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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"

AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

CHRISTENDOM - AND OTHERS - ASTRAY

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At the Table of the Lord

The Voice of the Lord

MOSESES, as he was about to die, exhorted Israel that they should keep their holy fellowship with God, and not lose their separation. His words to them, found in Deuteronomy, can be a help to ourselves as we strive to be His holy people.

“Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he shewed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire.”

(Deuteronomy 4 : 36).

also verse 33—

“Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live ?”

It was a fearful and awesome experience, which Israel had at Sinai. What a lasting impression it should have made upon them. Yet, the sad record of the Apostle Paul tells us, in Hebrews 12 : 19—“ . . . which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them anymore.”

In truth, they had heard the voice of the Almighty—a power revealed to them. What a privileged and honoured people ? Yet, they would not allow the voice of the Lord to be a power in their lives, the only power by which they could keep their peculiar and privileged position.

What about ourselves, brethren and sisters ? His voice speaks still to listening ears, those attending, striving to catch the words, the indication of the Spirit.

Let us remember the effect upon a faithful servant, of hearing the Lords' voice (Exodus 34 : 29-34) :

“ . . . Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him.”

Does Moses' experience, his face shining, while God talked with him, even though he knew it not, tell us that as God's voice is truly heard, there comes a change in countenance, a certain alteration which is a sign of reverent submission to His voice, an evidence of the Spirit's work ? And does this lead our minds to the

hope we have, expressed in Aaron's prayer for all Israel, that the Lord might cause His face to shine upon those who seek His voice, granting eternal peace ?

"And the Lord sent Thunder"

The word "voice" in Hebrew, is also translated "thunder." This Israel heard at Sinai, but much earlier in Egypt; during the plague of hail, this same thunder was heard.

"And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven; and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground." (Exodus 9 : 23).

How awesome ! Well might Moses remind them, "Did ever people hear the voice . . . and live ?"

In Egypt those who were His people, were not touched by the plagues. This figure carries forward to the time when God's judgments are as thunder in the earth. But those who have, through their lives, heard His voice, will escape destruction to be His forever.

His Son was able to bring His whole being into subjection to that voice; thereby glorifying His Father. In John 12 : 28, we read Jesus' words :

"Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

The people said, "it thundered," but Jesus told them it was God's voice (verse 30). "This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes." His hope was that they would listen and submit to the voice; that they would hear in Jesus, God's words, for He told them :

"I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." (verse 49).

Let us, brethren and sisters, seek the words of Jesus, and of His Father. Let us wait, hearkening for the Voice, responding quickly, willingly, fearful lest we appear to be slothful. We can take exhortation from the Prophet Isaiah, chapter 6 : 8. "I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I, send me."

If our response can be as instant, as willing, surely we shall know the joy that comes from pleasing One whom we love.

To consider for a moment the many aspects of His Power, all manifest as the Voice of the Lord, will help to the realisation that this Voice of God is ever working for the benefit of His people, even now, and in the end most wonderfully, as His purpose unfolds. How we long to hear that voice say,

“Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

(Matthew 25 : 34).

David could see in faith the power of the Voice of the Lord. He placed his trust in it, yielded his will to it, knowing that that power was strong on his behalf.

“The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters.” (Psalm 29 : 3).

David waited, and we wait for this time, now seeing people as waters of the earth, troubled and miry; but His voice for which we listen now, will change these fearful conditions.

The Psalmist continues to help us perceive the greatness of God’s voice (verse 7)—

“The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire.”

The fire, we know, speaks of His power, His Spirit. Does not His voice direct in all the Divine work, that for some, the fire will be a blessing, a cleansing, even as the flaming sword which divideth between flesh and spirit. For others we read in Isaiah 10 : 17—

“The light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day.”

For those who hearken, the flame of Yah, can be for a strength and refuge; let us therefore take warning.

In Psalm 29 : 8, we are told that “The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness; the Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.” The voice did shake the wilderness and Sinai, and later at Kadesh, when the children of Israel rebelled against going into the land. His wrath was felt upon all that generation. But His voice continues

now, to shake the people who are in the wilderness. In Hebrews 12 : 25, 26 Paul speaks:

“See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: . . . For now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven: . . . that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.”

We have witnessed and experienced this in measure, and must be ready for more shaking. Shall we listen, not refusing him, that we may become steadfast, immovable ?

Are we not made to realise how great and how far reaching is the power of the Voice ?

“The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve.”
(Psalm 29 : 9).

The hinds speak of His people, those who are to become the bride of the hart, the Lord Jesus. Job was asked, “. . . cannot thou mark when the hinds do calve? . . . they bring forth their young ones . . . their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with corn . . . ” (Job 39 : 1-4). Here is a work, is it not, for the hinds, bringing forth, and nourishing. The people subject to God’s voice, do bring forth fruit now, carefully nurturing it, and seeking to present it to their Creator, looking to a time, hoping to be His eternally, then to bring forth much fruit to Him, as kings and priests . . . all for His glory. To be part of this beautiful figure, we are helped and guided by His voice.

“The Lord God is my strength, and He will make my feet like hind’s feet, and he will make me to walk upon my high places . . . ”

These considerations should cause us to marvel more fully at this Almighty power, and to be profoundly grateful that He has spoken to us. Let us never fail to hear and heed, to value that voice, remembering its promise—

“Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold, the man whose name is the BRANCH : . . . and he shall build the temple of the Lord . . . And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord ; . . . this shall come to

pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God." (Zechariah 6 : 12-15).

Here repeated, is Moses' exhortation to Israel. It is ours ! Let us not lose sight of the glories promised, the present joys known, "If ye will hear my voice."

J. A. DeF.

Christendom — *and others* — Astray (34)

The Law of Moses the Spirit of Christ

THE more the law of Moses is studied the greater is the help to an acceptable walk in Christ, because every part of the Law is the spirit of Christ. The Law which was given to guide every aspect of individual and Ecclesial life when the brethren and sisters were in the wilderness can supply similar help now although circumstances are so different. Is not this the reason why the gospel records are relatively so short and the part of the Bible giving the Law and the history of God's people who lived under the Law is so long ?

Had Christendom been designing the Bible they would have given nearly all its pages to the life and sayings of Christ, and would have regarded much of the Old Testament as being a history of little or no value and its Law without any application to the present day. Christendom forget that the Old Testament concludes with the exhortation—

"Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments." (Malachi 4 : 4).

Further, they forget that when Christ came His sole purpose was to uphold the Law and to fulfil the Law ; and while it is true that through His death the ordinances of the Law were terminated there was never intention on the part of the Almighty that the spirit of the Law should cease to instruct His People living at the time of the Apostles and since. Is not this the reason for the Law having been preserved in its fulness and also in its application to the people of God living from the time of Moses to Christ ?

The 'others' who had the Truth once, delighted in this knowledge and the blessings of being able to apply it to their lives, but with a departure from the Truth they have joined Christendom in viewing the Law as being archaic, and having little or no application to the present time. This is the reason that in their camp there is so much confusion regarding everyday problems which they can only treat as a matter of 'individual conscience,' being unable to ascertain the specific divine will so that all might be joined together in a true unity of the spirit and the bond of peace.

The amazing part about the Law is the kindly care which some of the brief commands reveal ; a care which is obviously intended to protect the children of God from their own weaknesses and preserve them as God's children in an evil world. This is perhaps seen to the greatest extent in connection with the Law dealing with the dead, which states :

"There shall none be defiled for the dead among His people."
(Leviticus 21 : 1).

This was the command given to Aaron the high priest and his sons.

To people living nineteen hundred and sixty years after Christ it may seem peculiar that God should ever view it being possible that His children could be defiled by the dead. It is not a sufficient explanation to suggest this was to prevent the spread of disease, because this was much more likely to occur during the illness preceding death when the dying would require attention than when the dead body was to be moved from the camp to be buried. Explanations of the Law which suggest that the items given were merely for hygiene and to suit the conditions of the time leave out the spirit of Christ, and reveal a mind astray from the "commonwealth of Israel." The learned often give explanations of this kind and if they are unable to suggest anything reasonable on these lines then they often discount the Law as having no value at all, as for example when a professor of Theology said he could see no use in the book of Leviticus unless one was training for a butcher.

The Almighty was careful to instruct that the touching of a dead body either accidentally or otherwise was defiling. It is most

important that the seriousness of what God meant by "defiling" be understood. Let the Law speak for itself :

"He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days."

"He shall purify himself with it on the third day, and on the seventh day he shall be clean: but if he purify not himself on the third day, then the seventh day he shall not be clean. Whosoever toucheth the dead body of any man that is dead, and purifieth not himself, defileth the tabernacle of the Lord ; and that soul shall be cut off from Israel."

(Numbers 19 : 11-13).

Contrast the position of the brethren and sisters in the wilderness with those in Christendom today ! Today the dead are invested with a kind of holiness so that men give more reverence to the dead than to the living. When the hearse containing the dead passes through the streets many will raise their hats to honour the dead although they knew not the man in his life, and perhaps if they did know him, really hated him ! But when dead a kind of sanctity is accorded to the dead, when they speak of "departed," and "respects" are shown to the dead often on a grand scale which would never have been given to him when he was living. This honouring of the dead on the face of it is most inconsistent, for those often condemned in life are praised in death, accorded reverence and granted the obsequies of a funeral arrangement including flowers, memorial service, and a flattering eulogy. In all this it is the dead who is honoured ; the creature, and not the Creator.

What is the cause of all this misguided and fallacious emotion ? Is it not that generally the belief is that the dead are not really dead and all that is done in the honouring of the dead and in paying what are called "respects" to the dead is to show to the living and especially the immediate relatives that the dead is not really dead ? In other words to blind the eyes to the truth declared by God that "the dead know not anything."

God knew of the tremendous temptation there would be in death, especially to close relatives of the dead, to imagine that the one having died was not really dead. He knew that the teaching of the

serpent in the beginning would remain a seductive philosophy to His people. He knew that the seed of the serpent, those believing in this philosophy including many doctors of philosophy, would be far more influential and numerous than His people who accepted the simple Truth that the dead are dead.

God also knew how easy it is for the human mind to be beguiled and therefore in His great kindness to His Ecclesia in the wilderness and to those brethren and sisters living afterwards He forbade the honouring of the dead by showing that physical contact with the dead was in His sight defiling to the extent that unless the defilement were removed according to the Law it would bring the punishment of death.

God's reason that contact with the dead was defiling

Although the reason that contact with the dead was defiling is not explicitly given in the scriptures there is little difficulty in finding the divine explanation.

Death came because of sin. In other words death is the fruit of sin. Had there been no sin there would have been no death. God therefore views death in the same light as sin itself; something distasteful and unlovely to Him as it was to Abraham, who, when his wife died, said "let me bury my dead out of my sight."

One of the evidences of Christendom's attempt to thwart God's view of death is seen in the large amounts of money spent to "beautify the dead" especially in America. Here a simple funeral can cost something like 600 dollars (more than £200) the dead being got up with every artifice possible in the way of paint and powder to make them look lifelike and as attractive or more so than when they were living.

There is however, a sweet reasonableness about the Truth which be it remembered is God's mind. To Him death is unlovely and those who have been forced to see the dead will say "Amen" to such a view. There is nothing beautiful in a dead body, especially when corruption has proceeded a day or two.

And so God's children of former times were helped to view the dead as He viewed them, unlovely and unbeautiful and only worthy of being buried as the fruits of sin. Their hope was the

hope given by God Himself, that any future life depended upon a resurrection of the body and not on the serpent philosophy that the dead are not really dead.

How very far Christendom have departed from the ways of God. To them the dead are hallowed. The dead are brought into what they regard as the sanctuary of God—the Church. In one of the most famous of England's Churches—Westminster Abbey—the place is almost full of dead men's bones—"the famous dead." What a travesty of divine Truth!

The "others" regard as one of their tenets that the dead are dead and give lectures to this effect, but do they refrain from joining Christendom in showing "respects" for the dead and in honouring the dead? To profess a principle without applying it is obnoxious in the eyes of God. It is like supporting something with one hand and pulling it down with the other. Let those who once had the Truth take warning and join with those who wholeheartedly believe that God will only be pleased with those who in principle and in deed believe and show the dead are dead.

Christ's application of this teaching to the present time

In the letter to the Ecclesia in Sardis, Christ shows the application of this teaching to the present time.

This Ecclesia had been alive in Christ but through departure from the Truth Jesus said:

"Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead."
(Revelation 3 : 1).

There can be no life in a dead body; neither can there be any life in an Ecclesia which Christ says is dead.

What then must have happened to the few in Sardis who Jesus said had not "defiled their garments"?

It must be abundantly clear from the principles which have been considered in the Law that these on apprehending the position in the Ecclesia would leave it because had they remained with the dead then they would have been defiled. The suggestion that the few approved could remain in the Ecclesia without defiling their garments is a contradiction of what Jesus says and also the principle of His spirit as exhibited in the Law.

This message of Jesus contains a grave warning for those who once had the Truth and believe in a gentile charity that their duty is to stay with the dead and to try and bring them back to life again—a feat which is utterly impossible ! There is only one course which will please the Almighty and bring His reward and that is to leave the dead and their defiling influence as shown by Jesus in the letter to Sardis.

(to be continued)

“Thy Commandment is exceeding Broad”

(Psalm 119 : 96).

Summary of a Bible Class

THERE are eight verses in the section of the Psalm 119 entitled “Lamed,” the twelfth letter of the Hebrew alphabet and the last verse of this section reads :

“I have seen an end of all perfection : but thy commandment is exceeding broad.”

Much beauty of divine pattern is seen in Psalm 119 in that each section of eight verses is entitled with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet; and that in every section the commencing letter of each of the eight verses in the original Hebrew is the same as the letter at the head of the section. By this arrangement it would be easier for brethren and sisters of former times to remember what the letters were to call to mind in respect of the divine purpose; a valuable feature when it is remembered that written copies of the Scriptures were not freely in circulation.

The first verse in the “Lamed” section of the Psalm commences:

“For ever, O Lord, Thy Word is settled in heaven.”

(Psalm 119 : 89).

There is one word in the Hebrew original for those translated “For ever”—“le-olahm.” The translation “for ever” scarcely gives an adequate insight into the original, which means “to the hidden

period or age," which will be seen to be a clear pointer to that age which is generally hidden from view, the time when the Lord Jesus Christ will be in the earth and the Kingdom of God will be established. This word gives the setting for the "Lamed" section directing the mind to that future age to which David along with all faithful servants of God have looked. Until this time the all powerful word of God is established in heaven showing that the promises which God has made will never fail so that the Psalm continues . . .

"Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth."

Coming now to the verse under consideration :

"I have seen an end of all perfection."

These words take the mind to that age generally hidden from the vulgar gaze, the future age or the "olahm," as given in the Hebrew original.

Generally speaking the aims and objects in all pursuits of life by mankind everywhere is to attain perfection: if in the realm of agriculture then it is to grow perfect crops or rear perfect cattle; if in the sphere of art, to paint the perfect picture or sing the perfect song, and if in work, to produce the perfect product. Never however, in the realm of human activity is the perfect attained and especially is this seen to be the case in the "art of living together." The world today, whether viewed nationally or internationally, is a powerful and terrible witness to the complete failure of all human endeavour to attain perfection in human relationships, and the misery and fear on every hand is an additional testimony to this.

What a privilege it is then to be able to see perfection in the end through the work of God as will be revealed in His Son when the Kingdom is established. By what means is this perfection to be achieved ?

"Thy Commandment is exceeding Broad"

Much reflection is necessary to see the extent of the commandments of God. Applied in the first place to what is generally termed "Natural Law," the earth was created by His word; the sunshine

and the rain bringing fruitful seasons are further evidence of His law ; the control of the rivers and the mighty oceans are a testimony to His command.

The intricacies and marvels of the human body are a further witness to the command of God which made man from the dust of the ground. It was God's word that made us and we can say with David that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made."

God's command given to cover every aspect of the life of His People.

To dwell with the Ecclesia in the wilderness for a little while, as may be done by considering the record in Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy, shows very clearly that every detail of life was catered for in the commandments of God. This gives a clear idea of how "exceeding broad," they were. This is seen clearly in the record :

"Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes, and ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thy house and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the doorposts of thine house, and upon thy gates." (Deuteronomy 11 : 18-20).

So emphatic—so "broad"—are these words that they allow for no occasion when a brother or sister could have a problem which the Law did not meet. Indeed, the Law of God is perfect, "converting the soul," or "restoring the life," that is, bringing the life in all its practical details in harmony with the will of God, and by this means uniting such a life to God.

"The end of the Commandment—'Perfection'"

In the Lord Jesus is seen pre-eminently the end of the commandment "perfection." His life was a perfect exhibition of the word of God. So much so, that He was entitled to be called the "Word of God." In all sincerity He could claim that they who saw Him did see the Father. Looking at the Lord Jesus in this way

enables the mind to comprehend the graciousness of the infinite, the goodness of God Himself.

Through the spirit of God in every age men and women have been drawn to the Almighty to become like His son, and these who have faithfully responded will be redeemed from bodies of corruption and made glorious like the Lord Jesus Christ. It is through Jesus, "the lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world," that the means is seen by which all that pertains to sinful flesh is to be destroyed and in place qualities and attributes of the Spirit are to be implanted.

In the last book of the Bible, "the Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto Him," is seen not only the perfection of Christ Himself but a multitude of those redeemed who have become like Him. Having followed in His steps during their probation by valuing and observing the commands which are to lead to perfection, they will experience perfection of nature through the mercy of the great God of heaven and will be led as a host of redeemed ones out of all the nations and kindreds and tongues and peoples to exhibit the majesty and glory of God along with the Lord Jesus in the new earth. The curse will then be removed from the earth. War shall be no more. "The law of the Lord shall go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Peace will be assured. Here is perfection indeed achieved through the working of His comprehensive commandments which as the Psalmist states are "exceeding broad."

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

“Surely the Princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish; how say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings? Where are they now? Where are thy wise men? and let them tell thee now, and let them know what the Lord of Hosts hath purposed upon Egypt.” (Isaiah 19 : 11-12).

WHAT a thorn in the side of Israel has Egypt been ever since that tiny state was independently established ! For Egypt, and her President, the self-styled leader of the Arab world and opponent of Israel, it is becoming evident, are to receive punishment for what has been done to the Jews just as the Nazis received their punishment for their vigorous extermination campaign against Jewry.

How interesting have recent news reports been in this connection, one of which reads as follows :

THIS “FEEBLE PHAROAH”

“Mr. Abbas Aram, the Persian Foreign Minister, announcing that Persia had broken off diplomatic relations with the United Arab Republic, described President Nasser as ‘this feeble-minded Pharaoh’.”

This announcement followed the expulsion of the Persian Ambassador in Cairo because of what appeared to be the recent Persian recognition of Israel. The Persian Foreign Minister declared that Persia would not resume diplomatic relations with the U.A.R. so long as the present “illegal” regime was in power.

Apparently all this trouble came about through a misunderstanding. A Persian diplomatic spokesman has stated that Persia accorded Israel de facto recognition ten years ago, but later withdrew its representative from Tel-Aviv in deference to Arab wishes, therefore the Persians maintain that in fact there has been no change in the relationship between Persia and Israel at all.

The national press has stated that President Nasser’s accusations to the effect that Persia has now “provocatively” recognised Israel appear to be based on a misconception arising out of exchanges at a press conference given by the Shah in Tehran.

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As the mind contemplates such events the words of scripture cry out in irony at such a situation.

“The princes of Zoan are become fools, the princes of Noph are deceived; they have also seduced Egypt, even they that are the stay of the tribes thereof.” (Isaiah 19 : 13).

Yes, it is apparent that the U.A.R. leaders are incompetent to allow such misconceptions to arise and lead to such disastrous consequences, for the Egyptian economy is bound to be effected, or at the least will not be helped, by the resultant loss of trade. It is also obvious that the Egyptian head is to some extent irresponsible by reason of his sudden impulsive outbursts as the one just mentioned which occur from time to time.

In a book that the Egyptian leader has written entitled “The Philosophy of Revolution” Nasser speaks of a “Moslem circle” together with Arab and African circles, which Egypt should lead. Now that a rift has occurred between the U.A.R. and Persia and the fact that Israel has cultural and economic connections also with Turkey, both Moslem States, the dream of such a circle around Israel is obviously broken !

Again words of scripture come to us with power, speaking of such a situation :

“ . . . they that weave networks shall be confounded. And they shall be broken in the purposes (margin Heb. foundations) thereof, all that make sluices and ponds for fish (margin Heb. of living things).”

(Isaiah 19 : 9-10).

Yes, it is as though Nasser has been weaving a net for Israel, a net in which he hoped to take men and confine them to his own purposes, but he has been broken in the very foundation of his effort !

This setback to U.A.R. prestige in the Arab world is not the only setback the Arab alliance is experiencing. God has declared :

“Thus saith the Lord, They also that uphold Egypt shall fall . . . and they shall be desolate in the midst of the countries.” (Ezekiel 30 : 6-7).

Further to this God has declared—

“And I will make the rivers dry.” (Margin Heb. drought).
(Ezekiel 30 : 12).

It may be argued that such words apply to a historical fulfilment when Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon overthrew the Egyptian power in time past. But perusal of such prophecies make it evident that another and final fulfilment is to be accomplished upon Egypt of which the former fulfilment was a type.

How interesting therefore in connection with such words of prophecy has been the recent news item concerning drought in Syria ! This reads as follows :

THIRD YEAR OF DROUGHT IN SYRIA NEED FOR MORE FOREIGN CREDITS

“For the third year running the Syrian farmer has been beaten—by the weather. In a country where statistics are uncertain it is difficult to draw accurate comparisons, but it is probably half a century since the elements conspired so malignantly against him, and by an unhappy coincidence third successive year of drought is also the third year of Syria’s partnership in the United Arab Republic. Not many Syrians put the blame for the drought on President Nasser, but it is a cruel misfortune for the Egyptian leader that ever since his authority was extended to Syria the Syrians, instead of earning half their national income by the export of wheat, barley and cotton, should have had to import substantial quantities of grain to keep themselves alive.”

The article goes on to say :

“In a good year the Syrians expect to export 250,000 to 300,000 tons of wheat; this year, merely to meet their own internal needs, they will have to import a similar quantity, which is twice as much as they imported in the season which ended on June 30th. With barley the position is not very different; instead of having a surplus for export of around a quarter of a million tons, they will have to import 100,000 tons, or 30 per cent more than last year. The effects of this reversal of the normal Syrian trade pattern are felt all through the Syrian economy. Farmers are unable to pay their debts, or to make normal purchases of consumer goods. Foreign exchange is short and imports have to be restricted.

Merchants are feeling the pinch, and there is inevitably some grumbling at the controls imposed on the Syrian economy on orders from Cairo (and incidentally against the liberalising trend introduced by Field Marshal Amer when he assumed authority in Damascus in October).”

Meanwhile Israel continues to prosper! Eilat on the gulf of Aqaba leading into the Red Sea, (a port which is Israel's answer to the Suez embargo on her shipping) is booming. It is already a growing home for over 7,000 people and is now connected with Beersheba by a good road with a regular service by coaches and lorries. The growth of Eilat is indeed remarkable. After four centuries of isolation and neglect it began a new life in 1950 when the first Israeli house was built. Two years later the first permanent settlers arrived and after the Sinai campaign in 1956 building began in earnest, to exploit the value of the port which makes Israel the only Mediterranean country having access to the Atlantic and Indian oceans without dependence on the Suez Canal.

There is good news also from the shores of the Dead Sea. Gladioli, tomatoes and other plants are being grown experimentally on a plot of land which was washed with fresh water for long periods to reduce the salt content in the soil. North of Beersheba thousands of acres of the Negev have been reclaimed: so complete is the transformation from a few years ago that it is hard to realise that the cultivation of this land is not as longstanding as that of the fertile coastal plain and the northern valleys. Baked earth and sandy ridges have become productive agricultural land, thanks to the laying of pipelines which give a plentiful supply of water.

At the time of the Sinai campaign an eight-inch pipeline was laid from Eilat to Haifa, a distance of more than two hundred miles, in a few months, to carry a million tons of oil a year without dependence on the Suez Canal. By next year it is expected that this will have been replaced by a 32-inch pipe, and oil from the Persian Gulf will, it is expected, be exported to Europe from Haifa, while the old, smaller pipe will carry water southward for irrigation. Such is the development of the Negev that a visitor can return to a place after a mere two years and find it transformed beyond

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recognition. A common saying in Tel-Aviv these days is "If you don't see the Negev then you don't see Israel."

So the land continues to be "brought back from the sword," and the "desolate land" is beginning to be "tilled," an earnest of the time when, as declared by God through Ezekiel the prophet—

"This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced and are inhabited. Then the nations that are left round about you shall know that I the Lord build the ruined places and plant that that was desolate: I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it." (Ezekiel 36 : 35-36).

Yes, eventually the enemies of Israel are to be made to realise that their resistance to Israel has been a futile fighting against the purpose of God, to quote the words of Isaiah :

"In that day shall Egypt be like unto women: and it shall be afraid and fear because of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which He shaketh over it. And the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt, every one that maketh mention thereof shall be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the Lord of hosts, which He hath determined against it . . . And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it. And the Lord shall smite Egypt: He shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the Lord, and He shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them." (Isaiah 19 : 16-17 and 21-22).

In like manner will come blessing and peace to all nations, when the basest of men who are "high in place" in this dispensation are removed. To such a time of joy have all the children of God been called.

"Oh that men would praise the Lord for His Goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men."

(Psalm 107 : 15).

D.L.

News from the Ecclesias

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.

As these notes are being written, we, in Ireland, are looking forward to the visit of our brethren and sisters from Eden and Manchester, with joyful anticipation in the Truth.

Brother and Sister Pinkerton were greatly blessed in their being able to take part in the Manchester Fraternal, and to profit with their brethren and sisters of the Household "in doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness," sorrowing only in the suffering of our sister. Our thoughts at that time also being with all those of His Family who were unable to be present, but joined together with us in Spirit.

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.

The visit of Brother and Sister DeFries and Family meant happy times spent together in our homes, at Woollaton Park and at Lowdham.

We also had Brother and Sister De Fries, Brother Iago, Sister Harrison and Sister Crossley at the Table of the Lord when Brother De Fries encouraged us by exhortation.

We have also had Brother and Sister Pulman when he helped us also.

We are also grateful for the clearer understanding of the vision John saw in Patmos allowed us at the Manchester Fraternal Gathering.

We draw attention to our Fraternal Gathering date altered to October 8th and the time to 3.30 p.m.

We cordially invite all.

H.J.S.

THE REMNANT

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.

Brother and Sister DeFries and family arrived from the United States on Thursday, July 28th. Their sojourn with us has been one of unsullied joy, reminiscent of the life promised in the Kingdom. Discussions on the word, counselling over problems, and exhortations and helps received have given untold benefit and aided greatly in the work of binding together.

On Friday, August 5th, Brother DeFries gave a special lecture in our own Town Hall, entitled "The Dangerous Conflict between East and West. What will be the outcome? What is the divine solution?" All were stirred by the simplicity and the power of the appeal.

On Saturday, August 6th, was the occasion of our Fraternal Gathering, when consideration was given to the latter-day application of the Revelation with the help of some new charts. It was felt that the research of the brethren over the past few years has greatly simplified our understanding of this valuable book and consequently heightened our appreciation of what is promised for faithfulness.

For the weekend we were pleased to have the additional company of Brother and Sister J. Pinkerton from Ireland and also visitors from Wales and Nottingham. The right hand of fellowship was given to Brother DeFries by Brother H. J. Smith of Nottingham to show our unity of purpose with those in the States although separated by three thousand miles ; and the one-ness of mind with Brother DeFries in his work.

The Sunday School Outing took place on Saturday, August 13th when a happy time was spent by brethren and sisters and children.

The visit of Bro. and Sis. DeFries seemed to come to an end all too quickly and it was with profound regret and longing that a number of brethren and sisters saw them leave Manchester Airport on Wednesday, August 24th. Our thanks are due to Brother DeFries for his many and able ministrations.

W.V.B.