Gal. 3 : 16).

As already noted, with the coming of the Lord Jesus came the fulfilment of faith. The covenant of Abraham was of faith, and the Law which came four hundred and thirty years after, could not disannul the promises to Abraham. Thus when the Lord Jesus came, faith came into view, for He is the very embodiment of the Faith, delivered unto the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles and the saints.

Therefore as we look at the Robe of the Ephod and its termination or hem of golden bells and woven pomegranates, we see an important part of the purpose of God symbolised. The blue of the Law, throughout which flows the Love of God, extending the entire length of the high priest's body and terminating in the announcement of the Faith, the Lord Jesus and the purpose of God through Him. For the sole purpose of the Law, was to lead, by its many types and shadows, the people of the Living God, to Christ. Intervening, or between the bells, are the fruit the multitudinous seed who have responded to the message of Faith.

Thus as the high priest of Israel moved about, in performance of his task, the golden bells would ring, an ever present reminder of the faith, the one great essential to salvation. All things were to be done in faith, otherwise the multitude of offerings would have been useless, of no avail.

The skirt of the garment is revealed as a symbol of protection and salvation, as when Ruth appealed to Boaz, respecting his kinship to her, she requested him to spread his skirt over her because he was a near kinsman. (Ruth 3 : 9).

When the Lord God called Israel to be His covenanted people, He had in effect spread His skirt upon them. This is revealed to us by the Prophet Ezekiel at Chapter 16 : 8 of his prophecy.

“Now when I passed by thee and looked upon thee, behold thy time was the time of love, and I spread my skirt over thee and covered thy nakedness. Yea, I swear unto thee and entered in a covenant with thee, saith the Lord, and thou becamest mine.”

Again when illustrating the redemption of a remnant of Israel, the prophet was commanded to wrap a few hairs in the skirt of his garment. (Ezekiel 5 : 3 with 6 : 8).

In the latter days, it is written that the nations shall take hold of the skirt of Him that is a Jew, in declaration of their allegiance to the Lord God. (Ezekiel 8 : 23).

Thus as we look at the skirt of the Ephod Robe, we see in symbol, not only the message of glad tidings in the shape of golden bells, but also a multitudinous seed who have acknowledged the salvation offered and have taken hold of the hem of the skirt, as a covering for the nakedness of the flesh. For this is why the Robe reached down to the feet of Israel's high priest.

The incident will be remembered, which is recorded for us, of how a woman with an issue of blood, touched the hem of the skirt of Christ's garment in faith, that by so doing she would be made whole. (Matt. 9 : 20-22). Later we read of the people, that they besought Him that they might touch the hem of His garment. “And as many as touched Him were made perfectly whole.” (Matt. 13 : 6). They enjoyed a salvation from their diseases which spoke of a greater salvation to come.

Such incidents are not accidental, for they are recorded by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to reveal the sublime symbology of the skirt of the high priest of Israel and his greater successor.

The Lord Jesus revealed this, when as a result of these incidents He declared that virtue had gone out of Him. (Luke 5 : 25-30).

The feet also are revealed as having an important significance, being also connected with salvation. Thus it is written—

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bring good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that sayeth unto Zion, thy God reigneth.” (Isaiah 25 : 8).

The beautiful significance of this is brought out for us in the Gospel records which relate to the incident of a woman who was a sinner coming to where Jesus sat at meat in the house of Simon the Pharisee. Here the woman wept and washed His feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. As a result of which she obtained forgiveness from sin. (Luke 7 : 36-50).

There is also the record of Mary the sister of Lazarus and Martha who sat at the feet of Jesus listening to His gracious words.

With these incidents in mind we again look at the hem of the skirt of the Ephod Robe, seeing the emblems of faith and the resulting multitudinous seed of those around the feet of the high priest. Again we look at the feet of the Greater High Priest, for it is to these feet that all must bow in humility and reverence, if they are to receive the salvation declared by the Good News of the Gospel's golden bells.

(to be continued . . .)

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

“Behold, he shall come up as a cloud, and his chariots shall be as a whirlwind: his horses are swifter than eagles. Woe unto us ! For we are spoiled.” (Jeremiah 4 : 13).

HOW eloquent and glowing are the words of scripture ! This prophetic utterance of Jeremiah though having a fulfilment at the time of the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, has a final fulfilment which it is obvious from the signs around us, is not only irrevocably approaching but also is very near !

The time spoken of is that of the Russian onslaught against Israel, God's land. This event, it is obvious from the fourth chapter of Jeremiah, will be brought about by the Divine Hand as a judgment upon His people, Israel, who are yet in need of the rod of God so that they will be provoked to turn unto the words of God's appeal—

“O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee ?” (Verse 14).

Recent news of the armed might of Russia impresses upon the mind just how much God is concerned with the affairs of this world and testifies to His greatness and the greatness of His word which declares—

“I will bring evil from the north, and a great destruction (Heb. breaking) . . . he is gone forth from his place to make thy land desolate; and thy cities shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant.” (Jeremiah 4 : 6-7).

Russia has suppressed all opposition to its policies in her satellites, even though world opinion condemns this Russian action. Russia to some extent continues to be an enigma, the “Iron Curtain” hides much from western eyes.

Some idea of present Russian strength is however known by the Western Bloc.

An official N.A.T.O. pamphlet called “N.A.T.O.—Insurance for Peace” has stated that Russia has 20,000 front line aircraft, plus a modern force of 500 heavy atomic bombers. The Soviet Bloc ground forces number about 4,500,000 men, of whom 3,000,000 are in the Soviet Army. The Soviet Navy is the second largest in the world, the pamphlet said, and at the present rate of construction, Russia will have about seven hundred submarines by 1960. In spite of various manpower reductions announced since 1955, the Soviet Union and the Eastern European satellites have more than six million men under arms.

Army—Russia has a spearhead for rapid advance into Western Europe. This consists (the pamphlet says) of 22 Soviet divisions in the Soviet zone of Germany and 60 Soviet divisions in Eastern European countries and Western Russia. Since 1952 the Soviet Army has been drastically reorganised to enable it to fight under atomic conditions. Old equipment has been replaced by modern weapons and vehicles.

Air Force—This comprises 800,000 and 20,000 operational aircraft. The satellites have 2,500 operational aircraft, 75 per cent of which are jets.

Airfields—Russia has been building a great network of military airfields in Eastern Europe.

Contemplation of such armed might brings the words of Joel to mind, which foretells the coming catastrophe—

“A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; THERE HATH NOT BEEN EVER THE LIKE, NEITHER SHALL BE ANY MORE AFTER IT, EVEN TO THE YEARS OF MANY GENERATIONS.” (Joel 2 : 2).

Yes! The signs are speaking with increasing vividness of the coming of the day of the Lord. As His prophetic message is read which speaks of His judgments we also find recorded along with the details of His judgments, His appeals to sinful humanity—

“If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the Lord, return unto me: and if thou wilt put away thine abomination out of My sight, then shalt thou not remove.

And thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth, in Truth, in judgment and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in Him, and in Him shall they glory.” (Jer. 4 : 1-2).

Yes, God is very kind; His judgments are tempered with the mercy of His call. Should not such thoughts provoke the heart to respond to His gracious appeal to be fruitful in the things of His Spirit?

“Break up your fallow ground and sow not among thorns.”
(Jeremiah 4 : 3).

—which has been written not only for natural Israel, but also for those who have been called out from the Gentiles to belong to the Israel of His Spirit.

D.L.

News from the Ecclesias

Criccieth, Pentrip, Black Rock, Portmadoc. Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.0 a.m. Bible Class, Thursdays, 7.0 p.m.

We were pleased to have the help of Bro. J. Smith of Manchester on December 27th, when a lecture was given in Portmadoc at the Girls' Club. Two strangers attended. One who said he was a member of the Presbyterian Church asked several questions which showed a keen interest in the Bible.

Several others who did not attend thanked us for the leaflet and so with the aid of posters and adverts in the papers we feel grateful to have been allowed to witness once more.

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.

Response to recent circularising has not been encouraging, but the witnessing goes on as we find, and make opportunity.

Contacts with Christadelphians continue with some requests for the booklet, “The History of the Truth in the Latter Days.”

God willing, we plan to hold our Sunday School Party on Saturday, February 8th.

THE REMNANT

In all the work, and the living as "His Family", it is our need and desire to fellowship, in anticipation of the Eternal Fellowship for which all His children are striving.

J.A.DeF.

Nottingham (late Beeston). Meadow's Community Centre, Kirkwhite Street (Queen's Drive end), Nottingham. Sundays: Mreaking of Bread 11.0 a.m., Bible Class 2.15 p.m.
Thursday: People's Hall, 7.45 p.m. Eureka & Exhortation alternately.

As the New Year opened with new opportunities, the sobering thought, also, that another twelve months' record had closed, presented itself.

How much we can show, of good works, will help to decide our eternal destiny.

How much we have put into our ecclesia, will decide on which side of the Judge we shall be placed.

Can we improve during the short time allowed us ?

An enjoyable and profitable time was spent at the Sunday School Party in Manchester by all who could attend.

H.J.S.

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.

January 3rd was a most enjoyable day in every way being the occasion of our Sunday School Party, when we had brethren and sisters and their children from other Ecclesias. The subject of the address was "The Creation", and help was afforded by the children constructing charts showing the work of God on the six days of Creation. Finally, a beautiful scene in miniature enabled the minds of both young and old to grasp in some measure the glory of the Creation and, that as God Himself pronounced, it was "very good" in all respects. The children gave a good account of themselves in saying appropriate verses. The prizes were distributed by Brother Harrison and these were eagerly received by the children.

On the following day, Sunday, was the occasion of the Quarterly Address when Brother S. Lancaster spoke to the children on the subject of "Love not the world." The weekend was helpful to all, and it is hoped was a special help to the children who are being brought up in particularly difficult times, when their minds can so easily be turned away from those things which are of divine importance.

We are glad to report the continuance of interest by several correspondents. It is hoped that these will be led to see where alone the Truth of God can be found.

W.V.B.