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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

SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD

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At the Table of the Lord

“ Shall I Go Up? ”

WE have been reading of David—“ a man after God’s own heart.” As we strive to discern why God should speak of him in this way, how impressed we should be by his spirit. His experiences, thinking, reactions, are all exposed to our view through our readings in Samuel, to help us make our spirit more like his, and so please God.

Often we find this spirit expressed in few words, yet so powerfully. We have read, when the Philistines came up against Israel, “ David enquired of the Lord saying, Shall I go up . . . ? ” (II Samuel 5 : 19). David’s enquiring in these circumstances is a testimony of his spirit, of his faith and trust in God, of his submissiveness to the hand of his God. And because of this, God answered—“ . . . Go up: for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand.” No question of the outcome, for the record tells us,

“ . . . David smote them there, and said, The Lord hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me. . . . ” (verse 20).

How great the victory, and how complete the recognition that his God had done it!

The Philistines came up again against Israel, but David did not presume to go forth against them, although he could have done so, feeling that God had been and was still with him. But no—he stopped and enquired again of the Lord, and was told, “ thou shalt not go up. . . . ” What a help and lesson for us we are given this insight into David’s heart. All too often we may go ahead in our own thinking—overlooking the need to “enquire of the Lord.” How grateful David would feel that he **had** enquired the second time.

Let us, on every occasion, “enquire,” and we too, will be helped and know the same gratitude for His guidance.

As we then discern the Spirit’s exhortation in the example of David, in his submission, his trust, his awareness of weakness in himself, can we not take courage and resolve that we will move in the determination to be like him?

The Source of David's Strength

We might well ask, how is it that David had such trust? It wasn't something just there naturally, for we know that man's mind is contrary to God's. David was flesh as ourselves, and only came to this pleasing spirit by overcoming that flesh. We can be helped toward David's spirit in discerning how and why he grew in this mind. We first read of David when he was anointed by Samuel to be king over Israel.

“ . . . There remaineth yet the youngest, and behold he keepeth the sheep. . . . ” (I Samuel 16 : 11).

This was referring to David, the youngest son of Jesse, who was a shepherd. How helpful to the development of David's mind his work as a shepherd would be. He had the care of the sheep, had time to meditate, to develop certain godly characteristics, as he gave his time and energies for the sheep. He would grow to be selfless, watching, healing when needful. In his experiences as a shepherd, and with a sensitive mind towards God, he could perceive in the shepherd and the sheep, the relationship which the Lord Jesus was later to use as an illustration of His care for His people. It would be a beneficial experience for David, and in it he found help. We remember David's words when he was to go out against the giant, Goliath, recorded in I Samuel 17 : 34-35—

“ . . . Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear. . . . ”

This powerful experience must have helped tremendously to grow in faith and later to enable David to face greater trials. So he continues in regard to Goliath,

“ . . . this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them (the lion and the bear), seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. . . . The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine ” (I Samuel 17 : 36-37).

David drew on this strength, this trust in God to destroy Goliath, the fearsome giant of the Philistines. This experience with Goliath and God's deliverance again, helped David as Saul hounded him for years, seeking his life. What tribulation David endured, what patience he showed; how faithful he was in not killing Saul when

several opportunities to do so presented themselves. But no—it was in God's hands; Saul was the Lord's anointed. How much David had to overcome, to prove his faith in God, and how faithful he was in trial, helped and strengthened by each experience he went through. How quietly he waited for God's Hand; how quickly he enquired of the Lord in time of decision, and moved only when God told him to do so.

Can we see, then, how David was led by God, submitted and grew in faith, and so was enabled to overcome? All these experiences are recorded by the Spirit for us, brethren and sisters. They are to help us grow in trust, to move in faith, to enquire of the Lord as did David, "Shall I go up?" What a help his life can be to us as we read of it; for we, too, have giants, lions, bears, adversaries to face which try our faith, our dependence upon God. The biggest adversary really is in us, for we are not naturally inclined to have these qualities of David; but must struggle to develop them. It is a great battle, a battle for life itself, which we must win if we are to please God, and hope to know His deliverance.

"A Sound of Going in the Tops of the Mulberry Trees"

Returning to David's experiences against the Philistines, when they came up the second time, David, we are told, enquired again of the Lord, having learned by experience to seek God in every situation. He was told,

"... Thou shalt not go up; but fetch a compass behind them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees. And ... when thou hearest the sounding of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then shalt thou bestir thyself; for then shalt the Lord go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines." (II Samuel 5 : 23-24).

David was to wait for the Lord—for a **sound** of a going in the mulberry trees—a sound which would tell him to go up. We find help in the Hebrew for the word "**sound**." It is used also as **Proclamation, thunder, voice**. It was a powerful sound, a clear sound; it was like the thunder heard by Israel at Mount Sinai which caused all to quake and tremble.

"There were thunders (same word as sound) and lightnings, and a thick cloud. . . ." (Exodus 19 : 16).

God's voice which David heard in the mulberry trees was not an uncertain sound; but a mighty voice, giving direction and strength to those who, like David, listen and hear. That David knew the

power of this voice of God is clear, for we read his words in Psalm 29 : 3-11,

“ The voice (sound) of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thundereth The voice of the Lord is powerful: the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. . . . The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness. . . . The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve. . . . ”

These are not empty words, but an expression of David's heart as he observed and experienced the power of that “ voice of the Lord.” It was his strength, his trust, and because of this, he could say,

“ The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace ” (Psalm 29 : 11).

Can we hear David speaking to us, brethren and sisters? Can we perceive this conviction which carried him through such grievous trials? Can **we** take his strength to our own hearts, and listen for the sound of that voice—not an uncertain sound; but the Voice of the Lord, correcting, guiding, and strengthening, if we are alert for it and enquire after it?

“ Then Thou Shalt Bestir Thyself ”

The sound which David heard was “ a going in the tops of the mulberry trees.” We find the word “ **going** ” is used as **march**, in Psalm 68 : 7, which helps us appreciate the benefit given to David:

“ O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst **march** through the wilderness. Selah, The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God.”

Selah, the Spirit says—Value it, considering the end of God's purpose. Are we perceptive, brethren and sisters, and so value that going forth of God before His people? He was there so tangibly before Israel, in the cloud by day and the fire by night, marching with them. There was no doubt in Israel's mind as to Who was with them, or that He **was** with them. He is with us, just as surely, just as tangibly, just as powerfully, as with our brethren in the wilderness; as with David in the valley of Rephaim.

Let us be sure, then when we hear the sound of a going, that we, like David heed the Lord's words: “ Bestir thyself: for then shall the Lord go out before thee. . . . ”

Does this not help us to discern David's spirit, his heart, which was so pleasing to His God? As we grow in perception of this spirit, of his continual determination to enquire of the Lord, of his utter

trust and waiting upon God, WE must let that perception work in us that which is pleasing in God's sight. Let us be especially alert for "the sound of a going," that we may move only in His way, subject to His Voice, always listening, waiting patiently and humbly for the answer when we enquire of the Lord. Then shall we not draw more closely to that spirit and that heart which was pleasing to our God, and which He designated as being "after Mine own heart."

J.A.DeF.

Christendom — and others — Astray (90)

The Spirit of the Law the Spirit of Christ.

"If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant . . . ye shall be unto me a kingdom of Priests and an holy nation."

Exodus 19 : 5-6.

HOW different are the views expressed by the Spirit regarding the state of Christendom and those who take but a superficial look at the "Mother Church," and her "Daughters." Recent events which have received world-wide publicity give the general impression that the influence of Christendom is for good and will possibly be the means of saving the world from destroying itself. The visit of the Pope to New York to address the United Nations in the cause of peace has had a dramatic effect upon even those who would not claim to be religious. They feel that after all there is something in the claims of the Roman Church to be the "Mother Church," especially having regard to its long history, which according to Roman Catholics is nearly two thousand years, but in point of fact is nearer to fifteen hundred years. The claim of the Church of Rome to be the oldest Church is a false one. The true Church can go back to the time when there was the "Church in the Wilderness," and even before this; more than two thousand years before the Roman Church was established by the Emperor's decree of 606 A.D.

The basis of the teaching of the true Church is entirely different from that of the false Church. Whereas those called to belong to the "Church" or Ecclesia of God are required at all times in their belief and practice to be obedient to His voice, the false Church and its branches have long since spurned this idea, and has not been afraid to exalt the voice of man above God's Word. This is seen in how the doctrine, belief, and practice of Christendom depend upon the capricious will of men, who as religious politicians make many fair and specious promises with a view to obtaining as many

adherent as possible. It is as well for us to be forcibly reminded that in spite of the greatness and grandeur of the Churches of Christendom her claims are utterly false and in opposition to the declared purpose of God. On account of Christendom adulterating the word of God to appeal to the palate of worldly men she is described by the Spirit of God in the Revelation as proffering to the world a golden cup in which is the filthy admixture of that which is holy and profane. The Spirit in describing this great and iniquitous system uses words which we dare not use as an expression of personal opinion. Christendom is spoken of as "the mother of harlots." The significance of these words is simple and full of meaning. Christendom claims to be the bride espoused to her Lord, the Christ. In the favours of the Kings and Princes of the earth she has shown herself in the figure to be an unfaithful lover and hence the unsavoury descriptions the Spirit gives to her.

Christendom is astray; sadly and badly astray as seen in the words of the Lord Jesus in the Revelation.

The only basis for the true Church or Ecclesia is that shown by the Spirit of Christ in the Law: obedience to the voice of God and the keeping of His covenant.

May the means which God has given for the preservation of His ecclesia in times past and in the present time be considered so that the valuable lessons which God intends we shall learn, and warnings He would have us receive may be heard when the 'others'—those who once had the Truth—say the position of the Truth amongst them is being completely undermined but are unable to find any way of dealing with this. Help will be afforded if consideration first of all be given to—

The "Constitution" of the Ecclesia in the Wilderness and the Land; and how evil was to be dealt with.

The Ecclesia in the wilderness came into being when God called Israel out of darkness, out of Egypt; and when subsequently all were baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. This baptism must have had a profound meaning for all Israel at the time because "by faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land." Israel were shown that the nations of the world were condemned even as the power of Egypt was destroyed in the waters of the Red Sea, and that God had the power to save from death all of His people who were separated to Him from the nations of the world.

Here it is as well to remember that the God, Yahweh, the only true and living God was the God of Israel and of no other nation.

Now let us see how His people were constituted as His Ecclesia in the wilderness. The words of the "Constitution" are extremely simple and yet all-embracing:

"If ye will obey my voice indeed and keep my covenant . . . ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation"
Exodus 19 : 5-6.

To give adequate power to this "Constitution" the brethren and sisters actually heard the voice of Yahweh declaring unto them the ten commandments. We know that this was a terrifying experience causing even Moses to quake exceedingly. A plea went up from the Ecclesia that henceforth God would speak to them through Moses, which He did in giving to Moses the Law in the mount. They would never forget, however, the basis of their "Constitution" was the hearing of the voice of God which had caused them to be so fearful and no doubt mindful of the greatness of the presence of the Almighty.

Let us keep in mind the simplicity of this "Constitution." It will help us when we come to deal with the "Constitution" of the true Ecclesia at the present time.

How was the Ecclesia to be preserved from the incursion of false teaching? How was the evil to be dealt with so that the Truth might be kept amongst God's people?

It is very important that we realise that there is a great difference in the method ordained by God at this time, and that which is chosen for the present time. In the days of the Law the Ecclesia was a Kingdom, the Kingdom of God. God was their King in very deed, governing, preserving, blessing and punishing according to the behaviour of His people. Accordingly, the Law of God given through Moses required that rebels should be cut off in a most salutary manner. They were to be stoned to death by the congregation, and then their bodies hung up so that "all Israel might hear and fear." We see then that in the time of the Law evil was required to be dealt with according to that Law—by the immediate punishment of the evil doer whether by "stripes" or by death.

There were frequent failures in Israel to keep this Law and often the nation was involved in transgression and departure from the way of the living God. The 'others' those who once had the Truth—will use such occasions to justify tolerating evil in the Ecclesia; to prevent withdrawal or division from those who are evil or refuse to separate from those who are evil. They fail to recognise the difference in the means God ordained in the past for dealing with evil, and what He requires for the dealing with evil at the present time.

When the Ecclesia was a Kingdom it was impossible for any to withdraw in the sense of leaving the Kingdom, because that would have taken them into the wickedness of the surrounding nations. When the Kings and Priests failed to deal with the evil in the nation then God took the matter into His own hands. Let the apologists for evil in the Ecclesia consider the severity of God's wrath upon His people when they were punished by the "sword, the famine, the pestilence." Had any of these apologists experienced the invasion of the armies of the surrounding nations, or the dreadfulness of the famine in the time of Elijah, or the pestilence when no less than seventy thousand brethren and sisters perished by plague in the days of David—then he would no longer be prepared to argue that because of the evil in the nation of Israel it should be tolerated now in the Ecclesia.

Further let the burden of the messages of God's prophets be considered, which rose up early and testified against Israel's wickedness warning the brethren and sisters what would befall them if they continued in their evil ways. Let the apologist for the toleration of evil in the Ecclesia, because of evil in the nation of Israel in time past, join himself to those in Jerusalem at the time when the Chaldeans took the city. Let him see the sons of King Zedekiah slain and then the eyes of the King put out. Let him see the dreadful misery of the brethren and sisters being taken off with their families into the captivity of the alien state of Babylon; then perhaps he will be less ready to excuse the presence of rebels in the Ecclesia at the present time by referring to the wickedness of the brethren and sisters in the time of the Law.

Finally, let the apologist for toleration of rebels in the Ecclesia or Kingdom at the time when the Lord Jesus Christ appeared in Israel. He told them plainly that they were "lost." For any who would disassociate themselves from the evil of the nation they were to be baptised unto "the baptism of repentance." Even Christ Himself was baptised for this reason, that although He was a Jew and of the nation of Israel and did not sin He must show like others called to God, condemnation of the nation by being baptised and so "fulfilling all righteousness." How wrong it is to suggest by referring to the wickedness of the nation at this time that God will tolerate rebels in His Ecclesia. Jesus warned what the progress of wickedness would involve when He said that the time would come when the temple would be destroyed, and "not one stone should be left upon another." Not long after the death and resurrection of Christ the Kingdom of Israel was besieged by the Romans and finally its capital city Jerusalem taken. This was acclaimed by Rome as a great victory and an arch of triumph was erected in

Rome to commemorate this. It is called the arch of Titus, the name of the general who was responsible for capturing Jerusalem. Let the apologist for retaining rebels in the Ecclesia stand under this arch, and see there in the engravings which are clear to this day how the precious and holy ornaments belonging to the temple, the light-stand, the table of shew-bread, and other things were carried up the Capitoline Hill by the captive Jews in the triumph of Titus. Here it is seen that not one word of the prophets failed. Wickedness amongst the brethren and sisters in Israel had ultimately brought their casting off and expulsion from the land of God. In accordance with the words of Moses spoken so long ago the brethren and sisters were now without God and were scattered into all nations of the world, where the words of Moses have been tragically fulfilled that among these nations they should "find no ease, but a trembling heart, and failing of eyes and sorrow of mind," and "that their life should hang in doubt and that they would fear day and night and have none assurance of life." May these grave and sombre thoughts silence those who think it is right to retain rebels in the Ecclesia by refusing to divide from them however many they be, on account of the dreadful wickedness that obtained in the Ecclesia or Kingdom of God in times past.

"Constitution" of the Ecclesia at the present time and God's Commands for dealing with evil in the Ecclesia.

It is hoped that a previous article dealing with the "Statement of Faith" will have shown how frail a thing is any "Constitution" prepared by men.

As in the case of the Ecclesia in the time of the Law the only all-embracing "Constitution" is that which made Israel a "kingdom of Priests and an holy nation." This was and is simply obedience in all things to the voice of God and the keeping of His covenant. It would be a denial of the goodness and justice of God to suggest that His voice may not now be heard on all matters affecting every aspect of life and belief. The God of the brethren and sisters in Israel is the God of those who constitute His Ecclesia at the present time. His complete provision for the brethren and sisters for knowing His will in time past lacks nothing today. As it is hoped that previous articles have shown the Word of God and His presence in the Ecclesia are as powerful as in the Ecclesia in the wilderness to give all the answers to any questions which may arise respecting belief and conduct.

The present Ecclesia is not the Kingdom of God but is constituted of a number of people called out from the world to live in

the world but not to be of the world. For the preservation of the Truth now, it is just as necessary as in time past for evil to be dealt with. The Law of God as given through the Lord Jesus Christ and the Apostles shows how this must be done. In the present dispensation God does not visit evil with punishments as He did in the case of the brethren and sisters living in the Kingdom. He requires that those who are called out from the world, and are separated from the world should remain so. For the preservation of the Body of His Son He has shown that those who manifest a return to the world in either belief or practice have no place in the Ecclesia. They must be put outside the Ecclesia; returned to the world. How?

Here there is no room for speculation or sentimentality but a careful following of the Law of God.

Take for instance in the first place the case of the individual, which for some unknown reason seems to be regarded by the 'others' as requiring different treatment than if a multitude of evil-doers were involved. Jesus shows very clearly and dramatically in Matthew 18 that if the Body is to be preserved then it is essential that an offending member must be "cut off." Whether this be "a hand, a foot or an eye" it must be removed otherwise the evil will spread to the destruction of the whole Body, which in a figure will be "cast into hell fire" along with all the false bodies belonging to the 'Beast' at the time when the Lord Jesus Christ returns.

It may help if the words of Jesus are received that an evil-doer is "perishing" (Matthew 18 : 14). To leave such a one in the cause of charity is to be guilty before God. His blood will be upon the head of those who so fail. The fact that the one who is an offender is "perishing" requires haste and merciful application of the commands of Christ. Jesus gives three steps which are to be taken in order to 'gain' the offender from "perishing." First he is to be seen "between thee and him alone." If this fails "witnesses" are to be taken with a view to helping the offender, and establishing the position for preparation of giving a report to the Ecclesia if the offender will not repent. Finally, in the third stage the matter must be reported to the whole of the Ecclesia who will admonish according to the report given by the "witnesses." If the one who is guilty will not now repent there must be withdrawal. "Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

It should not be necessary to say that one who refuses to repent after these three steps have been taken is a **rebel** and denies God. Under the Law he would have been stoned to death, and hung upon a tree, so that "all Israel might hear and fear." To retain such a one in the Ecclesia condones the evil and is an insult to the Almighty.

In the true Ecclesia the commands of Christ will be fulfilled in the gentleness of His Spirit and in the greatest effort "to gain," but never allowing the proceedings to drag on to the detriment of the Truth and the injury of the Body. It will soon be discovered in the course of dealing with the offender whether he is amenable to repentance or not. If not, action must be swift to remove that which is offensive in the sight of God.

There are many commands of the Spirit in the New Testament which are agreeable to this interpretation, and reflect the same attitude and purpose of the Almighty in the present dispensation as was seen in the time of the Law. The only difference, as has been previously stated, is that under the Law continuance in evil was punished by God's direct intervention. At the present time this is not so. Those called out from the world to be Ecclesias, are shown how they may be preserved as such. Failure to follow the divine Law for the expulsion of evil from the Ecclesia can only result in the Ecclesia becoming part of the world.

This is most forcibly stated in the figure used by the Spirit:—

"Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened." I Corinthians 5 : 6-7.

It is quite evident that the 'others' reject this. While admitting that there is 'leaven' of a very serious character they say that they must allow it to remain, hoping in some way, they know not how, that ultimately they might be able to kill the 'leaven.' Obviously such a method is completely opposed to the tenor of the Spirit's teaching, and what is happening among the others testifies that the 'leaven' is spreading rapidly. 'Division' whether it be from one who is a rebel and denies God or from many is a divine requirement as the words of Jesus and the general teaching of the Spirit shows. Neglect this divine precept and disaster is bound to ensue! The Body will become wholly corrupt and only fit for destruction at the coming of Jesus. It is quite evident that the present Editor of the "Christadelphian" does not understand the divine requirements for dividing from one or more who are rebels against God, when he speaks of division as being "crude and cruel surgery." Also many of the leaders of the 'others' who are similarly blinded to the essential and beneficial results of division from evil. They say:

"Nevertheless, we regard division in the Body of Christ as an evil to be avoided by every means possible, and we do not believe that wholesale division is a suitable method of obtaining the purity of the Faith."

They might as well say that they know better than God, for their words are in direct opposition to His commands for dealing with evil. To speak of the divine purpose in division from evil as “crude and cruel surgery,” is a dreadful indictment of God’s revealed will for purging the evil-doer from His Ecclesia.

When a Body has become so leavened as is the case of the ‘others,’ the question can rightly be asked what must be done?

There is no hope of restoring such a Body. It has gone from bad to worse, and will continue to do so as the leaven spreads. God’s call to individuals is to “come out and be separate.” Find the One True Body and rejoice in being united to God in that Body through the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation in an apostate Body is impossible.

To be continued . . .

It was hoped in this article to deal with the “pernicious doctrine of Ecclesial autonomy. This must be left over until the next article, when more will be said about the purpose of ‘Division’ as a means now for preserving the Truth from the contaminating leaven.



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

“FOR I BEHELD, AND THERE WAS NO MAN; EVEN AMONG THEM, AND THERE WAS NO COUNSELLOR, THAT, WHEN I ASKED OF THEM, COULD ANSWER A WORD.

BEHOLD, THEY ARE ALL VANITY; THEIR WORKS ARE NOTHING: THEIR MOLTEN IMAGES ARE WIND AND CONFUSION” (Isaiah 41, vv. 28-29).

AT first sight the question might be asked, what connections and implications can the above words have to events of these modern times? Admittedly this message came first of all to ancient Israel over twenty-six centuries ago in days when molten and graven images were prepared and worshipped. But a second consideration reveals that these words are not so irrelevant to these present days as they at first seem to be.

There is a context in the chapter that takes the mind forward to great things:—

“ I have raised up one from the north, and he shall come: from the rising of the sun shall he call upon my name: and he shall come upon princes as upon mortar, and as the potter treadeth clay.

Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? and beforetime, that we may say, He is righteous?

Yea, there is none that sheweth, yea, there is none that heareth your words.

The first shall say to Zion, Behold, behold them: and I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings ” (verses 25-27).

These words have to be considered carefully to get the implication of their meaning. Briefly the message is that God is to send one who is to tread down the powers of worldly rule. Such a one is to be the bringer of good tidings to God's people. He will establish justice to the benefit of all nations. But the question is asked, who among the exalted of the nations has been able to forecast this? The answer is none! They cannot show this. They cannot declare it, because there is none that heareth the words of the prophet of God.

THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANISATION

It is now twenty years since the United Nations Organisation was officially formed on October 2th, 1945. This confederacy took up its permanent headquarters in New York, at that time under the first Secretary-General of the scheme, the Norwegian stateman Trygve Lie. Since then there have been other leaders of this organisation during these troubled years, but where has the counsel of such men, or this political monolith itself led the nations?

Events of recent weeks provide the answer. The trouble between India and Pakistan revealed once again the impotence of the organisation, which to a vast number of the world's people is their hope, their only hope, for stability and peace. The fighting between India and Pakistan over Kashmir though not so costly as some clashes of recent times resulted in what is believed to have been the death of nearly 5,000 men and involved the loss of 500 tanks and 100 planes. Such nations, impoverished as they are by much backwardness and large populations which they find it difficult to feed, cannot afford such skirmishes. But though the conflict has died down, it is only for the time being, differences are not settled. In fact they smoulder on as isolated outbreaks of trouble along the cease fire line continue to occur, which dashes the hope at the United Nations headquarters that had begun to rise.

When this recent trouble was flaring up the present United Nations Secretary-General decided to respond to the plea contained in the Security Council resolution "to exert every possible effort" in the Indo-Pakistan crisis by flying to meet consecutively the leaders of the warring nations. But a question which has not been publicised is why did the leader of the U.N.O. not "exert every possible effort" for a Kashmir solution before such a deterioration of the situation. The conflict could indeed have led to a terrible catastrophe, for if India and Pakistan had joined in total war against each other and this had overflowed into the border territories, China would have been brought into the trouble and the whole of Asia would have been set on fire. But as yet, this had not to be in the purpose of God. Nevertheless, the thought highlights the question, what has the U.N.O. been doing over the years to clear up the situation in Kashmir? A U.N. Military Observer Group designed to keep the peace has been in Kashmir since 1949. The present commander of the group has been in charge there since 1960. It consists of 45 officers selected from eleven member countries of U.N.O. The groups staff is dispersed in its daily work along a 500 mile front, much of which is mountainous and largely inaccessible country. It has an aircraft and crew at its disposal, and the group is split into two, each assigned to the respective Indian or Pakistan side of the troubled line between the two nations. The ineffectiveness of this mission, which has been doing this work for 16 years as the representative of U.N.O., is clearly seen. The trouble is still there, the enmity is not removed, for "there was no counsellor." The deliberations, the debates, the assembling in the great building in New York to consider world matters has proved to have been in essence "wind and confusion." Why? Because the U.N.O. image is man's work and man cannot find an answer to his own troubles by his own device.

"Behold, they are all vanity; their works are nothing . . ."
(Verse 29.)

The threat to the peace of nearly six hundred million people in the sub-continent has to some extent overshadowed and hidden the trouble which is brewing in Rhodesia. At the time of writing an ominous visit by the Rhodesian Prime Minister to London for talks is expected. A spokesman of the British Colony has stated his government's position in the following words so full of meaning:—

"It has been made clear to the British Government that in view of the fact that independence negotiations have dragged on for more than two years these talks must be final and conclusive."

Thus the Rhodesians have been shocked by their spokesman into the realisation that unless something unexpected happens they are on the verge of their biggest political and constitutional crisis. The demand for independence according to the present constitution, which is designed to keep the large coloured population of Rhodesia in subjection to the comparatively small white population, seems unlikely to be granted by Britain. It may so be at this point that the Rhodesian Government will take the law into its own hands and declare itself independent on its own terms. This most certainly would result in economic reprisal by Britain, but could also lead to militant action by the parent nation as well. Perhaps even insurrection of the coloured population would develop. This agitation in one of the territories of Africa would undoubtedly have a disturbing effect upon the continent as a whole, and could lead to intervention by the newly emergent Negro states in sympathy with their fellows in Rhodesia. So as one trouble dies down another is seen to threaten, and U.N.O. has no "counsellor that can give an answer." The vast sums of money spent upon the organisation have been to a large degree unprofitably employed. This is vanity; the work has been ineffective; nothing substantial has been provided for the building up of an edifice of world peace, and so crisis follows crisis.

" . . . their molten images are wind and confusion " (Verse 29)

At the time of writing, the time also for the Papal visit to New York approaches. On arrival the Pope is due to address the General Assembly of the United Nations on the theme of world peace and spend some time with the heads of delegations, the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and officials. Tremendous preparations are being made for his visit, the air lines and railroads for example have been organising for some weeks for the expected trek of many Roman Catholics to New York who desire to get a glimpse of the Pope on American soil. So the Pope identifies himself to some extent with an organisation that is devoid of the counsel of God, which is the only true and effective counsel. The arrangements to speak to that assembly set to some extent the seal of the Pope's approval upon it, but still there is no counsel of God, the world situation does not improve. But the striking thing is that the Papacy not only identifies itself with the U.N.O. image but brings within the scope of its counterfeit approval many other images which still abound in the world of these times.

The following statement from a member of the Ecumenical Council is one of great significance. It concerns part of the revised version of the proposed declaration on "The relation of the Church

to Non-Christian Religions.” As one who helped to draught the declaration he pointed out that “for the first time in history, the Church has looked into the Moslem, Hindu, Jewish and Buddhist religions as well as into those of the primitive tribes of Africa and has praised the working of God in those people.”

So the images are had in esteem and yet there is not one counsellor among them. Even India, the country of astrologers, and one time greatly respected in the corridors of U.N.O. flounders in the circumstances of these times.

But there is a counsellor coming, according to the promise of God, in context with these times, as seen in the message of Isaiah which follows the present consideration.

“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles” (Isaiah 42, v. 1).

“He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law” (verse 4).

Christ is coming with the only counsel that can be effective, the only advice that can smooth out the injustices that rankle in the minds of all peoples. So, it is seen, that the record of Isaiah has indeed a message for these times to those who hear its words.

D.L.



Correspondence

Letter from E.W.P. Kidderminster:

“In your magazine I observe your continual reference to the ‘Ecclesia in the Wilderness.’ Would you at your convenience be good enough to indicate who are the members who constituted this Ecclesia?”

REPLY

The “Church” or the “Ecclesia” in the Wilderness were the nation of Israel who came up out of Egypt. This is seen in the address of Stephen in which he says:

“This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.

This is he, that was in the church (Ecclesia) in the wilderness.”
Acts 7 : 37-38.

In this issue you will see in the article entitled “Christendom — and others — Astray,” the simple “constitution” which God ordained at Sinai, which God gave at Sinai.

“If ye will obey my voice indeed . . . Ye shall be unto me . . . a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” Exodus 19 : 5-6.

This is also the fundamental “constitution” of the present Ecclesia. You will observe that it is simple and all-embracing.

W.V.B.

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 p.m. Bible Class: Midweek, Forestville, Hamburg, and Orchard Park.

Brother Butterfield's visit here has been a full extending of help and fellowship—a joy to all. The Spirit has granted additional help in counsel from our brethren, and there is strong desire to submit in gratitude, to chastening, correction, and every indication of the Father's Will, and the overruling for good in the santifying of His Way.

The response to the circular on The Creation sent to Christadelphians has been encouraging.

God willing, the Sunday School address is to take place on October 10th. All look forward to this help.

J.A.DeF.

Nottingham. Meadow's Community Centre, Kirkwhite Street, (Queen's Drive end), Nottingham. Sundays: Breaking of Bread, 11.0 a.m., Prophecies and Eureka Studies, 3.0 p.m., Bible Class, Tuesdays, 7.30 p.m.

Once again we had a most enjoyable and profitable time at our Fraternal Gathering on October 2nd when the subject considered, chosen by the U.S.A. Ecclesia, was "Open ye the Gates."

We thank Bro. Butterfield and Bro. Pinkerton for their helpful addresses.

The report of work done in U.S.A. during Bro. Butterfield's visit was most stimulating and encouraging as it left no room for doubt that God is working on behalf of the U.S.A. Ecclesia and with the Body of which we are part.

H.J.S.

Newtownards, Co. Down, N. Ireland.

A most delightful time was enjoyed by Bro. and Sister Pinkerton at Nottingham Fraternal, 2nd October, and at Manchester on Sunday 3rd. Much help was received in contacts with all. Sister Nancy is very grateful for messages sent back. We cannot help but be impressed by the evidence of the Father's hand in our midst (as all are in the Body) and pray that all may be strong in faith, that the Body may benefit and be upbuilt, as we gratefully accept His guidance in the unity of the one faith. J.P.

Manchester. Memoria! Hall, M.A.P.S. Building, Albert Square, Manchester.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.30 a.m. Lecture 3.15 p.m.

Thursday, 7.15 p.m., Onward Hall, Deansgate.

Saturday Bible Class 3.45 p.m. For dates please refer to plan.

Since our last news was written the work of circularising members of the various sects of Christadelphia has begun to show a fruit of interest in a ready response from a number of them requesting a copy of the August magazine which deals with the subject which is exercising so many of their minds. Some very interesting letters from Christadelphians have also been received.

On September 26th at the Sunday School Quarterly Address, children and grown ups alike heard a very instructive address, ably demonstrated by Brother J. Smith on the subject of the Parable of the Sower.

We were glad to have the company of Brother and Sister J. Pinkerton on October 3rd and record our thanks to Brother Pinkerton for his ministrations in exhorting and lecturing.

The return of Brother Butterfield from America on Tuesday, September 28th, with "good news from a far country" has been a source of encouragement to the Ecclesia because of the assurance received that God is working with all His people both far as well as near.

On Saturday, October 16th, a Special Address was given for Christadelphians entitled, "The present peril in Christadelphia. The denial of God's Word. What does God require of you?" After the Address questions were asked, and it was very obvious that there is great concern among the more thoughtful of the Christadelphians, and discussions are to take place with those specially interested.

D.L.

Pentrip, Black Rock, Portmadoc.

Breaking of Bread: Sunday 11.0 a.m. Sunday School 2.30 p.m. Eureka Study: Thursday, 7.30 p.m.

Much blessing is felt in the number of visitors which we have had during the summer, and also encouragement through one or two opportunities to try and give the Truth to one or two who have been more than casually interested.

Recently we have had the help at the Table of the Lord of Brethren J. Smith and S. Elston, and we are thankful to them for their labours.

Sister S. Elston, of Nottingham, and Sister M. Slaney, of Manchester, have spent some time with us.

per W.V.B.

