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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 FLIGHT FROM PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

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

"If the Lord Delight in Us"

ISRAEL'S failure to go up and take the land when told to do so, by the Almighty, is preserved as a record to warn us. Paul says, in I. Corinthians 10 : 5, 6—

"But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted."

How seriously we ought to consider the Spirit's warning, and profit by it!

Under God's care and guidance, Israel was brought to the edge of the promised land—very close to the fulfilment of the promises looked for by so many. We remember that Joseph never forgot them. He said "... unto his brethren, I die, and God will surely . . . bring you . . . unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God surely will visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence." (Genesis 50 : 24, 25). Here was one who longed for this land, knowing God's promises concerning it, and anticipating His visitation. There were many in Israel who sought for an end of their journey through the wilderness, for the finding of that rest which in time would be theirs in the land. But before obtaining the promised possession, they must be tested. God required a proving of their love, their desire to please Him, their obedience and their fear.

Numbers 13, tells us how God commanded Moses to take one man from each tribe to go and spy out the land promised. This they did for forty days, and came back to report. What was the report? Verse 27 tells us,

"... We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey . . ."

Just as God had promised! What could prevent their taking it as He commanded? But the further report was, verse 28:

"Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover, we saw the children of Anak there."

Here, in this testing, was their faith—their trust in God's word and His strength sufficient to enable them to take the land? They wanted it, yes, longed for it; but not enough to overcome their fear. The cities were walled; the people fearful giants; how could they ever conquer such? Thus the spies discouraged their brethren in Israel, and fear overcame faith. What a lesson for us as we are called upon many times to face like obstacles in the way toward our inheritance, promised by God. How weakening fear can be! It can overcome. Our faith, too, can vanish in such a test. In Israel, there were a few who were strong in this faith and trust. Caleb was one, and his plea to Israel was, “. . . Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.” (verse 30).

Let us get hold of this spirit of Caleb. He believed, knowing God's promises would not fail. True, the giants were fearsome, but they were only men; the cities were strong, walled, but Israel's God was stronger. Caleb's spirit was to go at once, trusting in the source of all strength, Israel's God. We too, brethren and sisters, have giants and walled cities as fearsome obstacles; but must we not consider the warnings given as in Proverbs 26 : 13 ?

“The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets.”

There are indeed lions, giants, walled cities, to test all the children of God.

To those who are slothful or slack as the word means, not diligent, and quick about the work of the Truth, and for the Truth, the obstacles can be so fearsome, they annul faith. But Caleb's spirit was not slothful—“Let us go up at once.” The longer Israel hesitated, the more they feared, for the record in Numbers 14 : 1 is—“. . . the people wept that night.” If faith had been strong enough, if they had heeded Caleb's cry, and gone up at once, what a different story it would have been! As we go about the work given, as we strive to prove our faithfulness to God, our faith must be indeed, to go up at once, trusting in Caleb's God.

His Presence

Moses also entreated Israel to overcome their fear, and go up into the land, reminding them of the failure to honour God by obedience.

“Ye murmured . . . and said, Because the Lord hated us, he brought us out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the land of the Amorites, to destroy us.” (Deuteronomy 1 : 27).

They failed to perceive God’s care for Israel, His love for His people in redeeming them. “. . . Our brethren have discouraged our heart . . .” (verse 28). All sorts of excuses, but the real failure was in the hearts, in the lack of belief. Surely an example to us, brethren and sisters, as we face difficulties. How easy it is to excuse failures, but how must it look to the Almighty? He accepts no excuse, but judges each one according to his spirit, as evidenced by works of faith. Moses continued to help, to encourage—(verse 29) “. . . Dread not, neither be afraid of them. The Lord your God, which goeth before you, he shall fight for you . . .” He reminded them of all that God had done for them, of His continual Presence in the cloud and in the fire. How quickly Israel forgot that Presence!

Can we too, forget His Presence, forget all that He has done to redeem, to lead, to direct our walk; and so fear to go forth in trust and confidence ?

Israel’s reaction, so ungrateful, so insulting to the God who had saved them, was—

“. . . Would God we had died in the land of Egypt ! or . . . in this wilderness ! . . . Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.”

A forsaking of God’s leadership ! Unbelievable ! Would our reaction in face of obstacles such as they knew show our faith to be strong enough ? They had much help and encouragement. Joshua and Calab warned . . .

“Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land . . . the Lord is with us: fear them not.”
(Numers 14 : 9).

Their exhortation was—verse 8—

“If the Lord delight in us then he will bring us into this land . . .”

Here we find the crux of the matter. If He delight in us ! This word we find means to have pleasure in, to be well pleased with— which reminds us of the Almighty’s words in Matthew 3 : 17—

“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Surely here was One who was helped in facing many grievous obstacles, before He could say, "It is done." Paul speaks of Him in Hebrews 12 : 2. ". . . who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." What strength Jesus showed and what help He knew, because He had faith, in which God was "well pleased." To these words concerning Jesus, the Creator adds, "Hear ye him."

Do we, brethren and sisters, hear Him? First, seeking His voice, His Presence, that we may be close enough to hear Him. Do we strain to catch His word; His indication? Jesus told His disciples—Matthew 17 : 7—" . . . Arise and be not afraid." This message was also given to Israel by Moses, by Caleb, and by Joshua. Let us take heed to them, for we struggle over hard obstacles at times. Can we try to put away fear and let faith guide our walk in striving to delight Him?

"In These Things I Delight"

How particularly may we do this? The prophet Jeremiah tells us, chapter 9, 23 . . .

"Thus, saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth, for in these things I delight, saith the Lord."

Oh, to be a delight to God! But could we? Are we not so weak and human? So were Moses, Joshua, Caleb and Jesus—all of them flesh, as we are, yet able to delight the Lord. Did they not reflect His very qualities—Righteousness, judgment, and loving kindness? Can we look a moment at these qualities?

Righteousness—like God, knowing right, upholding it, doing it, hating that which it not right.

Judgment—discerning evil and good, approving the right, condemning the wrong. This is God's ability in all things. We must, and can in a measure, reflect it, if we grow in the way of the spirit. Let us bring it into our own lives, to seek the right and its reward, resisting the evil, disciplining ourselves, in an effort to grow more godly; seeking only to delight Him who is Judge of all.

Loving-Kindness—Mercy, an outstanding quality of God, one which He requires His children to have also; the ability to be kind, loving, long-suffering, while upholding always His requirements—a quality not naturally ours. Yet God is all this, and delights in all who strive to be so.

What a wealth of help there is for us as we consider these things, brethren and sisters. We may have His strength (the Only Strength) that which was shown by Joshua, Caleb and Moses, as they exhorted Israel.

“Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.”

If strong in faith and determination, we, too, may know the joy of the promised inheritance. Our hearts do long for the end of the wilderness journey, and for the time foretold by God through Isaiah 62 : 4, 5—

“Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall the land anymore be called Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, (my delight is in her) and thy land Beulah (married) for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married . . . as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.”

This is our inheritance; Israel's too, if they had obeyed, trusting in the strength of God, which is never failing. The trials are here for us to face. Will we be discouraged by walled cities, or the giants, which seem so strong? Let us gird up our loins, for the land is in sight; the time is short, but it will be sharp. We have so great a help how can we fail!

J. A. DeF.

Christendom — and others — Astray (33)

The Law of Moses the Spirit of Christ

CHRISTENDOM in their teaching place particular emphasis on the need for love and good works. The priests of Christendom make frequent reference in their sermons to these things, and often refer to Christ as one who “went about doing good.” It no longer matters what is believed apart from a general consent to Church dogma: the whole of godliness is represented as being fulfilled by “acts of charity,” of “doing good” to one's neighbours and the church.

This is a very convenient doctrine for those travelling in the "broad way," for the wishes of the flesh can be largely gratified, and if there is indiscretion or transgression, atonement can be found by putting the hand into the pocket and "doing good." The deeper the pocket, the more liberty and licence can be claimed by the flesh. Christendom loves Mammon for his riches; and Mammon does not mind spending to ingratiate himself with Christendom's priests. It is worth it to give him a certain respectability and honour among his fellows. And so the partnership between Christendom and Mammon works to their mutual advantage; but many of Christendom's adherents perceive the hypocrisy, and in disgust they often leave the church; perhaps to go to another where in greater or lesser degree they find their experience repeated.

What is wrong with Christendom? For their profession of "love and good works" sounds noble enough. Even to Christendom's members it is most evident there is something sadly wrong. The hypocrisy is nauseating to many; but perhaps what is worse, the teaching of "love and good works" permits one "Christian" country to fight another. If the lay people ask the priests, "Is it right to kill?" their answer is "Yes, you can put bullets into your brother or a bayonet, providing there is love in your heart!" At least that is what their answers amount to, although, of course, they are couched in such terms that the obvious evil is not so apparent.

The real wrong with Christendom is that their teaching of "love and good works" is superficial, because it lacks the teaching on the love of God, with all the upholding of right which this implies, and because of this, true love eludes Christendom as their plight of confusion and groping in the present darkness of world politics so clearly shows. They know not whether to use nuclear weapons or not; whether to support general armament or disarmament. Truly, Christendom is enveloped in the darkness foretold by Isaiah:

"For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people." (Isaiah 60 : 2).

The "others," those who once had the Truth, have fallen into the same error as Christendom: of declaring in effect that "love and good works" are the things which really matter, and failing to realise that these they "ought to have done, but not to leave the other undone,"—the upholding of the law in loving obedience to God. It is not surprising that the "others" find themselves in a

similar state of confusion as Christendom: by professing a general acceptance of certain articles of faith, but allowing what they call "liberty of conscience" on so many things. In this respect there is no difference in the ways of Christendom and the ways of the "others." Both are fellow travellers in the "broad way"—which—let it be carefully noted—"leadeth to destruction."

The Ordinances terminated but not the Spirit of the Law

The lack in both Christendom and the "others" is a humble appreciation of the value of the Law, as showing the Spirit of Christ. It should be realised that though the ordinances of the Law terminated with the death of Christ, the Spirit of the Law remains to guide and help those who would be approved by God. Such, says the Apostle Paul, have the Law "written in their hearts." How then can the Law be said to be "done away with?" Through the Law being written in the heart, and only by this means can one become a Jew! One living to the praise of God, as the word "Jew" (contraction of "Judah") means.

"But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly: and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." (Romans 2 : 29).

The words of the Apostle clearly show that one who would have praise of God, rather than praise of men, must have the Law written in the heart, that through its spirit or power, the "thoughts and intents" of the heart may become godly.

Without that spirit of the Law there is no hope of living to the praise of God: no hope of salvation. Let an effort be made to discover this wonderful power in another item of the Law.

"Whatsoever soul it be that eateth any manner of blood . . . shall be cut off." (Leviticus 7 : 27).

Much searching below the surface will be necessary to discover the Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, in this well-known part of the Law. Was this law given solely for some hygienic reason or dietetic consideration? This could not be so; for a certain quantity of blood remains in a carcase even when slain by the shedding of blood. The veins, especially the smaller ones, would continue to hold as capillaries a quantity of blood. If blood in itself were hurtful or poisonous, God would have given the same careful instruction as in the case of unclean animals and birds. There must be a deeper reason than a natural consideration for the divine forbiddance of eating blood on pain of death.

The Law from the Beginning

Generally, when reference is made to the Law, it is understood the Law of Moses is meant. Indeed, many times in the New Testament this is the case. Was their no law before Moses? At once the answer springs to the lips, "Of course, there must have been." Then, what was this law?

Full details are not given, but sufficient is recorded to show that the law from the beginning was akin to the Law of Moses, and demonstrated the same principles and exhibited the same Spirit, the Spirit of Christ.

The part of the Law of Moses under consideration, the command not to eat blood, is found as the law which God's people were required to observe in the days of Noah, from which it may be justifiably concluded that this was a law from the beginning.

After the flood, with all the lessons this was intended to teach, Noah was commanded:

"Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you . . .
But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof,
shall ye not eat." (Genesis 9 : 3-4).

How wonderful it is to discover that the Law of God has always been the same from the beginning; not in the ordinances to be observed but in the Spirit which varying ordinances showed.

Thus, the whole of the Word is seen to be perfectly united by one Spirit, the Spirit of Christ; a truth which can be embraced with hearty and thankful conviction, when the understanding is enlightened by the "wondrous things out of His (thy) law."

For those who would see that the "royal law" has been in operation from the beginning, manifest in various ordinances adapted to the circumstances of the times, it will be refreshing to recall that Abel made an acceptable offering, according to faith, that is according to the things taught and believed, by bringing to God the "firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof." The correspondence in this act of fulfilling the law then in operation, and the Law of Moses is so obvious that comment is unnecessary.

Later in Noah's time, when he, and his family had just come out of the ark, burnt offerings were made of "every clean beast, and every clean fowl." This is a clear pointer that God's law respecting burnt offerings were known and understood well before the days of Moses.

And so these references and others supply a positive proof that from the beginning God has been revealed in a law given by Him, showing Him to be unchanging and unchangeable.

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood.” (Leviticus 17 : 11).

This is the reason given by the Almighty why His people were forbidden to eat blood. God’s kindness is seen in that whenever a command is given, there is always an explanation so that the children of God may not only obey, but submit in loving obedience. It must be remembered that the commands reveal the loving character of God, and when understood, are seen to be a means of protecting His people from their weaknesses, enabling them to enjoy the peace of God, and at the same time become like God Himself, so that they might have the reward of being given to the Son of God for ever. Such provision, and such a reward, obviously based upon mercy freed from any cloying sentimentality, makes an instant appeal, and is calculated to draw a people to God in the true bonds of love. By this means the love of God can take on a real and deep meaning, and the love for God become sincere and profound.

The reason given for the command that the blood must not be eaten was that the “life of the flesh is in the blood.” Here was no natural consideration, but some spiritual lesson.

In passing it will be noted how simple and wonderful are the words of Truth. Three thousand years before the discovery of the circulation of the blood, God said in a way all could understand that the life was in the blood. What a tribute to His wisdom and a witness to His Truth.

The question is : Why did God forbid the eating of the blood which was the life ? What lessons would be implanted in the minds of His people by this prohibition ?

In effect, God was saying in the command : “You must not consume the life for it is mine.” What a salutary lesson! No right to life !

God in His kindness knew the weakness of all human beings, and through their weakness their difficulty in recognising that they were dying creatures, and deserved to die; that they had no right to the present life or any life to come. The serpent had denied this divine teaching in the beginning with a lie, which has been multi-

plied to all generations in all parts of the world. "Ye shall not surely die," said the serpent, reasoning according to superficial appearances, for if the worst came there was the "tree of life" which would provide an antidote to death. God's command was clear. His care in seeing that it was carried out was complete. After the transgression the "tree of life" was guarded. Adam and Eve died. In spite of these simple facts the world is still deceived by the serpent, for the whole of Christendom says: "We shall not surely die."

Those who have been in the presence of death, particularly of some one deeply loved, will know something of the temptation to reject God's teaching that we all deserve to die; and to be convinced at this time that we have no right to life.

How kind then God was in giving a command which would bring home to His children that the life belonged to God, and that by constantly being reminded that they must be careful not to eat the blood, they and their children would come to see that the life belonged to God, and that He must be sought for life—both for the present life and the life promised through the Redeemer.

"For this is my blood . . . drink ye all of it." (Matt. 26 : 27-28).

For four thousand years God forbade His people to drink the blood to impress upon their minds the simple lesson that life, all life, belonged to Him; and that they had no right to any life. Then suddenly, almost strangely, His people hear His only begotten Son say, "Drink."

In this there cannot be a contradiction, but rather a further lesson. Here, in Christ Jesus, God's people could have life—on conditions. Symbolically, this was shown in the figurative drinking of His blood.

What condescension! What superb instruction! What love! That for four thousand years the lesson was kept constantly before God's children, that they had no right to life, but life would be provided through a Redeemer. And when He came this great and welcome truth was demonstrated in the simple ordinance of the Lord's supper. "This is my blood." "Drink ye all of it."

Week by week since then the disciples have been privileged to eat and drink at the Table of the Lord, knowing that,

“Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.” (John 6 : 53).

Life — On Conditions

As the ways of God are considered it is difficult to find words to express appreciation of their simplicity and reasonableness, and above all to give utterance to the profound thankfulness that is felt. As the Apostle Paul says they are “unspeakable”—they leave one speechless.

Having received the lesson of four thousand years taught in all homes of the children of God, and remembered in all their eating—that we have no right to life, let us be careful as we see a life provided which can be shared not to make the mistake that this is for all and sundry without conditions.

There are conditions, just as clearly stated as in the case of all God’s commands—

“Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils.”
(I. Corinthians 10 : 21).

“Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils: Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table, and the table of devils.” (I. Corinthians 10 : 21).

Just as there is “one body, . . . one Lord, one faith,” so there is only one table; at least only one true table. When division takes place, there still can only be one table. Two groups formerly constituting the One Body cannot meet at separate tables, and claim to be meeting at the table of the Lord. Those upholding the right will be the One Body and be allowed to meet at the Table, truly the Table of the Lord. Those in error will no longer be part of the Body; they meet on Sundays to eat bread and drink wine, but this cannot be at the Table of the Lord. It must as the Apostle clearly shows be another table, the table of devils. “Christ is not divided;” neither can His table be divided.

Many, many thousands will claim to have eaten at the Lord’s table when Christ comes, who have made the fatal mistake of supposing that the Table of the Lord can be divided.

“Then shall they begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence.”

“But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.” (Luke 13:26-27).

How very searching are these words of the Master ! Those who had the Truth, and vainly imagine that though they are divided into upwards of twelve sects can all be partaking of the Lord's Table, would do well to consider how mistaken they are; to realise before it is too late the beauty and power of divine teaching concealed in the command given from the beginning that the blood, the life, must not be eaten; to perceive anew the marvellous condescension in the provision of a blood or life which can be eaten; and to grasp the simple fact that this can only be found at the One Table where members of the One Body meet, believing that Christ is undivided, and that all other tables are the tables of devils.

From Abel to Christ, from Christ to now the Spirit of the Truth is seen, powerfully expressing the love and wisdom of a beneficent Creator. The record is complete that even now when there is no voice we might learn to do His will and obey His Word, to the end mercifully provided of everlasting joy with the One Christ at His One Table in the Kingdom when He comes.

(to be continued).

“The Flight From Personal Responsibility”

IN a circular from Los Angeles with the above heading there are many thought-provoking words respecting the responsibility of those who claim to have the Truth in these latter days.

The following quotations make clear what is wrong with those who claim to have the Truth in these days :

“Our generation is unquestionably running away from personal responsibility, and the historian of our days will record the fact, incredible as it may seem, that our chief concern has been and is, to avoid any mental or ecclesial trouble by ignoring it.”

“Our forefathers in the Faith were men of courage, men who weighed facts and acted on their own convictions, men who knew the First Principles of the Oracles of God and insisted on their acceptance by those whom they fellowshiped.”

These statements are followed by an interesting quotation from the writing of Dr. Thomas as follows :

“The apostles command all true believers to fight the good fight of faith and to contend earnestly for it, as once for all delivered to the saints, I Timothy, 6-12, Jude 3 : This contention is a matter of duty the performance of which is not optional, nor dependent on the prospect of success or failure. We have nothing to do with consequences. If no one will obey the faith, it is still our duty to contend for it. We are exhorted to save ourselves and others if we can, and it contributes to this salvation of one’s self to “contend for the faith.” If others will not be saved we cannot help it; we shall have done the best we could, and there we must leave it.”

The writer goes on to show that the grave wrong with those to whom he presumably belongs at the present time is that they have lost the doctrine of fellowship. He says :

“Such puts unscriptural geographical boundaries on matters regarding disfellowship.”

This departure from the Truth commenced more than a generation ago when the late C. C. Walker wrote concerning the doctrine of fellowship :

“In nothing do we feel more bereft than in this question of fellowship.”

Duty to God imposes a responsibility as the writer of the above article correctly states ; but what does the carrying out of this responsibility require ? Is it sufficient merely to denounce those in England responsible for Re-union with those who left the Truth in 1885 and to state in general terms the requirements of the doctrine of fellowship ?

Surely the path of duty should be made more clear for unless this is followed there will be no hope of salvation.

The doctrine of fellowship which is vitally important has undoubtedly been lost by the present generation of Christadelphians. With an understanding of this and an obedience to its requirements then fellowship with God and His Son, is granted, with the promise of salvation which such fellowship gives.

There are conditions in order that men and women belonging to the world may be brought into fellowship with God and obviously there must be conditions on which either they as individuals or the community to which they belong can lose this fellowship.

Men and women coming to the Truth from the world are in darkness. They are without hope and have no fellowship with God. When called to the Truth to be joined to the Lord Jesus, they must renounce the world and in the ordinance of baptism be buried into the death of Christ which condemned the world. They rise from the waters of baptism "new creatures" in Christ.

Christadelphians perceive the division between light and darkness, and between fellowship with God and being without Him in respect of those coming to the Truth, but for some strange reason fail to perceive how this fellowship can be lost by either an individual denying some element of the faith or a community of his brethren embracing an error.

A useful question to consider is that if a community of believers in fellowship with God do not lose that fellowship on the embracing of one error, will they when they sanction two errors? How many errors must be embraced before a community of people lose the Truth and the fellowship of God, and depart into the darkness of the world?

There can only be one answer; as soon as one error is espoused then unless that error is expunged the fellowship of God will be lost.

This may be too brief a stating of the doctrine of fellowship and its application showing what the duty is of those who would have fellowship with God; but it will be clear in respect of those claiming to have the Truth in these days and are conscious of a "flight from personal responsibility" to the requirements and commands of the Truth that there has been an embracing of many errors, and consequently the Body possessed of the once cherished name meaning Brethren of Christ has now left the light to be joined to the darkness of the world.

Present responsibility is made clear in the words of the Apostle Paul :

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate saith the Lord and touch not the unclean and I will receive you."

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

“But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.” (Matthew 24 : 37).

AS the days go by it becomes more and more evident that world conditions at the present time are similar to those which prevailed in the earth at the time of Noah to the deluge.

Many things which were frowned upon 50 years ago, or even 25 years ago, have now become accepted as part of everyday life and are not viewed with shame and with a feeling of disgrace as they were formerly.

As conditions get worse so the return of the Lord Jesus Christ draws near; a time of trouble and punishment for a world that has refused the ways of God.

“For (said Jesus) as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark. And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away: so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”

Yes ! A flood is coming ! Not of water, but certainly a flood of destruction: to the nations the divine decree is :

“Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest and the flame of devouring fire.” (Isaiah 29 : 6).

As the record concerning the flood of Noah is contemplated, parallels of present conditions can be seen; reference will be made to them under the following quotation headings :

“ . . . the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.” (Genesis 6 : 2).

When this state of affairs which existed at the time of Noah is pondered, it becomes obvious that a barrier of separation for the family of God was broken down in those early times, for this action taken by the sons of God displeased the Lord, who said, “My spirit shall not always strive with man.” Has it been any different in these last times? Has there not been trouble resulting from marriage with the alien among those who claimed to belong to the family of God? Some contending that it was “unscriptural” to treat “compromising companionships or alliances with aliens as offences, or that the act of marriage with an alien severs from fellowship.”

The Spirit of God has been striving with men in these last times over many things contrary to sound doctrine that have entered in among those claiming to belong to Him. That spirit however will not always strive; soon the door of opportunity will be shut. It will then be evident to the rejectors of Gods' counsel, who have really belonged The Ark, as they witness the faithful conveyed away under the protection of God to a new age.

“And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of thoughts of his heart was only evil *continually.” (Genesis 6 : 5).

*—(margin reference “everyday”)

At the beginning of this century there was a certain regard, if only a conventional one, of using Sunday, the day of rest, for religious observance. Gradually that religious regard has diminished and with it the religious benefits, particularly to the younger minds, which Sunday School instruction among the various denominations indisputably afforded, though in many ways not according to truth.

With the coming of religious disregard, came the feeling of being at a “loose end.” Many, especially among the younger generation, did not know what to do with their Sunday leisure, and mischief resulted. But it was not long before big business saw the opportunity presented to it by this problem. Sensational Sunday papers and Sunday Cinemas along with other things was the outcome and now Television with its opportunity of being a great and profitable advertising medium has pandered to the desires of the masses and is a corrupting influence. One statesman of great repute said recently :

“Those with money to spend are today subject to a great deal of mis-education, to the growing vigour of vulgar advertisements. The people who are responsible for our advertisements are often guilty of a great sin against society. They show they realise and exploit the fact that it is easier to maintain material standards of life than the spiritual standards of life. The world was in a mess, but those who had reached the years of discretion could hardly blame the teenagers for the principal causes of the mess.”

Another statesman said that adults had failed youth in three ways—they were too selfish to stay married, they never cared what they read—“our press is discredited all over the world,”—and they

had not provided a truly Christian education. One of the curses of this age is the filth and the rubbish pumped into young heads by the gutter press.

Yet another statesman complained that he had met children who did not know the Ten Commandments. "No wonder the juvenile courts are full," he added.

But the ineffective cries of such thinking men are carried away with the great wind of change that is blowing; and the evils of which they warn, become more and more a part of Sunday, once a day of restraint, now a day of less restraint than the other days of the week, when men are occupied with the daily tasks!

Yes! the evil, as in the days of Noah, now prevails EVERYDAY—there is no cessation of it, and so, because men's minds are continually filled with such things, the evil, gaining in momentum, hurtles on towards that condition which will merit destruction.

"The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." (Genesis 6 : 11).

A parallel of such a state of affairs that marred this good earth at the time of Noah is surely developing amongst mankind at the present time, not only internationally, but also nationally!

Recently a member of the British Government said—

"We have a new prosperity without many of the old-fashioned virtues—such as reticence and a morality which stems from parental responsibility and family life and the tenets of religion—with the result that there is a considerable degree of licence. It is shocking to think that amidst all this prosperity there is a crime wave in the cities."

He went on to say that the reason some people get into gangs and hooliganism is that they are not strong enough individually to resist the herd instinct, and this is thoroughly dangerous to our civilisation. Though thinking that there was too much worry about television, he furthermore said, "Pure gangster films and rather lurid westerns displaying their weapons and indulging in violence for its own sake—this should not be encouraged."

From these belated remarks of a government spokesman, it is evident, it is as far as the government is prepared to go. Effective action to implement the view expressed, that violent entertainment should not be encouraged would be too unpopular with the masses who have grown to delight in such things. Hence, acted violence is increasingly becoming the tutor of the real thing; and one danger that is arising, to quote another statesman, is from the daily battles between gangsters frequenting certain drinking clubs which can result in injuries to unconnected passers-by. Every weekend in certain hospitals in the Metropolis there were places, he added, which were like a first-aid post on the battlefield.

So the words of the Lord Jesus Christ are coming to pass :—

“As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”

To this sign, Jesus however added words of warning. Words which must be especially applicable to those who are witness of the fulfillment of what He has foretold.

“Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come . . . Therefore be ye also ready.”

D.L.

News from the Ecclesias

Eden, New York. Grange Hall, Church Street. Sundays : Breaking of Bread 11.45 a.m. Sunday School 10.30 a.m. Revelation Study 2.0 p.m. Bible Class, midweek, Forestville, Hamburg and Buffalo.

The recovery of Sister Carter gives cause for deep gratitude. The Father is very gracious, and the love of His children has been manifest as born from above, in their supplications, communications, and the healing granted.

When this can be read, visitors from America will be in England, Ireland, and Wales, God willing. The opportunity for counselling, and the participation in the joys of the next Fraternal are deeply desired.

The work goes on, and contacts still continue.

J. A. DeF.

THE REMNANT

Co. Down., N. Ireland, Newtownards & Bangor. Sundays: Breaking of Bread, Newtownards, 11.30 a.m. ; Sunday School, 10.30 a.m.; Law of Moses Study, 2.0 p.m.; Bible Class, Bangor, midweek.

At our lecture on June 25th we had 18 strangers, including 4 Christadelphians. All listened with interest to Bro. Butterfield's address, and a few asked questions at the end. It was gratifying to get such a good response to hear the answer to our question "Is Christendom Astray from the Bible?" We are indebted to Bro. Butterfield for his help both in the public witness and also, at the Table on Sunday morning.

We are all looking forward to the visits of Brethren and Sisters, especially those from America, whom we have not yet met, as we know that these meetings together will be of great spiritual strength and joy to us here.

We hope to have, if it is the Father's will, our Sunday School outing on Saturday, 13th August.

J.P.

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

We have been helped by the visits of Bro. W. G. Butterfield and Bro. J. Smith at the Table of the Lord and the company, also of Sister W. G. Butterfield.

We also appreciated the help of Brother Iago at one of our Classes.

These visits help us to realise the binding influence of the Spirit by which we are favoured.

We keenly anticipate the visit of Brother and Sister DeFries with that of their family among us soon now.

H.J.S.

Pentrip, Black Rock, Portmadoc. Breaking of Bread Sundays 11.30 a.m. Eureka Class Thursday 7.30 p.m.

The Lecture at Portmadoc on July 12th was a source of great encouragement to us. Seven strangers were present and the particular interest of two strangers suggests the need for further work which it is hoped can be arranged soon.

And we have been grateful for the company of Brother and Sister Harrison of Nottingham, Brother and Sister Butterfield, Sister Davey and Brother Iago of Manchester.

We are looking forward to the visit of those from America and the joy of meeting them face to face.

To hear the news of progress regarding the sick fills our hearts with gratitude.

per 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. Onward Hall, Deansgate. Law of Moses Class : third Saturday each month at 3.30 p.m.

By the time this is in print it is expected that our visitors from the States will have arrived, and that there will be opportunity at the Fraternal Gathering on Saturday, August 6th for the meeting together of brethren and sisters from different countries; America, England, Ireland and Wales.

It has been decided to have an address on the Revelation, at the Fraternal Gathering, illustrated by new charts. Much has been discovered in the last year respecting the latter-day fulfilment, and it is hoped that by means of the charts that all will be able to get a simple outline of "The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to Him."

Brethren and Sisters are also reminded of the Special Lecture to be given (if the Lord will) by Bro. DeFries in the Memorial Hall, Albert Square, Manchester, on Friday, August 5th at 8 p.m. Subject : "The Dangerous Conflict between East and West." "What will be the outcome ? What is the divine solution ?" The Lecture is being extensively advertised.

W.V.B.