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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

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At the Table of the Lord

“Be of good cheer”

AS we have read of the Lord Jesus, our mind is impressed with the unfailing help He gave to His disciples, by His word, His example, and by the Spirit of God working in Him. His brethren sometimes failed in understanding, in perception, yes, even in faith; yet always His help and presence was with them to sustain.

We, brethren and sisters, are seeking to be like them, wanting to please our Father and His Son, yet often failing miserably; often we may feel discouraged, feeling “I just cannot seem to get on top.” We, in these circumstances, can find in Jesus’ word, example and spirit, the very same help His disciples knew. How blessed we are that these things are preserved for our time of need!

Let us look at Mark 6 : 45-52, where His disciples sought to cross the sea of Galilee to Bethsaida. It was difficult “for the wind was contrary to them.” Jesus came to them walking on the water.

“When they saw Him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: . . . and immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid” (verses 49-50).

How comforting, how encouraging to them, to allay their fears. How much is expressed in these words of Jesus: “**Be of good cheer.**” We find the words to mean, be courageous, be of good courage.

We, brethren and sisters, need to take these words to our hearts, for our lives are sometimes fear-filled, so much so that our faith and courage are hindered.

It should be a comfort to us that there are others who have known fear, whose hearts have been troubled and who have found help and encouragement through God’s grace and love. We have been reading of Jeremiah as he was placed in the dungeon. Can we imagine how he must have felt as the door of the dungeon closed over his head, and he found it to be so filled with mire that he sank into it? His flesh would cringe, his heart would perhaps feel, “this is the end.” Yet, he was sustained and soon delivered, because of his faith in God. Can we not imagine the spirit of that being con-

veyed to him, "Be of good courage, be not afraid, I am with you"? And so he was not allowed to perish, but was removed from his trial by the hand of the God in whom he trusted.

That same hand is extended to us as we face trials which by comparison may be small, yet are as great a test of **our** faith. Let us then reach out for that hand, believing in its warmth and strength.

"O thou of little faith"

Returning to the record of the disciples in Matthew 14, further help can be found in the reaction of Peter when he saw Jesus and heard, "It is I." Peter responded (verse 28), "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." We remember that Peter was a fisherman, and as such, would have a respect and fear for the power of the wind and the waves; yet also, he knew Jesus' power. Jesus' reply was, "come," and so Peter came down from the ship and walked on the water toward Jesus. He did take courage, and so was able. But how short-lived; "When he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink. . . ." He feared, and this overcame his faith. How easy to fear as Peter did; we can each one of us understand his reaction. But even in failure, the Lord Jesus was there to help as Peter cried out, "Lord, save me." Jesus, responding quickly, "stretched forth his hand and caught him." At the same time, He corrected and chastened:

"O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

Have we not known the quick blessing, have we not felt, too, the same chastening, even as we are lifted up by His gracious hand? How much His love and care for us is expressed in this chastening, the correction we so often need, because we do doubt. He knows every temptation which leads us to doubt, for He Himself experienced them. Let us then, brethren and sisters, strive to grow in faith, even as we hear and remember the words, "Be of good cheer. It is I, be not afraid." If we can, what great things are possible in our daily striving to grow in faith and in the determination to "come" unto Him, as Peter did.

"In the world ye shall have tribulation"

Living our lives in His service, in obedience to His word, we are helped again by His words:

"The hour cometh . . . that ye shall be scattered . . . and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me" (John 16 : 32-33).

With this mind and assurance, the Lord Jesus was able to overcome, getting the victory over His flesh. His words continue to help us grow in that same perception.

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace.”

What peace there is for us if we are truly “in Him,” belong to Him, hear Him as He says to us, “**In the world** ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

Yes, we know we shall have tribulation, for each one of us has experienced it and will experience it as long as we are in the world and in the flesh. In Him we have one who intercedes, who encourages and comforts, who corrects, who says to us, “Be of good cheer.” Can we receive it, believe it, and so find peace and assurance, putting away fear and doubt?

Every one of His children during trial has heard the encouraging voice, known the helping hand of the Lord Jesus. Paul is an example—imprisoned in Jerusalem, while the scribes and Pharisees were seeking to have him put to death. In the midst of this tribulation, we read of the help given:

“The night following, **the Lord stood by him**, and said, **Be of good cheer, Paul:** for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome”

(Acts 23 : 11).

How disheartening it could have been to Paul to know he must endure similar tribulation at Rome. But the first words of Jesus were, “Be of good cheer.” Paul had to be, if he were to go on and witness as God required in Rome. We remember how it was said of Paul, “I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name’s sake” (Acts 9 : 16). Paul was a chosen vessel unto God and unto Jesus. We know that “the Lord stood by him,” and that Paul took hold of that help, and went on to Rome and witnessed faithfully there.

Further in Acts, we read of Paul’s faithful witnessing, of the tribulation which beset him on the way to Rome. In all this, he could “be of good cheer,” knowing the Lord stood by him. In Acts 28 : 15, we read of his coming close to Rome at the end of his perilous journey.

“When the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii forum, and The three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.”

Do we not know just how he felt? Are we not given great help by brethren who do come alongside to help, to uphold, and to accompany us on our journey? We can imagine Paul's joy as he saw his brethren coming to greet him, to rejoice with him. We know the same joy, brethren and sisters, when those we love come closer in time of need. Indeed, it makes it so much easier to "take courage," and so we thank God as Paul did.

Our mind goes back further to Elijah, another chosen vessel of God, who felt he was at times alone. Yet, the Lord stood by him as well. In I Kings 19 : 14, Elijah's words upon Mount Horeb were:

"I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts . . . and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

Surely he was in need, and God's reply was,

"I have left me seven thousand in Israel all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (verse 18).

Elijah was not alone, but had faithful brethren to help him take courage. Verse 19 tells us, "He departed thence and found Elisha . . . and cast his mantle upon him." Here was one given as a brother and a friend, one who stayed with him until he was taken away. What a comfort Elisha must have been, how often as Elijah looked upon him, he must have taken courage! Let us be quick to give that help so needful to each other, so that we together can "be of good cheer." And let us, too, brethren and sisters, be very grateful to perceive and receive that help, **for it is born of love.**

Let us in this desire, join in the spirit of David's words,

"Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord (Psalm 27 : 14).

J. A. DeF.



Christendom — and others — Astray (80)

The Spirit of the Law the Spirit of Christ.

**“Sanctify unto me all the Firstborn . . .
both of man and of beast: It is mine”**

Exodus 13 : 2.

TO the sons of men God has given a precious faculty; the faculty of hope. This blessed gift is not found in any of the animal creation. Animals are not really concerned about the future; they live for the present or obey instincts for their preservation in storing food for a time when there will be none. This absence of hope in all animals explains why the slaying of animals is entirely different from the killing of men. When an animal is killed no hope is cut off. An animal will go on drinking and feeding, quite undisturbed by the prospect of being killed right up to the time of it being slaughtered. How different is the case of man who soon becomes fearful if some illness casts the shadow of death; fearful that his God-given hope may be cut off.

Some, failing to understand God's appointments class animals with men; and refuse to aid in their killing by not eating meat. Such are only sentimentalists, who are ignorant of God's appointments, and provisions for man. Animals were given by a kind Creator to assist man in his work, to provide him with food and materials for his clothing.

A just and merciful God not only provides faculties in man, but the means by which these can be satisfied: light for the seeing eye, food for the hungry mouth, and a wonderfully complete record showing how the faculty of hope may be fully satisfied with a “lively hope.”

Just as there are philosophers who will not eat meat, even claiming Bible support for their theories, so there are those who abuse the faculty of hope with the most strange and unreal ideas. These pay no attention to the Creator's provision for the satisfying of their ‘hope.’ Instead, they have trespassed beyond what the Creator allows: their ‘hope’ promises life at death. “Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved,” “God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.” The serpent was the first to declare the lie—“ye shall not

surely die.” In attempting to satisfy their ‘hope’ according to their own ideas, men of many creeds have become disciples of the serpent, proclaiming there is a continuance of life at death. So much so that the serpent’s lie has become the universal creed of Christendom. All in Christendom believe that there must be life in some form for all after death. Christendom is astray on the fundamental issue of life and death.

“Sanctify unto me all the firstborn.”

The work of “sanctifying” or making “holy” is most important, being the basis of salvation. God has never saved that which is unholy, and never will do so. The divine process for attaining salvation is simple to understand. There are three distinct steps. First, the one to be saved must be called by God. Then he must be “justified” or made holy. And lastly if he remains justified or holy he will be glorified. These essential steps are clearly stated by the Apostle Paul:

“Whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” Romans 8 : 30.

These simple steps were powerfully demonstrated in the Law of Moses. The Ecclesia in the wilderness and in the land were told in the Law of Moses that they must sanctify or regard as holy all the firstborn. Not only the firstborn of man but also the firstborn of beasts. That which is sanctified or made holy belongs to God, and this fact alone should speak volumes about God’s plan of salvation: that only those belonging to God can be saved.

To spend a little time with the Ecclesia in the wilderness or in the land, observing their every-day life with their cattle and fruits, would do more than words could possibly achieve to show that there is not to be life for all after death. As their first calves were born, their kids, their sheep, they were to be killed, for, says the Laws:

“They are holy: thou shalt sprinkle their blood upon the altar, and shalt burn their fat for the offering made by fire for a sweet savour unto the Lord.” Numbers 18 : 17.

What an impact it would make on the impressionable mind to see every firstborn of the cattle slain and given to God. The simple truth would be discerned that these firstborn were holy, they were God’s. Was God merely caring for cattle? Certainly not. Their killing shows that this was not the case. This law was given that every one in the Ecclesia might recognise that in a very special sense the firstborn must be given to God because it belonged to Him.

Also the truth would be equally clear that all apart from the Firstborn were not "holy," and did not belong to God. What a striking distinction there would be in the life of the Ecclesia in seeing that the only hope of belonging to God was to become part of the Firstborn. There could not have been a more powerful demonstration that all others than the Firstborn were not God's and would not be saved. This should make us consider most carefully the need of belonging to the Firstborn and remaining in Him. It is not only vitally important to be inducted into the Firstborn but to remain as part of Him until the end. The ever present danger must be recognised that though we might become part of the Firstborn we may very quickly lose this privilege unless we maintain our position as part of the one Holy dwelling of God. There is no claim in this statement to perfection; neither is there any desire to appear self righteous. We sin; we "spot" our garments. Unless our sins are confessed and forsaken we shall no longer be regarded as "holy" and a fit dwelling for God. Through the merciful appointment of the Lord Jesus as the great High Priest we can obtain forgiveness, and in a figure "wash our robes and make them white in the blood (life) of the lamb." This requires humility and will never allow us to excuse wrong. The Law of God must always be exalted even though at times it means our abasement. The natural man prefers to find excuses for his wrongs, and to justify himself by watering down the Law of God so that he finds no inconvenience in keeping it. Whatever the profession of such, they will be condemned as rebels dishonouring God's Law.

Salvation only in Jesus, the Firstborn of God.

It is a delightfully refreshing aspect of the Truth that the principles which governed the life and salvation of the brethren and sisters of the Ecclesia in the wilderness were the same as those which we are called upon to honour today.

They would know, as we must, that the Firstborn was "holy" and to belong to Him it was necessary to become "holy." The Law expressed this truth in a most explicit way:

"Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am Holy."

Leviticus 19 : 2.

God's kindness is seen in giving complete information in the Law so that He might be known in the "beauty of holiness," and that His son might be discerned in the exquisite and unique fragrance emanating from all the appointments of God's dwelling.

Beauty and fragrance appeal to all: especially to the devout whose minds and hearts respond in gratitude to these natural gifts. They speak of an exalted purpose; one that is able to lift man above his native instincts and deliver him from becoming a brute beast to that which is virtuous and delightful to behold, even to the likeness in character of God Himself.

Unless the beauty of holiness and the fragrance of the Messiah be discerned in the Law it will appear nothing more than a dead letter. These imperishable qualities, however, are to be discovered in the Law by the earnest worker whose reward in finding them is an inward glow of joy unspeakable for the present, and for the future everlasting joy and gladness

The Firstborn of man.

Not only was the Firstborn of beasts declared by the Law to be God's but also the Firstborn of man. The Law says:

“Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast: it is mine.” Exodus 13 : 2.

The firstborn of beasts, as we have seen, had to be killed, but God required nothing of this kind in respect of the firstborn males of men. Nevertheless there had to be a recognition that the firstborn boy in a family was God's. As the Law declared: “It is mine.” Never did the Law of God permit a human sacrifice as was common among the heathen nations which surrounded Israel. In the case of the firstborn child of man the Law required that a certain sum should be paid for its redemption. Such an offering to the priest was to be in recognition that the firstborn was God's and needed redemption, which God was pleased to give when this offering was made in faith. If redemption had not been sought then this would have amounted to rebellion against God's Law and was punishable by death.

Here was a twofold lesson. A repetition of the teaching that the firstborn was God's and so that it was only the firstborn who would be saved. Further, that even the firstborn would need redemption. What a striking testimony there is in this type that Jesus who was made under the Law for the suffering of death needed redemption for Himself. At once it is seen that Jesus' nature was human nature and not divine. He was a man and not God. He needed redemption and salvation like any other man. Through perfect obedience to the Law which, it must be recognised, condemned Him to death,

He obtained mercy and was raised from the dead; and is now "the firstfruits" of them that sleep.

The Ecclesia in the wilderness had been taught in a most simple and powerful manner the means by which they might ultimately be saved from death. When they were delivered from Egypt they saw the destruction of the firstborn of that mighty land, and the miraculous salvation of their own firstborn. In this distinction between destruction and salvation God's angel of death made no mistake. There was salvation for the firstborn in every house upon which the blood of the lamb was to be seen; where this simple sign was missing the firstborn was slain. How valuable would appear this sign of the blood of the lamb to the brethren and sisters in Israel. They knew its divine significance; that it was not a meaningless token. It spoke of the blood or the life of **the** Firstborn, of Jesus, who would please God in all things, and whose life became precious in the sight of the Almighty. Through the mercy of the God of heaven Israel were allowed to share this life and witness in a figure its delivering power. Their firstborn babes cooed and laughed after the Passover night; whereas those of Egypt were silent and cold in the arms of death.

These things were not only written for the brethren and sisters in Israel, but also for us; for Jews and Gentiles who are not born into the Kingdom of God but into a world of darkness.

Calling of the Gentile foreshadowed.

The Law of Moses pre-figured the calling of the Gentile to God. Under the Law the Gentile was regarded as unclean and not able to partake of the Passover, unless he were inducted into Israel by circumcision. With the terminating of the ordinances of the Law after the death of Jesus, God's purpose was to call from the world those who would respond to His invitation to take a place in His family. Here again there must be a recognition that only the firstborn and those allowed to share the life of the firstborn will be saved.

With regard to the firstborn of unclean animals such as the ass the Law says:

"And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck." Exodus 13 : 13.

Those who are "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel" are unholy and do not belong to God. As the Apostle Paul says they are "dead in trespasses and sins." They are like the ass in the

Law, unclean, and without hope of salvation unless redeemed. The mercy of God is seen to be wonderfully demonstrated in the Law in this matter in that the ass could be redeemed by a lamb. It would be a remarkable sight to see a lamb taken to the priest as an offering for the ass so that its neck need not be broken. The teaching is obvious. Those represented by the ass, those alienated from the "commonwealth of Israel, having no hope, and without God in the world," can be redeemed by **the** Lamb.

Baptism is the ordinance appointed by God in this dispensation by which there can be a partaking of the blood of the life of the Firstborn, of Jesus. Baptism into Christ is not just a washing away of sins. True baptism requires a "baptism into his death." This requires a recognition that Jesus was justly condemned to death, and that the one buried in water acknowledges this and the worthiness of his own death as a pre-requisite to resurrection to life in Him.

Christendom may have no appetite for divine teaching representing present Gentiles and Jews by an ass, which, if not redeemed, must die; but Christendom is astray, and with assinine stupidity refuses to acknowledge the teaching of God which alone might bring them salvation.

Divine Fellowship: belonging to God.

In trying to discover a basis for reunion amongst some of the sects of the 'others'—those who once had the Truth—there have been conferences innumerable, and in one case postponement of further consideration until there is a "definition of fellowship." What a confession by those who are supposed to be enlightened that this should be necessary. Fellowship can be very simply defined as belonging to God on the basis we have already seen: that is being "sanctified" or "holy." This requires the upholding of all the Law of God, showing what is holy and what is unholy. It is altogether inadequate to pick out some thirty items and say these constitute a sufficient agreement as to what is holy or unholy. Whatever God has declared to be holy must be upheld; and whatever He has said is unholy must be eschewed. Although we may fail through weakness this must be no excuse for not upholding this Law. In the One Body this Law will be revered, and the teaching of the Law of Christ will be seen in the Law of Moses for it is the Spirit of Christ. This is why the Law of Moses is so important as giving together with the New Testament a comprehensive view of what must be upheld in the One Body and what must be condemned. It is from this adequate source of enlighten-

ment that every issue in practice and doctrine can and must be settled. Indeed it is only by this means that there can be a "walking in the light," the basis of fellowship of one with another, derived from the fact that those walking in the light are walking with God.

An appeal is made to the others to leave their technical conferences and drafting of what appear like treaties between different sects, and come to walk in the light as shed in the Law of Moses as well as in the New Testament.

(To be continued . . .)

Summary of a Bible Class Discussion

"My speech shall distil as the dew."

Deut. 32, verse 2.

ONE of the greatest gifts of God to mankind is the gift of speech. Let us consider the wonderful kindness of God in His ability and forethought for the needs of His creation.

We can scarcely realise what life would be like if no-one could speak, or sing or utter a sound, how dreadful would the repercussions be.

When God made man He knew the needs of man and therefore gave to him the power of speech so that man might be able to converse with his neighbour—and also that he might communicate with his God.

What a wonderful provision of God and what a power is contained in the tongue, the organ of speech.

The ages have reverberated with the sounds of tongues and masses have been swayed with the power of them—sometimes for good and sad to say, most times for evil. And so to remind us of this fact the Apostle James says:

"Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

Even so, the tongue is a little member and boasteth great things, behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth.

And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity, so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell.” (James 3, vv. 4-6.)

From this quotation we find that this wonderful provision of speech—the gracious gift of an all wise Creator can be, and, is used wrongly.

What a contrast we find then in the words of God uttered by Moses . . .

“ My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass ” (Deut. 32 : 2).

“ My speech shall distil as the dew ”

What a difference then there is to be seen in the speech (or Word) of God and that of man left to himself, whose fine words and fair speeches only bring him to the grave.

David, who was a man after God’s own heart was caused to say . . .

“ Thy word (speech) is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path ” (Psalm 119 : 105).

Distillery is a process whereby liquids are subjected to heat until they evaporate and after a certain loss of temperature return back to a liquid but having left any deposit of foreign matter behind.

The word of God acts like this, does it not, as we gather from the phrase,

“ My speech shall distil as the dew.”

“ Like the dew of Hermon ” Psalm 133 : 3.

The dew silently and secretly deposited on the grass—**during the night** surely a wonderful sight to behold—in the morning—all the globules scintillating and sparkling like jewels when irradiated by the sun each and every one—some large, some smaller—yet of the exact same substance.

This is surely a divine figure given to show us the ultimate achievement of the word of God—yes

“My speech shall distil as the dew. Give ear O heavens and I will speak and hear O earth the words of my mouth (v. 2). My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.”

Here again the speech of God is likened also to the small rain upon the tender herb—nothing harsh or loud to uproot, but just that steady fine rain to give the tender plant the greatest benefit.

“Give ear and hear”

Do we get the lesson? “My speech—My word shall distil as the dew,” says the great God of heaven—What then of ours? Is our speech distilling—purifying to our brethren and sisters—or does it tend to be harsh and uprooting?

It can be so. A harsh word here and there can cause untold distress and anguish. The tongue is a little member and a deadly one. The tongue is a fire.

“For every kind of beast and of birds and of serpents and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind.

But the tongue no man can tame, it is an unruly evil full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father, and therewith curse we men which are made after the similitude of God.

Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. **My brethren these things ought not so to be.**” James 3 : 7-10.

Truly these things ought not so to be, and would not be if our speech followed after the pattern . . . “My speech shall distil as the dew” . . .

In John 7, verse 46, it is recorded of the Lord Jesus Christ . . .

“Never man spake like this man.”

Here was one who followed faithfully and obediently unto death the commands of God.

“Lo, I come to do Thy Will, O God” was His sole ambition.

He knew the depth of this statement given to Moses for the benefit of all God’s children,

“Give ear—and hear—My speech shall distil as the dew.”

J.S.

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

“AWAKE, AWAKE, PUT ON STRENGTH, O ARM OF THE LORD; AWAKE, AS IN THE ANCIENT DAYS, IN THE GENERATIONS OF OLD. ART THOU NOT IT THAT HATH CUT RAHAB, AND WOUNDED THE DRAGON?” (Isaiah 51, v. 9.)

THE above quotation could be said to summarise the yearning of the faithful for the final deliverance of the people of God through the revival of heavenly militancy against the enemy of the Truth.

In ancient times the arm of the Lord wounded the enemy of the people of Moses, “Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers” (Ezekiel 29, v. 3). When the time comes for the arm of the Lord to be again revealed in power, the latter-day dragon, the enemy of Israel will be slain.

The draconic power in existence when Christ returns is referred to in the Book of Revelation as follows:—

“And there appeared another wonder (sign) in heaven; and behold a great red dragon . . . And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth.

. . .

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon: and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not . . . And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ. . . .”

(Rev. 12, vv.3-10.)

The great red dragon of prophetic symbology is strikingly descriptive of the Communist powers of these times, which in twenty years have cast down “a third of the stars” and have erected an ‘iron curtain’ which has divided Europe in the West and Asia in the East

The Book of Daniel reveals that it is Michael (Christ) who is to “stand up” for the children of Daniel’s people (Daniel 12, v 1) at a time when the king of the north “shall enter into the countries,

and shall overflow and pass over” and “ shall enter into the glorious land” (Daniel 11, vv. 40-41). The Michael of Daniel and the Michael of Revelation therefore indicate that the situations described in the two prophecies are one and the same. The present situation in the Communist world significantly shows that though Communism seemed to be threatened recently with disruption in the differences between Russia and China, such a situation had not to be, for then the prophecy concerning the Red Dragon could not have been completely fulfilled. Hence the recently startling news, that caused dismay, concerning the fall of the Russian leader who had become popular in the west because of his moderating policies which have antagonised China’s anti-Western leaders. Since the downfall of this leader the Soviet press has emphasised in an article the need for “ co-operation of equals ”; the article laid great stress on the need for unity and solidarity in the Communist camp. There has also been a call from another Communist source for Sino-Soviet unity. Furthermore, there seems to have been evidence that the deposed leader in his desire to spend less on armaments had drawn up an economic blue print that would in effect, have made it impossible for the Russian economy to have produced what the Russian military wanted, hence another reason for his disposal.

Observers of the situation, reading between the lines in press reports that have come from Russia, are of the opinion that the new leadership is in fact itself divided, and that the military believes that to obtain what it wants for the armed forces the political leadership must be urged to unite on a programme of military expansion. One important phrase that pointed to this being the case was contained in an article in the Soviet Army Newspaper “ Red Star ” which started:—

“ The indivisible leadership of the party is the main source of the might of the Soviet armed forces, the foundation of military construction.”

That one of the new leaders was in agreement with the military seemed to be indicated, when, in his “ inauguration ” speech, he said that the Soviet Union could not fail to take into account the continuing existence of imperialist forces, which created a threat to peace, and that it would therefore take measures to strengthen its defences. So, for all the assurances of the new Soviet leaders of their continued interest in what is termed “ peaceful coexistence,” there are definite signs of change in Russia’s foreign policy; and again the cry against “ imperialists ” is taken up. The Red power, then, has not changed in its appearances after all; though recently giving the impression of softening in its policies. It is now revert-

ing to its "dragonic" character; a character which will merit the judgment of the "arm of the Lord," when that arm awakes as in the days of old.

"I BEHELD EVEN TILL THE BEAST WAS SLAIN,
AND HIS BODY DESTROYED, AND GIVEN TO
THE BURNING FLAME." (Daniel 7, v. 11.)

A sign of what is coming upon a world of beastly ferocity was contained in the news that China now has a nuclear weapon. The failure of men to control their own ferocious tendencies and policies will ultimately destroy the present arrangement of things. China has been working hard in an endeavour to obtain the power which its enemy the U.S.A. has in abundance. The explosion which was reported to be in the area of Sinkiang was surprising in that it revealed that Chinese nuclear weapon technology is quite near to being able to make the hydrogen bomb. The substance used for the Chinese nuclear test was found to be that of a material which it was thought only existed in Russia, the U.S.A. and Britain. China then is seen to have cut by half the time needed to develop nuclear weapons, and so it is thought that she can become an H-bomb power in the near future. Western estimates, therefore, that China would be at least four or five years developing into an H-bomb power are now having to be hastily revised.

China's achievement of course has galvanised some quarters in India into action. Furious controversy is now taking place there whether India should match the Chinese atom bomb with a nuclear device of her own or not.

It will probably only be a matter of time before other countries also follow the course that China has taken. But whatever the long term result in the world at large because of China's success, the immediate impression, which is such a sign, is that China, as part of Communist power, is now fulfilling the role of greatness in world affairs for which she has been predestinated.

The long term result, it seems; that will flow from China's successful experiment, however, is that other nations will be impelled into producing their own nuclear devices for purposes of upholding their own prestige. This then is the setting for the developing of another world system, similar to the Red Dragon, in that the scripture defines the other great system which is to rise up in the earth as "the Beast." Concerning such a system which is yet to rise, the scripture declares through the Apostle John:—

“ And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, . . . and the dragon gave him his power . . . and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” (Rev. 13, vv. 1-4.)

Such a system will be allowed by God to continue for a short period, even as the Dragon will be allowed to do so. The end of such ferocious systems however is sure. “ I beheld,” said Daniel the prophet, who saw the system many centuries before John saw it in vision, “ even till the beast was slain, and his body GIVEN TO THE BURNING FLAME.” Surely the extension of nuclear devices in the nations foretell the final outcome of men’s systems, when the present constitutions will disintegrate in the fire of men’s own inventive wrath.

Recent news from Turkey was interesting for it is now evident that this country once at enmity with Russia is now on good terms with her neighbour. At the time of writing the Turkish Foreign Minister was intent upon improving still further the present good relations between Turkey and Russia after being invited by the Soviet Government to visit Moscow. Foreign observers have felt that such things may mark a turning point in Turkish foreign policy. One of the reasons for such a change in Turkey appears to be Turkey’s dissatisfaction and disappointment over the way the Cyprus issue has been treated by the West. Such a change points to the line up of nations which the Scripture shows will take place at the time of the end.

The prophecy of Ezekiel that “ Gomer, and all his bands ” (Ezekiel 38, v. 6) which is the ancient name for the territory of Turkey, will be in alliance with the King of the North when that power is to be defeated by the “ arm of the Lord.”

So whether in Turkey or China, or in Russia itself, the course of present world affairs is seen to be moving in the direction which the scriptures foretell. Soon the “ arm of the Lord ” as a consequence will “ awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old.”

D.L.

News from the Ecclesias

Eden, New York. Grange Hall, Church Street.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 12 noon. Sunday School 10.45 a.m. Revelation Study 2.0 p.m. Bible Class: Mid-week: Forestville, Hamburg, Buffalo, and Orchard Park.

Our Sunday School Address as scheduled had to be postponed because of illness. It did take place on October 18th, to the benefit and enjoyment of young and old.

There has been very certain evidence among us of God's care, and a Father's love. For this we gratefully strive to respond in correction and zeal.

Further evidence of care and love was seen in the greeting and message received from the Nottingham Fraternal Gathering. This is deeply appreciated, and fills a need.

Our supplications are for those who are ill that God would grant them His sustaining care, and a restoration of health according to His will.

Correspondence with those interested and questioning continues. This is one way the Creator permits a witnessing, and we try to work faithfully, watching for His indications.

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.

In these days of apathy, it is encouraging to have interest shown in the Truth. First, while on holiday at Black Rock and then travelling from Derby to our lecture here, given by Brother W. V.

THE REMNANT

Butterfield, on October 18th, and would have also come to the lecture given by Brother D. Lancaster on November 8th had it been possible.

We were pleased to have with us at the Table of the Lord, besides the Brethren who lectured and exhorted, Sister W. V. and Sister Beryl Butterfield, Sister Harrison and Sister Crossley on October 18th and Sister D. Lancaster on November 8th.

H. J. S.

Newtownards, Co. Down, Northern Ireland.

Sundays, Breaking of Bread, Newtownards, 11.30 a.m.

Sunday School: 10.30 a.m. Bible Class: Wednesday.

A public lecture was given in Belfast on Saturday, October 24th. Subject: "Is the Christ of Christendom the Christ of the Scriptures?" The speaker was Brother D. Lancaster.

The attendance was disappointing, though the lecture was heard with appreciation by the strangers present; one desiring further information. We thank Brother Lancaster for his help in lecturing and also at the Table on Sunday morning. J.P.

"Pentrip," Black Rock, Portmadoc.

Breaking of Bread: Sunday, 11.0 a.m.

Eureka Class: Thursday, 7.0 p.m.

It is with gratitude that we acknowledge the gracious hand of our God in the wonderful blessing which we have received; surely a token of that greater blessing which we know is assured for the faithful.
per J.S.

Manchester. Memorial Hall, M.A.P.S. Building, 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: 3rd Saturday each month at 3.45 p.m.

We rejoice to see the hand of God at work in our midst on behalf of those who desire to find the Truth. Were this quest to depend upon human efforts then the Truth would never be found. God, however, has shown that He is aware of any whose heart is towards Him and will over-rule his affairs so that he might be led to where the Truth is to be found, as was the case with Cornelius.

Following a lecture, which is to be illustrated with slides, in our own Hall by a local photographic society entitled, "The Holy Land," arrangements have been made for a special lecture the following day, that is on Sunday, November 29th. Subject—"The Holy Land, Why Holy?"

We have been pleased to welcome Sister Packer, of Nottingham, at the Table of the Lord.

W. V. B.

