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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 WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY

SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD

CORRESPONDENCE

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

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At the Table of the Lord

“With Bands of Love”

HOW powerful is God’s plea to His people Israel, preserved for us by the prophet Hosea. Their Creator desired that they should turn again their hearts to Him, as His own people, so that He would not be forced to look upon them as “not my people.”

Yet, how very great was Israel’s iniquity, their refusal to hear. It was in Hosea’s time that King Hezekiah opened again the door of the Lord’s House, and told the Levites,

“ . . . sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the Lord God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place. For our fathers have trespassed, and done evil . . . and have forsaken him, and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the Lord and turned their backs.” (II. Chronicles 29 : 5, 6).

How dreadful their failure, and so God pleaded,

“O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.”

We know that under Hezekiah there was a revival of faith, but at his death, a rapid fall to the former iniquity. The Almighty’s pleas went unheeded, and the nation ultimately became a scattered, despised, and godless people. The unhearing ear, and the hard hearts of a people He had called to be His own, must surely have brought great grief to their God.

Let us take warning from this example, brethren and sisters, for we, too, can fail; we, too, can refuse to hear. Our hearts can become unyielding and unresponsive to God’s love and mercy, which is so far beyond our human comprehension.

The prophet reminded Israel often of this love of God, in hope that they would rise up in gratitude and obedience.

“When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt . . . I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms . . . I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love.” (Hosea 11 : 1, 3, 4).

We remember how God did bring Israel out of Egypt's bondage—How He cared for their every need: fed them with Manna, provided water from the rock, gave them guidance by the cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night; provided the tabernacle to teach of His purpose, gave them a godly leader in Moses, and a priest in Aaron. As He has said of His people, "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" (Isaiah 5 : 4).

He drew them out with bands of love, with cords of a man. Moses was as God to them. Surely so blessed a people must respond! Yet, they hated these bands and cords, they despised Moses, and rebelled at His commandments—so that ultimately they were cut off, becoming as He said, "not my people."

We wonder sometimes how Israel could have been so scornful of these bands which united them to their Father, yet they were men of flesh, like ourselves. So do we not need to ask, What of our response to God, these cords by which He is drawing us? Do we appreciate that through His love, He is pulling us, keeping us, binding us to Himself, and at the same time, restraining us from our own dreadful weaknesses? All this, because He is a God of love, loving those who want to be His, and desiring to have these children close to Him, ultimately to find a place in His glory and purpose. How greatly we must esteem these bands—they are so full of His Power.

It is only through THE man, Jesus Christ, that we may be joined to our Father. His are the cords of a man, which bind us to God, and through Him is the power which can keep us alive in the hope of Israel.

Every faithful brother and sister of the past, has known this hope, and by it has been bound to God. Isaiah exhorts,

"Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities : thine eyes shall see Jerusalem, a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down, not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken."
(Isaiah 33 : 20).

So let us too, "Look upon Zion," seeing in it the accomplishment of that hope, the happy culmination of having been drawn with cords, with bands of love, a perfect unity. Never again shall we

have to fear lest we break the cords, for all the weakness of the flesh will be gone. We do long for that peace of Jerusalem, the habitation which will enclose all the children, enveloping them in the love which is eternal. This was Israel's hope, but because they scorned the bands, it was lost to them as a nation.

David, being a man after God's heart, saw this and rejoiced. "The lines (cords) are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage." (Psalm 16 : 6).

These same cords can also bring us to peace and pleasure in the goodly heritage, which God has prepared for His faithful ones. These cords may now bring us to suffering, sadness, and reproach—all for His sake; yet even so, we know a certain peace and blessing as we grow to trust in His strength and love, looking forward to the time of which David writes further :

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Psalm 133 : 1).

It is fitting that this should be a song of ascent, to be sung by those striving to climb toward Zion, a song to encourage and to inspire each in the difficult walk. It should help us to be more closely bound, united in the Spirit, through these bands of our Father. Can we help but delight in them finding true happiness with companions who likewise rejoice in bands ?

"Wreathen Chains"

How grateful we should be that through Jesus, we have a sure hope of being eternally bound to God. He is a mediator, who will heal the breach which our failures, and our nature have made; this, because of His love for His Father, a love which was manifest steadfastly through His lifetime on earth. He did not fail, He did not disobey; in all things He gave the glory to God. Right to the end, He struggled till He could cry with victory, "It is finished." So He became the faithful High Priest, having shared all our weaknesses, and being able to carry our petitions before God.

In the pattern of the garments of the high priest, given to Israel, we are permitted to see this gracious work. Exodus 28, tells us of the onyx stones on his shoulders, upon which were engraved all of Israel's names. Verse 12 tells us,

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“And Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord upon his two shoulders for a memorial.”

And in addition, we read of the breastplate, wherein were twelve precious stones, one for a tribe, to be fastened over his heart :

“Thou shalt put the two wreathen chains of gold in the two rings . . . on the ends of the breastplate . . . And the other two ends . . . thou shalt fasten in the two ouches, and put them on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod . . .”

(verse 24).

The names of His people were bound upon his heart with “wreathen chains” or “bands” as we see it in Hosea. It is the same spirit power which binds the faithful to Jesus now. How great is this work of love, in these precious bands! Are not our names there, over His heart now? We believe and are grateful that this is so; but, they can be there only as we remain alive and appreciative, truly rejoicing in these bands of love.

Then as each day we strive to offer acceptably, bringing in symbol our lives and work to the High Priest, let us again remember David’s words in Psalm 118 : 27 “ . . . bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.” Truly our offering, no matter what it costs us, can only be acceptable as it is given with a willing and free heart, a heart which overflows with thankfulness and wants to show the Creator that this is so. Thus we will come to Christ, our Altar, humbly, yieldingly, as Jesus Himself did. In His Spirit, we may value our position and opportunity, and truly show that we are bound with love.

Shall we not then listen to the warning words of Hosea, considering the lesson of Israel’s scorn for these bands, and their subsequent cutting off? Let us enter into Hosea’s plea,

“Take with you words and turn to the Lord : say unto him, Take away all iniquity and receive us graciously ; so will we render the calves of our lips.” (Hosea 14 : 2).

May we make all of our words and works an acceptable evidence of our gratitude to the loving Father, who indeed has drawn us to Himself, and keeps us with bands of love.

J. A. DeF.

Christendom — and others — Astray (39)

The Spirit of the Law the Spirit of Christ

HAVING been directed by the Lord Jesus Christ to the Law of leprosy, and having seen in that Law the Spirit of Christ, there is no need for apology in going further into the Law. Those who have an inclination to do so will please Christ; those who are reluctant to investigate further must displease Him. To seek, is to seek His Spirit: to refrain from seeking, is to neglect His Spirit. It is perhaps as well to be reminded and warned by the Apostle Paul :

“If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His.”
(Romans 8 : 9).

Here then is a touchstone, a means of testing those professing Christ. Do they seek His Spirit in the Law or do they neglect it ?

Christendom with its many sects not only neglects the Law, but despises it by their pretentious claims to have a spirit superior to the Law. How reprehensible this must seem to God, who gave the Law and has preserved it for the better understanding of the Spirit of Christ. No wonder Christendom is confused. To claim to know Christ and yet despise the means of doing so must inevitably lead to confusion. Undoubtedly Christendom is confused; Christendom IS astray.

The “others”—those who once had the Truth—may not be accused of despising the Law of Moses but certainly they are guilty of neglecting it by failing to discover the Spirit of Christ therein. There is no doubt that they have to an extent become infected by Christendom’s attitude to the Law as is evident by remarks inferring that the Law is secondary in teaching and spirit to that of Christ’s. This wrong attitude is quickly discovered if the Law is quoted to establish a principle of Christ’s. Such an appeal is summarily dismissed with the remark, “We are not under the Law but under grace.” It is true that the ordinances of the Law have been terminated but not its teaching; the letter of the Law has ceased but not its Spirit. How else could the “righteousness of the Law” be fulfilled in those called to the Truth at the present time ? These words may sound strange as they fall upon some ears, but nevertheless they are the words of the Apostle Paul :

“For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

(Romans 8 : 3-4).

The “others” fail to understand this purpose of the Law for the present time and hence are deprived of the Spirit which it would give them. Does this not show that in spite of their claims, they lack that Spirit which is the hall-mark of Truth ?

Following the directing finger of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Law of leprosy let consideration now be given to that part of this law which deals with—

Leprosy in a House

Leprosy has already been seen to be a manifestation of sin and in this sense a type of sin. Like so many diseases leprosy is not only contagious but infectious, and in this way is a powerful reminder of how quickly “evil communications can corrupt good manners.” In another figure, leprosy is like leaven which will work insidiously until the whole Body is leavened unless its progress is arrested. The divine instruction for preventing the spread of leprosy was not merely intended as a hygienic measure but to teach the Ecclesia also how they must deal with sin when manifested.

It will be found that God’s instruction for dealing with the plague of leprosy in a house brings out these same points and indeed amplifies them in showing clearly what can happen to a “house” if the plague is not removed.

**“When ye be come into the land . . . and I put the plague of leprosy
in a house.”** (Leviticus 14 : 34).

“When ye be come into the land of Canaan, which I give to you for a possession, and I put the plague of leprosy in a house of the land of your possession :

And he that owneth the house shall come and tell the priest, saying, It seemeth to me there is at it were a plague in the house.” (Leviticus 14 : 34-35).

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It will be seen at once that the Law is not merely a hygienic measure dealing with the incidence of disease, for here it is God Himself who says He will put the plague of leprosy in a house ! Why should God do such an apparently strange thing ? God never punishes the innocent, although these may be tried.

As already noted, leprosy was sometimes inflicted as a punishment, so doubtless there would be a private lesson for the owner of the house where God put leprosy in it. Apart from this there was a much greater lesson for all the Ecclesia, for all Israel. The Priest must be notified of the suspected plague. Then the house was to be shut up for seven days, at the end of which time the Priest must again examine the house.

“If the plague be spread in the walls of the house :
Then the priest shall command that they take away the stones in which the plague is, and they shall cast them into an unclean place without the city :
And he shall cause the house to be scraped within round about, and they shall pour out the dust that they scrape off without the city into an unclean place:
And they shall take other stones, and put them in place of those stones; and he shall take other mortar, and shall plaister the house.” (Leviticus 14 : 39-42).

But what if the plague should break out again ?

“Then the Priest shall come and look, and, behold, if the plague be spread in the house, it is a fretting leprosy in the house: It is unclean.
And he shall break down the house, the stones of it, and the timber thereof, and all the mortar; and he shall carry them forth out of the city into an unclean place.”
(Leviticus 14 : 44-45).

What was the lesson, which this Law so carefully given, taught the Ecclesia at the time, and should teach the Ecclesia now ?

The plague of leprosy, as already observed, was a type of sin. Not of sin in general of which all are guilty at different times but of sin which manifested a rebellious spirit and an unwillingness therefore to repent. Such sin, or rather sinners are deniers of God.

This is the reason why Jesus says they are "perishing." No man can deny God and have hope of life. To leave a rebellious sinner through a mistaken sense of mercy or charity will certainly not save him. The grave danger which Jesus impresses is that others may be contaminated if not the whole Ecclesia. How often this has happened in the history of the Truth. When Korah, Dathan and Abiram rebelled it was not only they who perished and their immediate associates in the rebellion, but afterwards fourteen thousand seven hundred perished in the plague that God sent. These must have been sympathisers. Brethren actuated by ungodly sympathies. Hence they perished. A terrible destruction containing a dreadful lesson.

In the latter day history of the Truth much the same kind of thing has happened. Failure to deal with those who have been rebellious in that they would not repent of false doctrine which they taught resulted in the spreading of the plague. In the Inspiration Division of 1885 there were relatively few who believed in a partially inspired Bible. The majority who left the Truth at this time were those who sympathised with those in error and thus became infected by the plague of false doctrine; who in a figure became leprous and had to be removed from the house so that the house might be clean. To suggest, as the advocates of "Re-union" have done, that those who left the Truth at this time were for the most part misunderstood, and as Christadelphians must have retained the Truth shows that there is no understanding whatever of the holiness of God and of His doctrine of fellowship. Those who espouse false doctrine are unclean in God's sight; they are leprous. And those who associate with them also become infected by the plague. As lepers they are consumed by the plague for their sins. How can they possibly have any part in that which is clean and holy?

Do not these considerations show the importance of carrying out the instruction contained in the Law of leprosy respecting a house that has become infected? Clearly if the plague has been allowed to get too deep a hold then the Priest can do nothing but order the destruction of the house. This shows that when leprosy was manifested, urgent measures would at once have to be taken. The lesson is clear that where sin of a rebellious character in manifested in the House of God, it requires dealing with at once, otherwise the house will be destroyed.

Lessons for the House of God

The fact that God would put leprosy in a house shows that He will not permit rebellious sin to go undetected. He will reveal this as clearly as would the leprosy be seen in the natural house in Israel.

When revealed, then the Priest must be consulted. The house in Israel had to be shut up seven days. Does this show that the House of God must fear being cut off if rebellious sin is in their midst? Where this feeling pervades the house, what devout appeals there will be for help and willingness to take action when required.

The action to be taken is shown when the Priest discovers that certain stones in the house are indeed leprous. Brethren and sisters are compared in the Scriptures to "living stones." If they become rebels, then their condition is such that they are in a sense leprous and the House of God is no fit place for them. They must be removed with the help of the Priest and taken to an unclean place. What a vivid lesson is here! Those who become the teachers of false doctrine and will not repent are regarded by God as unclean, as leprous, and for the sake of the whole house, the urgent duty of all is to seek the help of the Priest to remove such from the Ecclesia. Parleying at this stage will do no good. Jesus shows there are three steps to be taken and only three. The sinner must first be seen alone if the facts are not already known. Then he must be admonished by the help of "witnesses." If this is not effective in bringing about repentance, then the Ecclesia must make a further admonition, the "second admonition." If after this admonition there is still no repentance then the sinner must be rejected. He must be withdrawn from and like a leprous stone put outside the house where it is unclean.

The House of those who once had the Truth

Where do these stand in the eyes of the Priest when He comes to inspect the house? Would He not find through failure to remove the leprous stones, the whole house has become infected by perverse doctrines and therefore, in the type is leprous? The pernicious notion that one must not judge has contributed to this disastrous position. It is as well to be reminded that life in the Truth consists

of judging righteous judgment continually. This implies not only the upholding of that which is right but the condemnation of that which is wicked. The words so often heard, "I cannot judge. I must not condemn. Christ is the Judge," may sound very benevolent and magnanimous, but they are hopelessly astray from the teaching of God, and wickedly subversive of His Truth.

It is a privilege to see a reflection of the Spirit of Christ in the Law of Moses designed for the preservation of all who will respond to the teaching of God and for the destruction of those who will not, that the House of God might be preserved clean and holy permitting Him to dwell therein.

In these last days the true House of God will have these lessons in mind watching vigilantly for the introduction of any error which when revealed will be regarded as the plague of leprosy. Careful and dutiful action will be taken with the help of the Priest that The House might be saved. At the time when the Lord Jesus returns to inspect the many houses which are often mistakenly called "fellowships," what wailing there will be when He pronounces them as unclean and only fit for destruction.

(to be continued)

The Woman Taken in Adultery

(John 8)

A Christadelphian whose interest has been aroused and feelings disturbed by the reading of the articles entitled, "Christendom—and others—Astray" writes :—

"Jesus did not condemn even one brought before Him by the then leaders of Israel, but rather He allowed the conscience of those that brought the woman to condemn themselves. Since I, like them am not without sin or fault, neither can I cast a stone at any, which I feel I should be doing if I left the Christadelphians."

The record showing that Jesus did not condemn the woman taken in adultery has become a sanction to most Christadelphians, allow-

ing sin and sinners to remain in their body. On the face of it to say, "I cannot condemn for I am also a sinner," sounds very charitable and extremely humble.

A great difficulty, however, is created by such an interpretation and application of the remarks of Jesus to the woman taken in adultery. They would mean that adultery and adulterers in the Body could not be condemned. Christadelphians generally are prone to say that they must not condemn and frequently use the argument of our correspondent. They should consider the appalling situation which arises from their attitude. Those of their number guilty of adultery would be entitled to say, "Jesus did not condemn why should you?" An obviously preposterous and untenable situation! One which would completely nullify the commands of Christ and the Apostles to cut off those that offend, and to withdraw from those which walk disorderly. There is an additional difficulty created by those who say that they cannot condemn because Jesus did not do so, in that they make the teaching of Jesus opposed to the Law.

Did Jesus contradict the Law ?

The teachings of Jesus and the Law indivisible.

What did Jesus say on this most important point ?

"Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."

(Matthew 5 : 17).

Indeed the whole of the teaching of Jesus was an exposition of the Law and the prophets as He showed after His resurrection :

"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." (Luke 24 : 27).

To suggest that Jesus taught differently from the Law, or gave a different judgment than the Law, tears asunder the fabric of holy writ. What then is the explanation which will reconcile what Jesus said concerning the adulterous woman with the Law ? For benefit of our correspondent and others like him the endeavour will be made to meet the difficulty and discover the true scriptural explanation. Certainly there must be one.

The position in Israel at the time when Jesus was to appear

Great was the consternation of those who were in Judea prior to the showing of Christ when they heard the voice of John the Baptist calling upon them to repent and be baptised. The cry of John at this time was the voice of heaven as he showed :

“Repent ye: for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.

For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

(Matthew 3 : 2-3).

So great a stir was caused by John's preaching that there went out to him, Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region round about Jordan. To be baptised in those days was a new thing. There had been no form of baptism since the time when Israel came out of Egypt and were baptised “in the cloud and in the sea.” Why did those who had been associated with the Truth and had the oracles of God need to be baptised by John? John supplies the answer when he said “repent.” As a nation Israel were astray from God and were “lost.” It was for this reason that Jesus said later that he came to save that which was “lost.” Restoration to God's favour required a baptism showing repentance. To repent implies a recognition of being wrong in God's sight and a need for alteration to be restored to His favour. A placing under the water was not sufficient. It was necessary as John showed to “confess their sins,” and at the same time, “bring forth fruits meet for repentance.”

Even Jesus as an individual belonging to the corrupt nation of Israel needed to be baptised to show His disassociation from that nation, and also the step that was necessary for Him to become right in God's sight. Did he not say when John was reluctant to baptise him?—

“Thus it cometh us to fulfil all righteousness.”

(Matthew 3 : 15).

From this it is clear that the first duty of any in Israel at the time of John and of Jesus was to be baptised unto John's baptism

in order to be restored to God's favour. Before taking such a step the applying of the Law of Moses in the judgment of another would only merit self-condemnation. It is evident that those who came to Jesus with the woman taken in adultery had not confessed their sins and been baptised of John. The first thing that God required of them and of the guilty woman was to confess their sins and repent. By this means a fresh start could be made in God's favour with a new responsibility which Jesus made clear to the woman when He said, "Go, and sin no more."

Afterwards the woman and those like her would be accountable to God according to His Law and will receive in the day of judgment according to their works. The words of Jesus to the guilty woman do not contradict the Law. He is showing that particular judgments of the Law cannot be applied to a people who have departed from God. They must be restored to God first. Then there must be an upholding of the Law, and judgment according to the Law. Thus in this simple way, Jesus and the Law are seen to be at one, and the words of Jesus which are so often misused by Christadelphians give no excuse for the toleration of unrepentant sinners in the Ecclesia. The duty of those who will hear the voice of God is to "come out" from amongst those who dishonour God by wresting His Word and make excuses for rebellion against God. God will only be found in the one true Body.

"The Signs of His Coming and of the end of the world"

" . . . Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood ; BUT THIS SHALL BE WITH BURNING AND FUEL OF FIRE." (Isaiah 9 : 5).

AS the year proceeds the West is looking more and more to the United States and its new Administration for help to enable leaders of the nations to avert the world war that continually threatens. The desire that the new government might prove success-

ful in such a task is even printed on U.S. mail by one of the latest American postmarks with its caption "PRAY FOR PEACE." The new President right from the start has obviously been aware of what is expected of him. To meet the great problems that he will have to face he has brought into his Administration a really startling number of men with outstanding gifts, not only in the first ranks of his government but also in the secondary positions. As he begins to consolidate his position complex and difficult situations are already developing, which in the eyes of those who look to men for a solution, are regarded as in need of very urgent attention. The future of south-east Asia is contemplated with alarm in view of the trouble in Laos. The Congo continues to present a very perplexing problem with a danger of a pro-Communist régime arising supported by the Egyptian contingent there. On the doorstep of the United States also, Cuba has become openly antagonistic to her powerful neighbour causing delight to the leader of the U.S.S.R. It becomes evident to political observers that any encouragement of Laos, on the borders of Communist China by America, to enter into the Western fold or any encouragement of Cuba by Russia to enter into the Communist fold will seriously aggravate tension between the two blocks. The situation is precarious and the danger of an increase in tension due to small nations consorting with larger ones, remains as the weeks slip by ! Even situations that do not now look very urgent may soon demand the most painful kind of policy decisions by the new American government before the year expires.

Such a situation is described most powerfully in the book of Ecclesiastes, which reveals that administrative brilliance is not sufficient to bring about a disentanglement.

" . . . Man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them." (Ecclesiastes 9 : 12).

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And Isaiah explains—

“Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear.”

(Isaiah 59 : 1-2).

The spirit of this declaration is just as applicable today as it was to Israel !

Before President Kennedy actually took over the reins of government he was urged by the National Planning Association to tell the American people the “stark, the unvarnished truth about the national emergency” created by the expansion of Communist military power. A report issued by this organisation presented a detailed military analysis to show that there has “been a shift in the balance of power favourable to the Soviet Union.” The organisation believed that the U.S. still holds a “substantial lead” in the guidance system which determines the accuracy of missiles, in the development of solid fuel missiles, and in mastering the problem of re-entry from outer space. But as against these important American assets must be placed the disturbing fact that the retaliatory power of the U.S. remains “far from adequately protected as we enter the period of the missile gap.” The organisation therefore believed that Russia for some time to come would continue to use the threat of local war or even of total war as an instrument of policy. Although it placed primary emphasis on closing the missile gap, the committee of the organisation also said that the Kennedy Administration at the same time should accept the related responsibility of producing a material increase in America’s conventional forces and in its air lift capacity so that “in a variety of circumstances we may have other options open to us than all-out thermal nuclear war.” The report also suggested that the new military programme should give its most important emphasis immediately to placing strategic missile bases underground and also dispersing them so that they would be less vulnerable to any attack. This suggestion of a combination of conventional weapons with nuclear weapons as necessary to the success of the American defence programme which, this year can

be expected to be more costly and bigger than ever, takes the mind to the prophetic words of Isaiah :

“ . . . Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood ; but this shall be with burning and FUEL OF FIRE.”

Nations are now seen preparing, more than ever before, for this coming battle ! Conventional weapons will first of all be wielded, and like all battles of the past in which conventional weapons have been used, there will be the “confused noise” of smaller armaments with the consequent shedding of blood. But men will not restrain themselves to the use of these ; their more devastating weapons will eventually be set in operation burning and consuming as the new “fuel of fire” is used ! But in what way will these nuclear devices be used when Christ appears, who is coming to prevent the destruction of all flesh, which would take place if all the nuclear stockpiles were to be opened and their deadly power exploded upon mankind ?

“AND THIS SHALL BE THE PLAGUE WHEREWITH THE LORD WILL SMITE ALL THE PEOPLE THAT HAVE FOUGHT AGAINST JERUSALEM ; THEIR FLESH SHALL CONSUME AWAY WHILE THEY STAND UPON THEIR FEET, AND THEIR EYES SHALL CONSUME AWAY IN THEIR HOLES, AND THEIR TONGUES SHALL CONSUME AWAY IN THEIR MOUTH.” (Zechariah 14 : 12).

Throughout history God in His work with the nations and with Israel has been seen in many of His judgments to have punished one evil nation with another, or one army by another. This may again be repeated after or while the conflict between East and West, over the territory of Israel is taking place ! A report from America a few months ago indicated the increasing hazard to army personnel that modern warfare brings. In New York, a former Atomic Energy Commissioner spoke guardedly of a revolutionary new type of nuclear weapon—“a third generation weapon, as radi-

cally different from the H-bomb as the H-bomb was from the Hiroshima-type A-bomb." It was stated that " the new weapon will not be a larger and more efficient H-bomb, nor a smaller and more efficient A-bomb. It will be a weapon of a different category . . . primarily anti-personnel in destination and effect. Hence it is apt for proper military uses. It lends itself to a new type of nuclear strategy that would be more narrowly military in character, and it need not create suicidal hazards for the country that employs it." Conceptual designs for this new type of weapon have existed in American laboratories. They would have already been tested had it not been for the U.S. tests moratorium. The moratorium had effectively blocked American advance to a new position of military and political strength. The ex-Atomic Energy Commissioner went on in his statement to say "I take it for granted that the Soviet Union is actively developing nuclear technology along this revolutionary line. I must assume that they have done some preliminary tests of the new 'fantastic' weapon. Such tests could easily have been carried on without detection."

This statement is very significant! When "The King of the North" fights against the latter day merchant powers of Tarshish in the Middle East, and enters into many other countries in his onslaught, it seems highly probable that "all out" nuclear war will be avoided due to mutual fear by the opposing powers of what such a situation would bring upon their home territories. A similar agreement by reason of the fear of consequences was evident in the last war when the horrors of gas warfare were avoided by the Nazi Powers and their opponents, and so millions of gas masks that were issued were never used ! Certainly after Christ has rid "the land" of the northern invader there will be many great powers still left that will not be so devastated that they will be unable to show resistance to Him. This is revealed throughout the Bible, but particularly in the book of Revelation. The words of Zechariah therefore seem to take on an added significance as such thoughts prompted by the recent news enter the mind. Zechariah chapter 14, speaks of nations being gathered against Jerusalem, and also of the coming to the Mount of Olives, of The One who ascended up from that same mount into

heaven nineteen hundred years ago. In the ensuing conflict "a great tumult from the Lord" is to be among those who are to use Israel as a battlefield, they will destroy themselves as much as they will destroy their enemies for "they shall lay hold everyone on the hand of HIS NEIGHBOUR, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour." Nuclear weapons CAN revert against those that use them, and in a fluid state of conflict mistakes also can easily be made, as evidenced in the first world war when some soldiers perished from the shells of their own forces that were fired in error upon them. Mistakes and perhaps retaliation against those who have made the mistake by those who have suffered, can perhaps be prevented from getting out of hand in conventional warfare, but what of nuclear warfare? The devastation can be done before those who have perished by it, or have been left alive, fully realise what has been done. The word of God in this context declares in relation to those who will have fought against Jerusalem "There flesh shall consume away WHILE THEY STAND UPON THEIR FEET . . . and so shall be the plague . . . of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague." What a wonderful prophecy or armies fighting with nuclear weapons and the result therefrom upon natural life in the vicinity of the conflict! The trend in scientific development towards the production of atomic weapons specially for the armed forces on the battlefield reminds that when the battle breaks out "with burning and fuel of fire." Then He who was given to be "Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace," will appear with salvation to those who belong to the True Israel of the prophet.

"Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end." (Isaiah 9 : 7).

D.L.

Correspondence

With reference to the correspondence with Mr. Holmes of Hamilton, New Zealand quoted in the February magazine, an interesting letter has been received from Mr. F. H. McLean of Surbiton, Surrey too late for publication. It is hoped to deal with this letter in the April magazine.

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.

Distributing continues in the Fredonia area, and there has been a reply from one tormented by the witness. She declares herself to be a Roman Catholic, and threatens to bring pressure if further literature is delivered at her address. Is it just a foretaste of the antagonism to be felt, in the desire to silence those who speak of the purpose of God, and the coming of the day of His wrath ?

Continued contacts with Christadelphians and others sometimes reveal in the correspondence amazing departure and failure to be aware of it ; or inability to waken to repentance, and the opportunity to once again be regarded as God's servants.

Is all this more than a work ? Are there living lessons and warnings for those of us allowed to be so engaged ? Trials are to grow sharper, and we shall be strong only as we look to the Source of all Strength, and courage, and are bound in a true unity.

J.A.DeF.

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 greatly encouraged by the company at the Table of the Lord of Bro. A. Iago, Bro. and Sis. D. Lancaster and Bro. Pulman.

We look forward to the visits of all who labour in the service of the Truth and the company of all our brethren and sisters cheers us and helps us to hold fast till our change comes.

H.J.S.

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

It has been our pleasure to meet here with some of the brethren and sisters from Manchester during the winter months, and we now look forward to more frequent visits during the summer.

We are grateful for the Remnant Magazine with all the valuable food it contains. What a great privilege is ours as we realise the great labour of love of our brethren.

The station poster at Criccieth was made particularly impressive for this month—so we feel happy in being allowed to continue to witness here.

per J.S.

Co. Down., N. Ireland, Newtownards & Bangor. Sundays: Breaking of Bread, Bangor, 11.30 a.m. ; Sunday School 10.45 a.m. ; Law of Moses Study 2.0 p.m. ; Bible Class, midweek Newtownards.

Turning again to “The Law of Moses” by Bro. Robert Roberts after many years, we are studying the Law with its help, and seeing in every facet of it, the Spirit of Christ, and how the love of Yahweh for Israel was revealed to the Ecclesia in the wilderness, and also to us, (but how few were, or are able to discern that Spirit). We are grateful to Him who has opened our eyes to these things and “hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit—for the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.”

Our deep desire is to help any who seek the Light, for outside the all-pervading spiritual darkness of today we, of the One Body of Christ, know that the Light of Truth shines clear and CAN be found through humble submission to His Will.

J.P.

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 3-45 p.m.

Encouragement has been found by the attendance of a few more strangers at our lectures and particularly a continued interest of one whom we believe is being called to the Truth.

Brethren and sisters are reminded of the Fraternal Gathering in Manchester to be held in our own Hall, on Easter Monday, April 3rd. All are cordially invited. We look forward to this, the first Gathering of the year, to provide for the necessary upbuilding by mutual contact and exhortation.

W.V.B.